Conference Agenda Monday

18th European Congress of Sport & Exercise Psychology

Date: Monday, 13/July/2026

8:30am - 5:00pm

Participant registration
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

9:00am - 11:00am

Beyond Performance: Psychological First Aid, Safeguarding and Athlete Welfare in High-Performance Sport - Practical Tools for Sport Psychologists Working with Elite Athletes and Sport Organizations
Location: **048**
This workshop offers practical, system-aware tools for sport psychologists working in elite settings, focusing on:
early identification of distress and environmental risk factors
psychological first aid (PFA) and safeguarding in practice
supporting athletes ethically within complex high-performance systems

Facilitator: Alina Gherghișan – sport psychologist, Welfare & Safeguarding expert and European project manager at the Romanian Olympic and Sports Committee, with 18+ years in high-performance sport and extensive experience in European safeguarding and wellbeing initiatives.

9:00am - 12:00pm

Applying a New Framework Using Brainspotting and EMDR to Address Epigenetic, Developmental, and Recent Trauma in Performance Enhancement
Location: **Aula Biblio**
This interactive workshop will explore a trauma-informed approach to performance, including:
• Brainspotting vs. EMDR in applied practice
• Case discussions and experiential learning
• Practical techniques for performance enhancement

A valuable opportunity for practitioners, researchers, and students interested in advancing their work in performance psychology.

9:00am - 12:00pm

Using Heart Rate Variability in Sport & Exercise Psychology: Practical Insights for Recovery, Stress Regulation & Performance
Location: **A10**
Want to move beyond “HRV as a number” and actually use it in applied work?
This workshop explores practical ways sport & exercise psychologists can integrate HRV to support:
recovery
stress regulation
cognitive & performance readiness
with clear takeaways for both research and practice.

Facilitator: Sylvain Laborde (German Sport University Cologne)
Associate Professor, founder of HRV LABorde – Performance Psychophysiology
Author of 150+ peer-reviewed papers & 4 books
Keynote speaker in 5 languages
Developer of the Vagal Tank Theory
His work connects HRV, breathing techniques, emotional intelligence & performance.

9:30am - 4:30pm

Quality Coach–Athlete Relationships and Interpersonal Communication: The Fuel of Performance and Wellbeing
Location: **106**
The workshop will focus on how high-quality coach–athlete relationships and effective communication can support both performance and wellbeing in sport. Participants will explore evidence-based models such as the 3+1Cs Model and the COMPASS communication strategies, with practical examples and applied exercises that can be transferred directly into professional practice. Designed for sport psychologists, mental skills consultants, coach educators, sport coaches, PE teachers, and practitioners working in performance and development contexts.

12:00pm - 2:00pm

From Consensus to Practice: Implementing IOC Mental Health Frameworks and Tools
Location: **Aula Biblio**
How do we translate IOC mental health consensus into real action in high-performance sport? This workshop focuses on practical implementation strategies, case examples, and adaptable tools to support early identification, risk management, and integrated care pathways for athletes.

Facilitator: Margo Mountjoy, MD, PhD — Clinical Professor (McMaster University, Canada) and member of the IOC Medical Commission’s Mental Health Working Group.

12:00pm - 2:00pm

Using Athlete365 Resources in Applied Sport Psychology Practice
Location: **A10**
This workshop will explore how the IOC’s Athlete365 resources can be integrated into everyday applied practice with athletes and their entourage.
Participants will gain practical insights on how to translate key topics such as mental health, safeguarding, dual career, and athlete well-being into concrete strategies for real-world settings.

Facilitator: Scott Sloan, International Olympic Committee
With over 15 years of experience across sport, mental health, and international development, and currently serving as Senior Project Manager for Mental Health at the IOC, Scott brings a valuable applied and global perspective to this session.

12:00pm - 2:00pm

From Athlete Voice to System Change: Engineering Better Sport Through Advisory Leadership

Location: **130**

How can athlete input move from symbolic consultation to real systems-level influence? This interactive workshop explores athlete advisory leadership through systems thinking, governance, power dynamics, and psychological safety, plus practical frameworks for embedding athlete-centredness into policy and everyday sport practice. Expect case discussions, small-group exercises, and applied mapping tools.

Facilitator: Dr. Sasha Gollish: professional engineer, PhD in civil engineering and applies systems thinking to sport performance, governance, and athlete well-being, coach, and retiring Canadian middle-/long-distance runner (Pan Am Games bronze medalist), focused on athlete voice, equity, youth sport reform, and system change.

2:00pm - 3:30pm

History of FEPSAC and European Sport Psychology – Why is it Important?

Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 299 / Symposium 1: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Any other topic
Keywords: History, FEPSAC, European sport psychology, women

History of FEPSAC and European Sport Psychology – Why is it Important?

Roland Seiler[1], Sidónio Serpa[2], Alberto Cei[3], Erwin Apitzsch[4]
[1]University of Bern, Switzerland; [2]CIDEFES – Lusofona University, Lisbon, Portugal; [3]University San Raffaele, Rome, Italy; [4]Lund University, Lund, Sweden

Studying history can show us why the current situation has arisen, how future developments might be shaped, and how collective identities, traditions and values have emerged that influence our science and our professional activities today. Since 2019, FEPSAC therefore supports the History Task Force to run a symposium on the history of sport psychology in Europe. This year's four contributions will examine thematic and political aspects from a historical perspective that continue to have an impact on sport psychology today. An analysis of contributions to the first World Congress of Sport Psychology in Rome in 1965 shows how European sport psychologists challenged the strongly medicalised perception of women's sport. At the outset of its development, sport psychology in Europe was a male dominated discipline. Bibliometric analyses of the International Journal of Sport Psychology (IJSP) reveal a steady increase of women as first authors during the first 50 years of the IJSP. The question of how an organisation such as FEPSAC was able to function in a divided Europe is once again highly relevant in today's climate of global tensions. The memories of a longstanding member of the Managing Council is an oral history example of the difficulties to maintain a dialogue. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War brought great hopes, but also many challenges. Based on the number of presentations at the FEPSAC congresses in 1991, 1995 and 1999, we examine whether FEPSAC succeeded in overcoming borders for sports psychology as well.

2:00pm - 3:30pm

Playing to Perform: Applying Donald Winnicott's Psychoanalytic Concepts to Sport Psychology Practice

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 207 / Workshop 4: 1
Workshop
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Consulting/ counseling, Group dynamics, Psychotherapeutic approaches (e.g. psychodinamic, systemic)
Keywords: Winnicottian Approach, Group Processes, Applied Sport Psychology, Experiential Learning

Playing to Perform: Applying Donald Winnicott's Psychoanalytic Concepts to Sport Psychology Practice

Asaf Blatt[2], Royi Yablochnik[3], Lael Gershgoren[1]
[1]College of Management Academic studies, Israel; [2]Ono Academic Studies, Israel; [3]Reichman University

Donald Winnicott made a profound and lasting contribution to psychology by reframing human development, creativity, and emotional health through concepts such as the true and false self, play, and the facilitating environment (Winnicott, 1965, 1971). Despite the clear relevance of these ideas to performance contexts, no systematic or documented integration of Winnicott's theoretical framework into sport psychology has been established to date; if such applications exist, they remain largely undocumented in the literature.

This applied, experiential workshop introduces key Winnicottian concepts and explores their relevance for contemporary sport psychology practice. Following a brief conceptual overview, participants will actively engage in practical exercises translating theory into applied interventions. These include simulated sessions integrating true and false self dynamics in youth and adult teams, applying the concept of the "good-enough mother" to work with parents and coaches, and fostering creativity and playfulness in individual work with athletes as a pathway to adaptive performance functioning.

The workshop emphasizes experiential learning: participants will take part in role-plays, small-group exercises, and guided reflections, allowing them to personally experience Winnicott's conceptualizations rather than only discuss them cognitively. Practical tools and structured activities demonstrated during the session will be directly transferable to applied settings, including youth academies, elite teams, and private practice.

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to conceptualize athletes and teams through a Winnicottian lens, design developmentally sensitive interventions, and intentionally integrate play, creativity, and authenticity into performance psychology work.

2:00pm - 3:30pm **Psychological and Affective Processes of Physical Effort**
Location: **A01**

ID: 193 / Symposium 2: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Exercise psychology
Keywords: physical effort, affect, pleasure, psychology

Psychological and Affective Processes of Physical Effort

İrem Tuğçe Öz[1], Abel Nogueira Lopez[2], Maik Bieleke[3], Damien Brevers[1]
[1]Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium; [2]University of Burgos, Spain; [3]University of Konstanz, Germany

A growing body of research shows that perceived physical effort influences affective responses to exercise. Yet effort perception is not a simple readout of physiological load. It varies across situations, individuals, and contexts, and these variations can have meaningful downstream consequences for pleasure, pain, and remembered experience. Clarifying when and why RPE diverges, which situational and affective factors bias it, and how such biases influence affective experience is essential for a more comprehensive understanding of effort. This symposium brings together recent work on psychological and affective processes underlying physical effort. Across populations and contexts (healthy individuals, athletes, and clinical samples), speakers will examine when effort is perceived differently, how discrepancies in effort perception emerge, and how these discrepancies shape in-the-moment affect and retrospective evaluations of exercise. İrem Tuğçe Öz will share on the influence of the running route familiarity on the prediction error of perceived exertion (PEexert), and PEexert's role on affect. Abel Nogueira Lopez will discuss the link between prolonged physical exertion, pain, enjoyment, and remembered pleasure in ultra-distance runners via Ecological Momentary Assessment. Maik Bieleke will provide insights on the discrepancy between subjective intensity of effort via RPE and force production via perceived maximal voluntary contraction, representing a non-linear pattern. Damien Brevers will present on the evolution of PEexert-pleasure association via adapted physical activity in alcohol use patients.

2:00pm - 3:30pm **Oral Presentations 2: Elite sports and expertise**
Location: **A02**
Session Chair: **David Mann**

ID: 327 / Oral Presentations 2: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: Skill training, complexity, representativeness, development

A Data-Driven Assessment of the PoST Framework for Training Classification in Team Sport

Sarah Green[1], David Broadbent[1], Aden Kittel[1], Ben Teune[2], Lyndell Bruce[1]
[1]School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Centre for Sport Research within Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia; [2]Women's Tennis Association, St Petersburg, Florida, United States

This project examined the application of the Periodisation of Skill Training framework (PoST) (Otte et al., 2019) in Australian Rules Football team training, and compared two data-driven approaches for objectively assessing skill training. The information complexity and game-representativeness of 198 training drills were classified by six coaches in line with the PoST framework and quantified separately by the research team using eight variables describing the training environment and athlete behaviour. Differences in information complexity across coach-assigned classifications were examined using one-way ANOVAs. In addition, k-means and Gaussian Mixture Model (GMM) clustering techniques were used to objectively cluster drills based on their information complexity and assess alignment with PoST stages. A scree plot was used to validate the k-means model, and BIC for the GMM model. Inconsistencies were observed in coach-assigned classifications, with limited differentiation of training intentions and similar levels of game-representativeness observed across classifications, opposing PoST's emphasis on this being a key differentiator. Both clustering methods revealed three distinct training types, consistent with PoST's 'Complex Training', 'Team-based Training' and 'Performance Training' stages. However, the GMM's probabilistic overlap better represented drills transitioning between stages. Neither method identified drills corresponding with PoST's Coordination stage, highlighting a potential discrepancy between the framework's definition and the coaches' intent. Considering both training complexity and representativeness may help coaches better align drills with game demands and intended outcomes. A modified framework tailored to team-level skill development may facilitate this, while objective classification methods could support and inform training design and evaluation.

ID: 128 / Oral Presentations 2: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: Psychological Flexibility, Olympics, Coaching, Behaviour

Coaching under pressure in Australian high-performance sport: A qualitative study of coach mental performance

Richard Fryer[1], Cliff Mallett[1], James Kirby[1], Todd Kashdan[2]
[1]University of Queensland, Australia; [2]George Mason University, USA

Pressure in sport comes from a range of perceived factors including uncontrollability, motivation to succeed, and social evaluation (Baumeister, 1984; Dickerson & Kemeny, 2004; Hufton et al., 2024). Psychological flexibility is a concept that has been suggested to help performers navigate challenging situations (such as competition pressure) and maintain effective goal-pursuit (Doorley et al., 2020; Hayes et al., 2006; Malo et al., 2024). This study investigated sport coaches' experiences during elite-level competitions to deepen the understanding of coach performance under pressure (Fletcher & Arnold, 2021; Gould et al., 2002). Ten Australian sport coaches (5 men, 5 women) with an average 22.3 years of experience at Olympic Games, Paralympic Games and World Championships across eight sports (athletics [2], cycling, diving, field hockey [2], netball, rowing, swimming, and water polo) participated in semi-structured interviews. Through a process of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), two main themes were generated: (1) coach mental preparation to perform (which included self care, meticulous planning and the importance of a coaching team), and (2) coach mental performance in action (which included emotion flexibility, attention, and flexible behaviour). These themes underscored the significance of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural factors in coaching performance at the highest level and emphasised the benefits of articulating specific observable coaching behaviours for coach development. The findings are discussed, along with recommendations for more research centred around direct observation of coaching in action.

ID: 374 / **Oral Presentations 2: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Emotion
Keywords: Psychology of practice, Coping, Self-Regulated Learning

Mapping the Landscape of Emotions, Appraisals, and Psychological Experiences of Athletes When Navigating Challenges in Practice

Royden Radowits, Bradley W. Young
University of Ottawa, Canada

Self-Regulated Sport Practice (SRSP) studies how an athlete's awareness and control over thoughts, motivations, actions, and emotions contribute to optimal practice (Young et al., 2024). Although SRSP researchers theorize that emotions catalyze psychological processes throughout practice (Young et al., 2025), research has not delineated and categorized which distinct emotions are involved in the regulation of practice activities. We explored athletes' emotions relating to poignant practice moments and how they described these emotions in relation to SRSP processes. Seventeen Canadian collegiate track and field athletes (Mage = 20.3 yrs; 4 men; 11 women; 1 non-binary) participated in event-focused interviews about emotionally expressive practice moments. Based on retrospective interviews and reflexive thematic analysis (idiographic focus), we catalogued their emotions in relation to challenges across three practice phases: anticipatory emotions, emotional appraisals during practice, and outcome-related emotions. Anticipatory emotions were appraised with respect to perceived (un)certainty of success, creating nervousness, hopefulness, or excitement towards forthcoming activities. During practice, athletes who felt they were meeting self-expectations reported pride, mundanity, and resolve, along with functional psychophysiological states; perceptions of not meeting self-expectations created worry, fear, pressure, and dispiritedness, accompanied by dysfunctional psychophysiological states. Post-practice, outcome-related appraisals aroused frustration, disappointment, sadness, regret, nervousness, or happiness and excitement. In relation to SRSP literature, we discuss the value of identifying distinct emotions for athletes as they cycle through temporal phases of practice. Extending appraisal-based theories (e.g., Lazarus, 2000), findings highlight self-expectations as central appraisal referents embedded within the regulation of metacognitive and motivational processes during sport practice.

2:00pm - 3:30pm

Oral Presentations 1: Health, Youth

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Markus Gerber**

ID: 160 / **Oral Presentations 1: 1**
Oral presentations
Topics: Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: mental health, youth sport, guidelines, psychological safety

Consensus-Based Mental Health Guidelines for U.S. Youth Sport: A Multi-Phase Mixed-Methods Study

Meredith Whitley[1,2], William Massey[3], Nazli Özkoca[4], Jim Arnold[4]
[1]College of Health Sciences, Adelphi University, United States of America; [2]Centre for Sport Leadership, Stellenbosch University, South Africa; [3]Hallie E. Ford Center for Healthy Children and Families, College of Health, Oregon State University; [4]College of Health, Oregon State University

Amidst a U.S. youth mental health epidemic (CDC, 2023), organized sport remains one of the most robust social institutions for youth. While often romanticized as a panacea for resilience, the U.S. youth sport system frequently prioritizes economic viability and elite performance over psychological safety (Bowers et al., 2011; Whitley et al., 2021). To address this critical policy gap (Atkinson et al., 2025), this study developed the first consensus-based Mental Health Guidelines for Youth Sport across the U.S. Utilizing a constructivist paradigm (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and guided by an integrated systems view of youth sport (Dorsch et al., 2020), researchers employed a multi-phase mixed-methods design including a Cochrane-guided rapid review to evaluate the impact of U.S. youth sport participation and interventions on mental health, 14 focus groups with youth sport stakeholders (n = 64), a Delphi study with mental health and youth sport experts, an in-person consensus workshop to finalize the first draft of the guidelines, and follow-up focus groups with more youth sport stakeholders regarding the proposed guidelines.

Results yielded seven final guidelines prioritizing safeguarding, adult education, and mental health literacy. By shifting the burden of mental health support from individual volunteers to the organization, these standards provide a necessary framework for state associations and municipal departments to draft protective legislation. These guidelines also offer an administrative audit tool for youth sport leaders. By establishing these minimum standards, the study concludes that "doing no harm" must become the fundamental requirement for youth sport participation.

ID: 614 / **Oral Presentations 1: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: machine learning, sport burnout, sport engagement, random forests

How Can Artificial Intelligence Advance What We Know About Sport Psychology? Insights From a Longitudinal Study of Young Athletes

Milla Saarinen[1,4], Daniel J. Phipps[2], Henrik Gustafsson[3,4], Christian Thue Bjørndal[4]
[1]University of Stavanger, Norway; [2]University of Jyvaskyla, Finland; [3]Karlstad University, Sweden; [4]Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Norway

In this longitudinal study, we examined how machine-learning approaches can contribute to sport psychology research on injury development in adolescent student-athletes (aged 13–14 years). A total of 207 student-athletes (54% boys, 46% girls) from seven Norwegian lower secondary sport schools completed weekly questionnaires on sport-related injuries, training exposure, sports burnout, and sport engagement across Grades 8–10, resulting in 2,131 person-weeks of data. Using a random forest algorithm, we modeled the dynamic and interacting contributions of psychological and training-related factors to subsequent injury risk over time. Previous injury history emerged as the strongest predictor of future injuries, alongside cumulative training load and changes in training volume. In addition, the model identified meaningful psychological risk patterns: high sport engagement was associated with increased reinjury risk following return to sport, and symptoms of sport-related cynicism amplified injury risk when combined with concurrent fluctuations in training load.

Our findings highlight that injury development in youth sport reflects time-dependent interactions between psychological states and training dynamics. Machine-learning approaches may be particularly useful in longitudinal research, where risk factors accumulate, fluctuate, and interact in nonlinear ways.

Overall, this study demonstrates how emerging machine-learning techniques—still not widely adopted in sport psychology—can expand how complex, multivariate longitudinal datasets are analyzed. By capturing nonlinear relationships and higher-order interactions, these approaches have the potential to significantly advance current methodological traditions and deepen our understanding of how psychological and contextual factors jointly influence athlete health and performance over time.

ID: 256 / **Oral Presentations 1: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Health, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: mental health, football

Implementing a Mental Health Monitoring System in a Youth Elite Football Academy

Jules Calvet, Clément Le Coz
PSG, France

Mental health monitoring is increasingly recognized as a key component of athlete development. This communication describes the development and ongoing implementation of a structured mental health monitoring system designed to support the detection and prevention of psychological distress among youth football players. The primary objectives were to enhance continuous monitoring of mental health, facilitate early identification of psychological symptoms, and provide a practical tool suitable for routine use in a training center context. The monitoring framework is grounded in Keyes' dual-continua model of mental health (Keyes, 2002), integrating both psychological well-being and psychological distress. The system is based on the adaptation of two validated instruments: the Warwick–Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (Tennant et al., 2007) and the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (Kessler et al., 2003). Collected data are displayed using a color-coded visualization, reflecting increasing levels of mental health risk based on Keyes' model. Initial classifications are based on literature-informed thresholds and are progressively recalibrated over time using each player's individual mean scores, allowing a personalized longitudinal interpretation. The questionnaire is administered biweekly, with randomized items' presentation to reduce responses' bias. This work focuses on the operational design and field implementation of the monitoring system within a youth elite football academy. As data collection is currently ongoing, future analyses will evaluate the system's effectiveness in detecting and preventing psychological distress. When a player is identified with a low score, a qualitative follow-up is immediately initiated by the mental team, including psychological interviews and tailored process.

ID: 515 / **Oral Presentations 1: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: anabolic steroids, body image, social pressure, risk behaviors.

Psychological and Social Determinants of Anabolic Steroid Use Among Adolescent Girls and Young Women

Faten Hamdi
University of Jendouba, Tunisia

The use of anabolic-androgenic steroids (AAS) is no longer confined to elite athletes and has increasingly spread among adolescents and young women outside competitive sport contexts (Sagoe et al., 2023). This study aimed to examine the psychological and social determinants of AAS use and intention to use in this population, focusing on body image, self-esteem, social pressure, and exposure to aesthetic norms promoted by social media. A mixed psychometric and empirical approach was employed. First, the content validity of the Questionnaire on Anabolic Steroid Use (Alharbi et al., 2018) was evaluated by a panel of nine experts in psychology, sociology, and sport sciences, yielding satisfactory to high indices (S-CVI/Ave = 0.87) and resulting in a refined 21-item instrument. Second, an empirical study was conducted with 420 physically active females (212 adolescents aged 16–19 and 208 young women aged 20–24) recruited from sports clubs, schools, and universities. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, correlation analyses, and hierarchical multiple regression. The results supported a stable four-factor structure explaining 67.2% of the total variance and demonstrated strong internal consistency (α > .79). Social pressure and aesthetic motivation emerged as the strongest predictors of intention to use AAS, while erroneous beliefs regarding their safety increased vulnerability. Educational level showed no significant protective effect. Overall, the findings highlight the interaction between psychological vulnerabilities and social influences, underscoring the need for targeted prevention strategies and educational interventions.

2:00pm - 3:30pm Working with the Body in Performance: A Practical Introduction to Working with the Nervous-System and Somatic Performance Styles

Location: **A10**

ID: 100 / Workshop 1: 1
Workshop
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Psychophysiology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: nervous-system regulation, interoception, trauma-informed practice

Working with the Body in Performance: A Practical Introduction to Working with the Nervous-System and Somatic Performance Styles

Aura Goldman
Independent Researcher and Practitioner Psychologist, Belgium

This applied and experiential workshop introduces practitioners to the role of the autonomic nervous system in performance and well-being, with three aims: to enhance understanding of physiological regulation in high-performance contexts, to develop participants' interoceptive awareness and ability to work with the "felt sense," and to apply a trauma-informed lens to recognise patterns of stress and recovery in athletes. The workshop integrates accessible concepts from contemporary neuroscience (e.g., Payne et al., 2015) and the process of developing the felt sense to enhance nervous-system literacy through direct experience. Participants will engage in a guided experiential exercise to explore interoception and regulation, followed by small-group case formulations based on Goldman's (2025) typology of five somatic performance styles: hyper-activated, over-regulated, disconnected, flow-seeking, and chaotic. Through collaborative discussion, participants will identify indicators of dysregulation, explore practitioner challenges, and co-create practical strategies to support athletes' capacity for adaptive performance under pressure. Interactive teaching methods will include brief psychoeducation, experiential exercises, reflective dialogue, and small-group problem-solving. Participants will receive summary materials outlining key models and reflective prompts for continued application in their own practice, supporting sustainable well-being and resilience in performance environments.

2:00pm - 3:30pm ‘Climbing Psychology’: The Multidimensional Nature of Psychological Functioning in Sport Climbing

Location: **A11**

ID: 446 / Symposium 3: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Health, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Measurement, Mental Health, Low energy availability, Psychophysiological resilience

‘Climbing Psychology’: The Multidimensional Nature of Psychological Functioning in Sport Climbing

Andrei Ion[1], Maria Stefania Ionel[2,1], Dragos Iliescu[1], Laura Visu-Petra[2], Zsófia Nemeti Fehér[1,2], Katherine Wheatley[3,4], Oliver Runswick[3], Emma Godfrey[3], Valentina Tomaselli[5], Irene Leo[5]
[1]Assessment and Individual Differences - AID Lab, Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Bucharest, Romania; [2]Sport and Exercise Psychology (SEP) group, RIDDLE Lab, Department of Psychology, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania; [3]King's College London; [4]South London & Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust; [5]Department of Developmental Psychology and Socialisation, University of Padova
Discussant: **Maria Stefania Ionel** (2, 1)

Rock-climbing places unique psychological and physiological demands on athletes, combining high cognitive load, emotional exposure, and strong cultural pressures related to performance and body composition. Despite the sport’s rapid growth and Olympic inclusion, climbing-specific research on mental health, emotional processes, and resilience remains limited. This symposium brings together four complementary studies examining anxiety, stress, identity,

well-being, and psychophysiological regulation in climbers across different performance levels. First, we present the preliminary development and validation of the Climbing Anxiety Scale (CAS-20), a sport-specific measure designed to capture anxiety experiences unique to climbing contexts. Building on this foundation, the second study explores how perfectionism and intolerance of uncertainty relate to mental health and performance in professional international climbers using a cross-sectional approach. The third contribution shifts focus toward wellbeing and culture, examining eating disorder risk and low energy availability among UK climbers, with particular attention to athletic identity processes and lived experiences shaping vulnerability. Finally, the symposium concludes with an investigation of psychophysiological resilience, examining associations between trait emotional intelligence and heart rate variability responses (Thayer & Lane, 2001) to cognitive stress in climbers compared with athletes from other sports. Together, these studies highlight the multidimensional nature of psychological functioning in climbing, demonstrating how measurement, emotional processes, identity, and autonomic regulation interact to influence both performance and mental health (Madigan et al., 2022; Stoyel et al., 2020). Collectively, the four presentations show how these domains jointly shape performance and mental health, offering integrated, evidence-based directions for assessment, prevention, and intervention in climbing.

2:00pm - 3:30pm

Oral Presentations 3: Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Cultural sport psychology

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Nicky Bosman**

ID: 204 / Oral Presentations 3: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Health, Physical activity, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Cognitive function, Forced migration, Physical activity, Well-being

Moving in Limbo: Evaluating a Co-Designed Exercise and Sport Intervention in a Greek Refugee Camp on Biopsychosocial Outcomes

Florian Knappe[1], Konstantinia Filippou[2], Antonis Hatzigeorgiadis[2], Ioannis D. Morres[2], Markus Gerber[1]
[1]University of Basel, Switzerland; [2]University of Thessaly, Greece

Forced displacement affected more than 123 million people by the end of 2024, and is associated with substantial physical and mental health burdens across the migration trajectory, often intensified by stressors in camp settings (UNHCR, 2025). Although exercise and sport are promising health strategies, implementation in camps is challenging, and context-specific effects remain underexplored (Rosenbaum et al., 2025). This study implemented and evaluated a co-designed exercise and sport intervention in a camp in Greece. In a pragmatic randomized controlled trial with two parallel arms (1:1), 142 displaced individuals (53% women) living in the camp were allocated to a 10-week intervention or a waitlist control group. Outcomes were assessed at baseline and follow-up and included cardiorespiratory fitness, cardiovascular risk markers, pain severity, and cognitive function. Effects were examined using structural equation modeling. Observations and focus groups complemented quantitative findings, with qualitative data analyzed via inductive, reflexive thematic analysis. Compared with controls, the intervention group showed a significant improvement in cardiorespiratory fitness (ß =.17, p=.010). There was no evidence for a direct group effect on metabolic syndrome components (p≥.192), pain, or cognitive function (p≥.332). However, increased fitness was associated with faster reaction times on cognitive tasks (ß=-.22, p=.004), indicating an indirect pathway from the intervention to reaction time via improved cardiorespiratory fitness. Qualitative findings suggested that participation created psychosocial benefits and strengthened coping resources. Camp residents experienced pronounced physical and psychological distress. A co-designed exercise and sport program provided temporary relief from monotony and social isolation, while supporting coping and physical health.

ID: 176 / Oral Presentations 3: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Special needs, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Participatory evaluation, Sport for development, Psychosocial wellbeing, Dialogical methodology

Participatory Evaluation of a Community Sport Program for Psychosocial Inclusion: A Methodological Framework From YouSport

Alessia Ferraboli, Anna Greiner, Chiara D'Angelo
Department of Psychology, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart (Italy)

Sport-for-development community programs are widely implemented and recognized as powerful contexts for promoting psychosocial development and social inclusion across vulnerable populations (Hermens et al., 2017). However, rigorous context-sensitive evaluation approaches prioritizing process understanding and local meaning-making remain scarce (Whitley, 2018). Drawing on participatory research principles (Vaughn & Jacquez, 2020), this study describes a dialogical process-oriented evaluation framework developed within YouSport program, a community-based sport-for-development association in Milan (Italy) working with vulnerable populations, including migrants, at-risk youth, and children with neurodevelopmental and cognitive disabilities. Conceptualizing monitoring and evaluation as relational and co-constructed processes that emphasize stakeholder engagement and shared meaning-making (Greene, 2001), a structured governance process was established to support the collaborative definition of objectives, tools, practices, and evaluative criteria. A mixed-method, multi-informant design was implemented across four projects during the 2024-2025 season, involving 81 participants, including 48 adult beneficiaries, 12 projects staff members, 14 tutors and volunteers, 5 parents, and 2 school-based professionals. Data were collected longitudinally through semi-structured interviews (n=46), focus groups (n=3), systematic

observations of training sessions (32h) and staff meetings (12h), alongside project-specific participants assessment and self-assessment tools. Data were triangulated to connect subjective experiences, professional interpretations, organizational coherence, evolving community representations, and behavioral changes. Beyond generating outcome evidence, the evaluation functioned as a reflexive device fostering organizational learning and enhancing the social dimensions of program delivery. A framework for sport-based psychosocial programs in complex community contexts is offered, demonstrating how participatory evaluation can produce actionable and context-grounded knowledge while maintaining scientific rigor and ethical accountability.

ID: 454 / **Oral Presentations 3: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Social cognition, Social psychology
Keywords: social influence, social facilitation, social support

Naturalistic Verbal and Non-Verbal Encouragement in Athletic Performance Assessments: A Mixed-Methods Study

Edda van Meurs[1], Maggie Nieto[2], Bernd Strauss[1], Sebastian Harenberg[2]
[1]University of Münster, Germany; [2]St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, NS, Canada

Athletes can appraise spectators' support (e.g., cheering, verbal encouragement) as a social resource in demanding situations (e.g., mobilising motivation, self-efficacy; Strauss et al., 2023). While some evidence suggests a performance-enhancing effect of verbal encouragement, others report no impact. The mixed findings may be attributable to the use of laboratory approaches with standardised encouragement that fail to replicate real-world conditions (e.g., spectators' interpersonal, dynamic interactions with the athlete). To operationalise authentic, externally valid, experimental spectator conditions, empirical evidence is needed to document naturally occurring verbal encouragement (VE) and non-verbal encouragement (NVE). Therefore, the present mixed-method study explores the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of VE and NVE in an authentic pre-season endurance test. Based on the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), we assume that spectators encourage more as the task becomes more demanding. Thirty-nine Canadian ice hockey athletes (49% female, M=20.97 years old, SD=1.91) were filmed during a 20-metre shuttle run. The athletes were divided into pairs: while one ran, the other encouraged them. VE and NVE were coded, transcribed, and the content explored using deductive-inductive thematic analysis. The quantitative analysis revealed that VE and NVE increased over time (OR=34.26, p<.001, ICC=16%). In the qualitative analysis, most statements were classified deductively as informational ('Two more rounds') or appraisal ('You're doing great') support. Goal orientation emerged inductively. Differences between men and women emerged in both the quantitative and qualitative analyses. The results can be used as a framework for naturalistic encouragement and its implementation in future operationalisations.

ID: 438 / **Oral Presentations 3: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology
Keywords: Euro-Western, mental preparation plans, psyching verses, Two-Eyed Seeing Model

Religio-Spiritual Experiences and Mental Preparation Plans in Sport Psychology Practice

John Elvis Hagan[1,2], Medina Srem-Sai[3], Thomas Schack[2]
[1]University of Cape Coast, Ghana; [2]University of Education, Winneba- Ghana; [3]Bielefeld University, Germany

The connection between religion, spirituality, and sport has gain popularity in modern day cultural sport psychology framework, especially based on individual identities in the sporting field. The religio-spiritual linkage to human experience dates back to antiquity. Yet, how to draw the potential scientific linkage between indigenous orientations and sport from research and consulting perspectives remain underexplored (Hagan et al., 2025; Hagan et al., 2019). This presentation highlights how indigenous sport psychology knowledge is premised on several principles such as ''concept of self'' driven by scientific descriptions and specific field observations ''the Haka dance''. We provide justification on why forging alliances between scientific Euro-Western and indigenous knowledge from the lens of the ''Two-Eyed Seeing Model'' will be key for advancing sport psychology practice in indigenous societies (e.g., Africa, Asian, Oceania, South America) (Gurgis & Callary, 2025). The main aspect of our presentation focuses on how sport psychology knowledge and applied practice could tap into some unique religio-spiritual practices (e.g., prayer, psyching verses, meditation, mindfulness routines) by incorporating them as part of formalised mental preparation plans (Hagan et al., 2025; Ikulayo, 2003, 2007; Ikulayo & Semidara, 2011). Further, suggestions are made regarding possible research integration using different designs to empirically test the functions, effectiveness and utility of these localised indigenous practices for performance optimisation and well-being in sports.

ID: 146 / **Oral Presentations 3: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity)
Keywords: positive psychology, psychological strengths, scale adaptation

Are Sport-Specific Psychological Strengths Culturally Relational? Evidence from the Turkish Adaptation of the SSPSQ

Yekta Sahin[1,2], Velittin Balci[1]

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Positive psychology interventions in sport rely heavily on measurement tools developed within Western cultural frameworks, often assuming that psychological strengths operate as universal and modular constructs. However, cross-cultural research suggests that psychological constructs may be structured and experienced differently across cultural contexts (van de Vijver & Leung, 2021). The present study aimed to adapt the Sport-Specific Psychological Strengths Questionnaire (SSPSQ; Beaumont, 2021) into Turkish and examine its factor structure within a cultural context commonly described as more relational. The sample consisted of 454 active athletes (mean age 23.16) from various sport disciplines. Following standardized translation and cultural adaptation procedures, the scale was administered online. Construct validity was examined using exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, alongside reliability analyses. Results did not support the original seven-factor structure of the SSPSQ. Instead, a culturally distinct five-factor model demonstrated excellent and theoretically interpretable model fit. A key cultural finding was the integration of passion and coachability items into a single relational dimension labeled Commitment Passion Coach Interaction. In addition, personal responsibility and competitiveness merged into broader factors. These structural changes indicate that psychological strengths in the Turkish sport context appear to be organized in more relational patterns rather than as strictly independent attributes, with passion closely embedded within the coach athlete relationship. The adapted 21-item Turkish version of the SSPSQ demonstrated satisfactory reliability (alpha = .85). Beyond scale adaptation, these findings challenge assumptions of cultural universality in sport psychology measurement (Henrich et al., 2010) and highlight the importance of considering cultural reconstruction rather than relying on direct translation alone.

2:00pm - 3:30pm

Oral Presentations 4: Violence

Location: **A13**

Session Chair: **Ohad Nahum**

ID: 652 / Oral Presentations 4: 1

Oral presentations

Topics: Violence

Keywords: sexual harassment, sports stakeholders, masculine culture

"Maybe This Must Be Endured If One Wants to Do Sports": Experiences of Sexual Harassment Among Sports Stakeholders

Aku Nikander

University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct, which violates a person's physical or emotional integrity and is sexual in nature. It is estimated that 26% of people in Finland have experienced sexual harassment in sport, and these experiences have been linked to stress, loneliness and quitting sports. This study examined the experiences of sexual harassment among sports stakeholders in winter endurance sports, team sports, and strength sports. The participants were three sports actors (e.g., former elite athletes, national coach, expert in elite sport), two of whom were female (one of whom was a para-athlete). Collaboratively constructed life-story interviews were conducted and analysed using narrative thematic analysis. The results indicated that harassment was normalised by treating it as humour or a way of cheering. Being in a minority position, being female and being young were perceived as exposing factors for harassment. Enduring and accepting the harassment were means to cope and continue in sports, although it meant being left alone. Competition for status between men and the 'way of being in sports' were interpreted as reasons for harassment. The ambiguity of intervening in harassment, and the sense of helplessness emphasized perceptions of actions that contribute to the prevention of harassment. Based on our research findings, sexual harassment in the sports world is perceived to stem from a masculine culture and organizational practices. This knowledge can be used to direct resources for tackling harassment by ensuring that ethical response and safe sport is ensured at all levels.

ID: 384 / Oral Presentations 4: 2

Oral presentations

Topics: Ethics in applied settings, Violence, Well-being and quality of life

Keywords: complaint process, interpersonal violence, safeguarding

Experiences of Complaint Processes for Violence in Sport: Preliminary Findings from a Qualitative Study in Québec, Canada

Stephanie Radziszewski[1], Camille Rheault[1], Sylvie Parent[1], Corentin Montiel[2], Ashley Stirling[3], Joseph Gurgis[4], Allyson Gillard[1]

[1]Université Laval, Canada; [2]Université du Québec à Montréal; [3]University of Toronto; [4]Ontario Tech University

Across sport systems worldwide, formal complaint mechanisms have been introduced to address interpersonal violence, yet limited research has examined how these processes are experienced by those involved. Since 2020, Quebec sport federations are required to provide access to an independent complaint mechanism for interpersonal violence. This study explored experiences of complaint processes for violence within this context. A qualitative design was employed, drawing on semi-structured interviews with 31 individuals who either filed complaints (n = 17), were the subject of complaints (n = 7), or were representatives of sport organizations connected to a complaint (n = 7). Participants occupied diverse roles, including athletes, parents, coaches, officials, and managers, and were involved

in a range of sports. Interviews captured experiences with complaint mechanisms operating at local, provincial, and national levels. Data were analysed following Braun and Clarke's six-step thematic analysis (2006; 2019). Preliminary findings suggest that complaint processes are psychologically demanding and unevenly understood. Participants described emotional distress associated with how procedures unfolded. Confidentiality emerged as a central and ambivalent issue, at times perceived as protective and at other times as a source of distress. When media was involved, participants described their cases as a source of tension and harm, with few perceived possibilities for regulation or sanction. Following decisions, several participants reported limited support and ongoing personal or professional consequences. These preliminary findings underscore the psychological and tensions between positive and negatives aspects of complaint processes for violence and invite closer attention to how such mechanisms are designed and implemented in sport.

ID: 407 / **Oral Presentations 4: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Violence, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Youth athletes, mental health, harassment and abuse, network analysis

Associations Between Interpersonal Violence and Mental Health: A Network Analysis

Felien Laureys[1], Martine Hébert[2], Sylvie Parent[1]
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Although participation in organized sports offers benefits for youth physical and mental health, sport environments may also expose athletes to unique stressors, including interpersonal violence (IV). Evidence indicates that IV in sport is widespread and associated with psychosocial difficulties. However, most existing research has focused on isolated associations between single forms of IV and individual psychosocial indicators, potentially overlooking their interconnected nature. The present study applied a network analytic approach in a sample of 5046 sport participants (14–19years; M=15.34±1.05) who reported to have experienced at least one type of IV. Central outcomes and bridge pathways were examined, by modeling associations between multiple forms of IV (psychological and neglect, physical, sexual, and instrumental) perpetrated by athletes and by authority figures and co-occurring psychosocial difficulties, including anxiety, depression, substance use, disordered eating, and interpersonal difficulties. Results revealed strong within-domain associations among IV types, with the strongest link observed between sexual violence perpetrated by peers and by authority figures. Within psychosocial difficulties, depression and anxiety showed the strongest association. Cross-domain connections were characterized by prominent links involving interpersonal difficulties and psychological violence by peers. Anxiety and disordered eating emerged as central nodes within the network, suggesting their potential role as key pathways linking IV exposure to broader psychological impairment. This study underscores the utility of network approaches for advancing understanding of IV-related psychosocial difficulties in sport and suggests that interpersonal difficulties, anxiety, and disordered eating may represent important targets for prevention, screening, and intervention efforts in youth sport contexts.

ID: 175 / **Oral Presentations 4: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Violence
Keywords: Violence, normalization, athletic identity

The Relationship Between Athletic Identity and Beliefs That Normalize Interpersonal Violence in Sport

Aave Hannus[1], Silver Mäoma[1], Margareth Olde[2]
[1]University of Tartu, Estonia; [2]University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Interpersonal violence in sports is widespread and often socially accepted. Athletic identity has been proposed as a psychological factor that may increase athletes' vulnerability to accepting these norms (Muhonen et al., 2024). This study investigated the extent to which athletic identity is related to beliefs that normalize interpersonal violence, comparing competitive athletes with recreational exercisers. A sample of 223 Estonian adults (117 recreational exercisers, 99 athletes) completed an online survey. All participants completed a custom Beliefs Normalising Violence in Sport Questionnaire (Olde, 2026), whereas only athletes completed the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (Brewer, 1993) and exercisers completed the Exercise Identity Scale (Anderson & Cychosz, 1994). Results if independent samples t-test showed that athletes, compared to exercisers, held significantly stronger beliefs that violent coaching methods have positive outcomes for sport paricipants (Cohen's d = 0.26), and perceived greater social approval for such methods (d = 0.34). Crucially, among athletes, a stronger athletic identity was positively correlated with beliefs in the utility of violent coaching methods ($r = .33$, $p < .001$), whereas exercise identity was not significantly related to the perceived utility of violent methods. Regression analysis confirmed that athletic identity accounted for 10% of variance in the beliefs in the utility of violent coaching methods ($p < .001$) in athletes. These findings suggest that a strong, exclusive athletic identity may be a risk factor in the normalization of interpersonal violence in sport. Safeguarding interventions should therefore address not only environmental factors but also athletes' identity-related beliefs to foster a safer sport culture.

ID: 387 / **Oral Presentations 4: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Violence
Keywords: trauma-informed, violence, complaint process

Conducting Trauma-Informed Research on Violence in Sport: Methodological Reflections From a Qualitative Study

Camille Rheault[1], Stephanie Radziszewski[1], Corentin Montiel[2], Allyson Gillard[1], Joseph Gurgis[3], Ashley Stirling[4], Sylvie Parent[1]
[1]Université Laval - Chaire de Recherche Sécurité et Intégrité en milieu sportif (SIMS), Canada; [2]Université du Québec à Montréal; [3]Ontario Tech University; [4]University of Toronto

Research on interpersonal violence in sport involves participants recounting experiences of harm, distress, and vulnerability. In this context, trauma-informed approaches aimed at minimizing the risk of re-traumatization in research and prioritizing participants' emotional safety, autonomy, and control are increasingly recommended. However, little attention has been given to how such approaches can be operationalized throughout the research process. This oral communication presents an applied example of how a trauma-informed approach was integrated across a qualitative study examining violence complaint processes in the Quebec sport system.The presentation draws on a broader qualitative study involving 32 semi-structured interviews with individuals who filed complaints, individuals who were the subject of complaints, and sport organization representatives. A trauma-informed perspective influenced decisions across the project, from study design to post-interview practices. This included designing the interview guide to limit questions about experiences of violence to focus on the complaint process and providing flexibility in data collection when additional space was needed. During this oral presentation, the project coordinator will describe how these practices shaped the conduct of the study and required close collaboration within the research team and ongoing attention to researcher posture. This included maintaining contact with participants through the transcript review process, which allowed them to adjust their contributions while also creating opportunities to check in and offer support when needed. By sharing this experience, the communication aims to highlight how a trauma-informed approach can meaningfully influence research decisions at multiple stages and contribute to methodological reflection in sport psychology research involving sensitive topics.

2:00pm - 3:30pm

From Role Strain to Resilience: Evidence-Based Strategies for Managing Coach Burnout

Location: **048**

ID: 547 / **Workshop 3: 1**
Workshop
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Organizational development and quality management, Professional development and mentoring, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: coach burnout, applied workshop

From Role Strain to Resilience: Evidence-Based Strategies for Managing Coach Burnout

Ioana Georgiana Dragomir
CRSSE (Romanian Center for Studies in Sports and Education), Romania

Burnout among sports coaches represents a growing concern across competitive sports environments, with role ambiguity and diminished perceived control identified as critical organizational risk factors. This 90-minute applied workshop integrates research findings with evidence-based practice to equip coaches and sport psychologists with actionable strategies for burnout prevention. The workshop comprises two interactive components. Part one presents preliminary findings from an ongoing study examining role inequity and burnout among Romanian sports coaches (N~300). Structural equation modeling analyses reveal that perceived control mediates the relationship between role ambiguity and burnout dimensions, suggesting that organizational interventions targeting role clarity and autonomy support may effectively reduce coach exhaustion and depersonalization. These findings align with job demands-resources theory and extend current understanding of organizational mechanisms underlying coach well-being. Part two engages participants in practical skill-building activities designed to promote role clarity and boundary management. Through guided worksheets and facilitated peer discussions, participants will: (1) conduct structured role clarification exercises identifying key stakeholders and expectations, (2) develop communication strategies for negotiating role boundaries with club management and athletes, and (3) create personalized action plans for implementing organizational changes within their coaching contexts. Interactive case studies will allow participants to practice applying these tools to common coaching scenarios involving conflicting demands and unclear expectations. Workshop materials, including role clarification templates and communication frameworks, will be provided digitally to all participants for immediate implementation in their professional practice. This evidence-based approach bridges research and application, empowering coaches to advocate for healthier organizational conditions while developing personal resilience strategies.

2:00pm - 3:30pm

Sport and Non-sport Performance in Young People: A New Framework to Overcome Trauma and Develop a Resilient Mindset

Location: **130**

ID: 514 / **Workshop 2: 1**
Workshop
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Psychotherapeutic approaches (e.g. psychodinamic, systemic), Youth
Keywords: trauma, resilence, youth

Sport and Non-sport Performance in Young People: A New Framework to Overcome Trauma and Develop a Resilient Mindset

Alessia Bruno
Performance Expansion, Italy

Children are not miniature adults. Children perform on a day-to-day basis and are expected to achieve results in the athletic, creative and academic field. When children perform at the highest levels they are faced with expectations, challenges and demands which can increase the risk of burnout and mental health problems. Children and yound people need to be faced with age appropriate challenges (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2019; Krabak & Brooks, 2023). Many youths experience physical and emotional traumas in relation to their performance. Traumatic experiences are stored in the nervous system, the subcortex, in a fragmented form (Shapiro, 2001). Children needs adults to help them to make sense of their traumas, and especially when young, narratives or creative tools are used to process negative feelings and enhance their creative, athletic and academic performance. Brainspotting and EMDR are revolutionary therapeutic approaches which access the subcortex to process trauma (Corrigan & Grand, 2013; Shapiro, 2018, D'Antoni et al., 2022; de Jongh et al., 2024) and move performers into a heightened flow state (Grand, 2013). More recently the author has developed a framework of working with young and adult performers using EMDR and BSP methods. Participants will have the opportunity to improve their understanding when working with this population. Attendees will collaboratively discuss videos of applied work learning about EMDR and Brainspotting protocols in performance. Participants will practice EMDR and Brainspotting stabilisation and visualisation techniques; learn about creative tools used in trauma work with young performers, which could be applied after attending this workshop.

3:30pm - 5:00pm

Oral Presentations 7: Well-being and quality of life

Location: **Aula Magna**
Session Chair: **Maria Chasandra**

ID: 110 / **Oral Presentations 7: 1**
Oral presentations
Topics: Esports, Health, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: esport, mental health, physical activity, sleep

Health and Well-Being in Esports: A Cross-Cultural Survey Study

Oliver Leis[1], Alexandra Ziegeldorf[1], Lara Wunsch[1], Nina Hottenrott[1], Michael G. Trotter[2], Benjamin T. Sharpe[3], Tobias Scholz[4,5], Matthew Watson[6], Marcelo Moriconi[7], Vassilis Barkoukis[8,9]

[1]Leipzig University, Germany; [2]Halmstad University, Sweden; [3]University of Chichester, UK; [4]University of Agder, Norway; [5]Esports Research Network; [6]Belgium Esports Federation; [7]Instituto Universitário de Lisboa; Portugal; [8]KEA Fair Play, Greece; [9]Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

The growth of esports and the demands of competitive gaming highlight the need to understand players' health and lifestyle behaviors. Research remains limited, particularly regarding cross-cultural and competitive differences (e.g., Rudolf et al., 2020; Trotter et al., 2020). This study explored health status and behaviors among 413 esports players (M = 24.0 years, SD = 7.3) from 38 countries across Europe, North America, and South America. Participants varied in gender, competitive level, and game titles, with approximately eight years of experience and 16 hours of weekly play. Players completed an online survey assessing BMI, smoking, drinking, physical activity, mental and general health, sleep, and social support. Weekly playtime differences were examined using t tests with bootstrapping and Mann–Whitney U tests. Cross-country comparisons used Welch's ANOVA with Games–Howell post hoc tests for countries with N > 30: United States (n = 41), Germany (n = 89), Greece (n = 91), Portugal (n = 90), and an "Others" group (n = 102). Health indicators showed a mixed profile. BMI resembled general young adults, most players did not smoke and were low-risk drinkers, and >40% met physical activity recommendations. Half reported minimal depressive symptoms and most described good sleep. However, a minority of participants reported poorer well-being. Perceived social support was moderately high, and greater playtime was not associated with poorer health. Findings highlight the importance of considering individual and contextual factors (e.g., gender, competitive level, cultural background) to support player well-being. Cross-country differences, practical implications, and future research directions will be discussed at the conference.

ID: 396 / **Oral Presentations 7: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Any other topic
Keywords: Superior performance, IZOF, Momentum, Flow

Hierarchical Model of Superior Performance (HMSP): Bringing Order to the Domains of IZOF, Momentum, and Flow

Elia Morgulev[1,2], Gershon Tenenbaum[3,4], Sigal Ben-Zaken[1]

[1]Kaye College of Education, Israel; [2]Levinsky-Wingate Academic Center; [3]Reichman University; [4]Ariel University

Individual Zone of Optimal Functioning (IZOF), momentum, and flow are all concerned with high-level functioning. Each was developed independently and, over the course of four decades, became widely applied across different domains. As these concepts were extended, redefined, and borrowed, extrapolations were often made well beyond their original formulations. The expanded IZOF model, as an example, attempts to capture more than a dozen emotions, whereas in some cases the study of the momentum experience reached well into attentional and emotional areas traditionally associated with flow. The existing breaks and overlaps in the literature, where both theoretical and empirical studies address these concepts in a fragmented manner without an overarching framework, is pressing

and calls for a solution. Hence, we have chosen to consider the canonical definitions of each construct along side their central phenomenological traits. This allowed us to develop a hierarchical model of progression and ascension in which IZOF provides the essential arousal and emotional foundation for superior performance (i.e., foundation layer). Building on this optimal state, competitive accomplishments lead to momentum, generating a further psychophysiological boost accompanied by a feeling of dominance, aggressiveness, and determination (i.e., activation layer). This unique combination of emotion, arousal, and success forms the optimal conditions for a flow state to emerge – a sublime peak performance experience of total absorption, characterized by diminished self-reflection, hyper-focus, and enjoyment.

ID: 574 / **Oral Presentations 7: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Self, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: social physique anxiety, intuitive eating, self-compassion

The Mediating Role of Self-Compassion Between Intuitive Eating and Social Physique Anxiety in Adult Athletes

Ayşe Yaren Kurden[1], **Hülya Aşçı**[2]
[1]Marmara University, Turkey (Türkiye); [2]Fenerbahçe University, Turkey (Türkiye)

Based on sociocultural perspectives, internalizing societal body ideals increases social physique anxiety (SPA), particularly among evaluated athletes. SPA involves concerns about negative body evaluation and correlates with maladaptive eating. In contrast, intuitive eating (IE), responding to physiological cues, is an adaptive, health-promoting behavior. Self-compassion (SC), a kind and non-judgmental attitude toward oneself, is negatively associated with SPA and positively with IE. This study aims to examine the mediating role of SC in the relationship between SPA and IE. Participants included 123 adult athletes (Mage=20.28, SD=2.59; 52 male, 69 female) from various sports. Data were collected using the Social Physique Anxiety Scale, Intuitive Eating Scale-2 (Eating for Physical Rather Than Emotional Reasons, Unconditional Permission to Eat, Reliance on Hunger and Satiety Cues, Body-Food Choice Congruence) and Self-Compassion Scale-Athlete Version. After confirming reliability and normality, mediation was analyzed via PROCESS Macro Model 4 (5,000 bootstrap samples, 95% CI). Mediation analysis revealed that SPA had a significant negative effect on SC (a=-.38, p <.01) and SC positively influenced IE (b=.41, p<.001). A significant indirect effect of SPA on IE through SC was found (Effect =-.155, 95%CI [-.391, -.014]). Furthermore, the direct effect of SPA on IE remained significant (c'=-.37, p<.05), indicating a partial mediation model. The findings indicate that SPA impairs IE both directly and indirectly through reduced SC. SC serves as a key protective mechanism for adaptive eating behaviors against physique anxiety. These results highlight the importance of self-compassion-based interventions in promoting healthy eating patterns among athletes.

ID: 637 / **Oral Presentations 7: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Social psychology
Keywords: Emotion, Social Cognition

Nonverbal Behavior and Emotions in the Context of Sports

Philip Furley
German Sport University Cologne, Germany

Humans have evolved to be well-equipped for communicating important internal states like emotions nonverbally. Somewhat surprisingly, research on body language (nonverbal behavior) in sport is only slowly emerging, although it is considered important and has been frequently studied in other disciplines. We argue that the ubiquity of (intense) emotional expressions and the wide-ranging documentation and coverage of sports events provides an ideal context for studying naturally occurring emotional expressions and their influence on interpersonal outcomes. In this presentation, we attempt to present results of our ongoing DFG-funded research to address the debate on the universality of NVB in a naturalistic sport context. We aim to address the unresolved question of specific nonverbal behaviors (NVB) associated with winning and losing, an area marked by conflicting findings, through the application of manual and automated Facial Action Coding System (FACS). These techniques systematically analyze the unique encoding of facial expressions in athletes using a predefined coding framework to categorize facial muscle movements. In addition, we analyze how naturalistic emotional expressions in sports are decoded by a diverse range of observers. With this approach, we aim to investigate the reasons behind potential convergence and divergence in encoding and decoding of NVB, considering the influence of contextual and personal variables. Recommendations for future research will be made on how researchers can exploit the fact that NVB often informs observers about what is going on inside a person and thereby gain insights on the reciprocal relationships between contextual factors, the athlete, and performance in sports.

ID: 318 / **Oral Presentations 7: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Health, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: athlete burnout, competitive anxiety, well-being, person-centered analysis

Psychological Profiles in Adolescent Athletes: A Person-Centered Analysis of Burnout, Anxiety, Well-Being, and Demographics

Beate Evelina Dislere[1], Jelena Kolesnikova[1], Dace Reihmane[2]

[1]Rīga Stradiņš University, Department of Health Psychology and Paedagogy, Latvia; [2]Rīga Stradiņš University, Department of Human Physiology and Biochemistry, Latvia

Grounded in contemporary models of athlete burnout and adolescent mental health (Gustafsson et al., 2017; Madigan et al., 2021), this study identified psychological profiles based on burnout, competitive anxiety, and well-being. Previous research has relied on variable-centered approaches, obscuring subgroups and limiting understanding of how constructs co-occur. Person-centered profiling in adolescent athletes remains limited (DeFreese et al., 2020); therefore, a person-centered approach was adopted. The sample included 450 athletes (M_age = 15.8, SD = 1.9; 38% female), primarily from team sports (59.8%), assessed at the start of the season. Clustering variables included components of burnout, competitive anxiety (including self-confidence), and well-being. K-means cluster analysis with consensus-based validation (NbClust; Charrad et al., 2014) was applied. Three distinct profiles emerged. Profile 1 (20.4%) was characterized by elevated burnout and anxiety alongside low well-being. Profile 2 (30.0%) was characterized by the highest well-being and self-confidence and the lowest burnout and anxiety. Profile 3 (49.6%) was characterized by intermediate levels across all variables. Females were overrepresented in Profile 1, whereas males were more prevalent in Profiles 2 and 3. No overall association was observed for sport type; however, individual sport athletes were overrepresented in Profile 1. Age did not differ, whereas participation duration differed, with longer experience associated with Profiles 1 and 2. Three psychological profiles were identified based on burnout, competitive anxiety, and well-being. Profiles differed by gender and, to a lesser extent, sport type, but not age. These findings highlight the value of person-centered approaches for identifying subgroups and informing tailored monitoring.

3:30pm - 5:00pm THE MISSING LINK? Breathing, Attention, and ADHD-Relevant Cognitive Mechanisms

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 437 / Workshop 5: 1

Workshop

Topics: Decision making and judgement, Health, Perception & attention, Well-being and quality of life

Keywords: breathing, attention regulation, executive functioning, cognitive control

THE MISSING LINK? Breathing, Attention, and ADHD-Relevant Cognitive Mechanisms

Gergő Gacs[1], Zsuzsanna Szilárd[2], Erika Kolumbán[2], Renáta Cserjési[1], Soma Zsebi[1]

[1]Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary; [2]Semmelweis University, Hungary

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is characterized by persistent difficulties in attention regulation, executive functioning, and self-regulation, which are highly relevant in everyday functioning and even sport performance contexts (Cortese et al., 2025). Mind–body interventions, including yoga and mindfulness-based approaches, have demonstrated beneficial effects on ADHD-related symptoms. However, the specific contribution of breathing as an isolated intervention has not yet been systematically examined in ADHD populations. (Kim & Jung, 2025; Peng et al., 2024). A preliminary systematic search for randomized controlled trials examining breathing-based interventions in adults with ADHD revealed a striking absence of eligible studies. This gap prompted a revised focus toward foundational research investigating how voluntary modulation of the breath influences attention and executive functions in healthy adult populations. Emerging evidence consistently demonstrates that breathing interventions, utilizing changes in breathing frequency, inspiration–expiration ratio, and nostril-regulated breathing are associated with changes in attentional performance (Telles et al., 2023; Aacharya et al., 2024; Gandharva et al., 2025). These findings suggest that breathing may represent a previously underexplored mechanism linking autonomic regulation and cognitive control processes central to ADHD symptomatology, potentially via vagal and autonomic pathways (Laborde et al., 2022; Robe et al., 2019). The translation of these findings to ADHD-relevant cognitive mechanisms remains largely conceptual. Drawing on an ongoing mixed-methods synthesis, this workshop explores breathing as a potential “missing link” between autonomic regulation and cognitive functioning. The workshop is interactive, allowing participants to practice evidence-based breathing techniques and learn strategies to support attention and self-regulation.

3:30pm - 5:00pm Oral Presentations 5: Social psychology, Cultural sport psychology

Location: **A01**

Session Chair: **Alessandro Quartiroli**

ID: 511 / Oral Presentations 5: 1

Oral presentations

Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Mental skills training, Personality, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)

Keywords: Courage, mental toughness, anxiety, sports performance

Validating the Hungarian Sport Courage Scale and Examining Its Relationship With Mental Toughness and Anxiety

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[1]Department of Physical Education Theory and Methodology, Hungarian University of Sports Science; [2]Department of Sport and Health Sciences, Faculty of Sports and Health Sciences, Sport Psychology, Technical University of Munich; [3]İstanbul Gelişim University

The study primarily focused on the psychometric validation of the Hungarian Sport Courage Scale (SCS). By adapting and validating the SCS into Hungarian, we addressed the need for precise tools in sports science. Through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and discriminant validity assessment via Fornell-Larcker criteria, we clarified the

conceptual distinctions between courage, mental toughness, and anxiety. Using a relational screening model, the research further explored the links between these constructs (courage, mental toughness and anxiety) and demographic factors among a convenience sample of 200–300 sport science university students. Data collection was conducted using a Personal Information Form, the SCS (Konter & Johan, 2012), the Sports Mental Toughness Questionnaire (SMTQ; Sheard et al., 2009), and the Sport Anxiety Scale-2 (SAS-2; Kovács, 2024). The results demonstrated that mental toughness serves as a significant positive predictor of sport courage. As hypothesized, students with higher mental toughness exhibited greater bravery and task involvement while displaying lower levels of sport-related anxiety. Furthermore, the analysis revealed how demographic factors moderate these profiles. Ultimately, this research aimed to establish a comprehensive psychometric profile of sport-experienced individuals, uncovering the core psychological traits that characterize the athletic performance.

ID: 629 / **Oral Presentations 5: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Group dynamics, Motivation, Personality, Social psychology
Keywords: Social Facilitation, Social Loafing, Audience Familiarity, Motor Performance

Individual and Team Performance Under Familiar and Unfamiliar Observation: A Mixed-Design Test of Social Facilitation and Loafing

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[1]Bursa Uludag University, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Psychology of Elite Performance Laboratory, Türkiye; [2]Yalova University, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Türkiye

This study examined the effects of audience familiarity (familiar vs. unfamiliar) and performance context (individual vs. team) on motor performance within the frameworks of social facilitation and social loafing, while also exploring potential gender differences across social conditions. Sixty university students (M_age = 21.20; 30 males, 30 females) completed a timed cup-stacking task (3–6–3 formation) designed to assess hand–eye coordination. A mixed experimental design was employed in which audience type (familiar vs. unfamiliar) was manipulated within participants, and performance context (individual vs. team) allowed for both within- and between-participant comparisons. Participants performed under four conditions: individual–familiar audience, individual–unfamiliar audience, team–familiar audience, and team–unfamiliar audience. The results revealed significant main effects for audience type, performance context, and gender. Performance was higher in the unfamiliar audience condition across contexts, higher in males than females across all conditions, and higher in individual compared to team settings. These findings are consistent with social facilitation effects under unfamiliar observation and suggest reduced effort in team contexts, in line with social loafing. Overall, the results highlight the influence of social environmental factors on motor performance, while acknowledging the limited generalisability of findings due to the controlled laboratory nature of the task.

ID: 263 / **Oral Presentations 5: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Social psychology, Talent identification/development, Youth
Keywords: Conversation Analysis, Sport Parenting, Communication, Verbal behaviour.

Labels and Self-Fulfilling Prophecies in Youth Sport: A Curious Case of Choking Under Pressure

Sam Thrower[1], Magnus Hamann[2], Elizabeth Stokoe[3], Chris Harwood[4]
[1]Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, United Kingdom; [2]University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom; [3]London School of Economics and Political Science, London, United Kingdom; [4]Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, United Kingdom

To date, studies examining choking under pressure typically examine the cognitive processes (i.e., antecedents, mechanisms, and consequences; Mesagno & Beckmann, 2017) and overlook the social interactions which can contribute to self-presentation concerns and lead to choking. The purpose of the current study, therefore, was to examine the naturally occurring interactions between a 50-year-old mother and her 14-year old son before and after a choking episode. Drawing upon audio and visual recordings during car journeys, over 2 hours of parent-child interactions were analysed using a single-case conversation analysis approach. Selected extracts were transcribed using the Jefferson (2004) system for capturing the production, pace, and organisation of social interaction. Conversation analysis revealed how the child resisted and disengaged when the mother's pre-competition interactional projects (i.e., exploring the child's previous choking experiences and causes of his elevated anxiety) did not align with his own. In addition, the mothers' interactional project, and use of the choking 'label', created an unintended self-fulfilling prophecy (i.e., choking again during the competition) leading to both short (e.g., reduced self-confidence) and long-term consequences (e.g., readjusted future goals). The current study illustrates how a chronic choker's self-presentation concerns are shaped and influenced by the social interactions which occur within a wider ecological system. From an applied perspective, these findings highlight the need for coach and parent education programmes to move beyond vague theoretically informed guidance (e.g., emphasise personal progress, improvement, and effort) and address the diverse topics and complex nuances that determine interaction effectiveness.

ID: 120 / Oral Presentations 5: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Elite sports and expertise, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Social psychology
Keywords: Parenting, Russia, Tennis

Winning at All Costs: Russian Female Tennis Players' Experiences of Parental Influence: An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

Kseniia Kotiusheva[1], Lea-Cathrin Dohme[2], David Woods[1], Lee-Ann Sharp[1]
[1]Ulster University, United Kingdom; [2]Cardiff Metropolitan University

Parenting plays a critical role in shaping athletes' development, enjoyment, and success in sport (Harwood & Knight, 2016). In tennis, where parental involvement is particularly influential, existing research and guidelines remain predominantly grounded in Western contexts, such as the UK and North America. Broadening this work to include diverse cultural settings is essential to ensure that athletes everywhere receive appropriate support. Given Russia's history of producing high-performing tennis players, this study explores Russian female professional tennis players' perceptions of parental influence throughout their careers within the Developmental Model of Sport Participation (DMSP; Côté, 1999) and the Process-Person-Context-Time (PPCT) model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). This qualitative study employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith, 2022), combining in-depth case and cross-case analysis. Data were collected via 16 in-depth, semi-structured interviews ranging from 86 to 244 minutes (M = 130.8, SD = 37.1) with eight active and retired Russian female professional tennis players (M ranking = 168.7; M professional years = 11.3). Preliminary findings reveal that players perceived parental behaviour as overbearing, characterised by a results-oriented approach and harsh feedback, including silent treatment, verbal and physical abuse. These behaviours persisted from junior years through professional careers. These practices may originate from a Russian socio-cultural context shaped by Soviet-era sport traditions, collectivist values, and respect for authority. In contrast to Western sport contexts, these findings highlight a uniquely Russian form of parental influence that shaped athletes' development, careers and post-retirement lives. Culturally sensitive interventions are needed to balance traditional norms of obedience with athletes' autonomy.

ID: 455 / Oral Presentations 5: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Social psychology, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19)
Keywords: social influence, social facilitation, home disadvantage, multiverse analysis

Checkmate at Home - Testing Explanations for Home Advantage in a Cognitive Sport

Leon Brüggemann, Edda van Meurs, Bernd Strauss
University of Münster, Germany

Commonly studied causes of home advantage (HA) in sports are travel fatigue, biased referees, and spectators. However, findings on these factors are mixed: for example, HA is lower in the absence of spectators, but does not disappear completely (e.g., Wunderlich et al., 2021). This has important implications for theoretical models: if HA exists without these factors, other approaches are needed to explain it. One sport in which these factors are naturally absent is chess. In Germany, tournaments are usually played without spectators and with one team hosting rounds for all other teams. Hence, there are fewer home games and instead matchups between visiting teams. Zak (2023) already found no HA in >100,000 Israeli chess games, but did so by assuming the home team played white. The present study replicates Zak (2023) in professional German chess to examine whether HA can exist without spectators, travel, and referee decisions. N=12,924 games (season 2019-2024) were analysed using a specification curve analysis (Simonsohn et al., 2020). Specifications described the model form, variables, covariates, and data. We modelled the game result with home status, colour, the players' ELO ratings, and demographic (gender, experience) and systemic (league, season) covariates. On average, the home team wins M=30.50% games (M=41.69% draws), indicating no significant HA, p=.577, d=0.11 [0.06; 0.15]. The median effect from k=288 specifications was practically irrelevant, d=0.002 [-0.03; 0.05] and never significant. The present analysis thus concludes that in a sport with little travel, silently observing spectators, and refereeing decisions, we do not observe HA.

3:30pm - 5:00pm

Rethinking and Refuting the Performance and Well-Being Relationship in Elite Sport

Location: **A02**

ID: 310 / Symposium 5: 1
Symposium 75 minutes
Topics: Best practice, Elite sports and expertise, Human factors, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Performance, Well-Being, Flourishing, Meaning

Rethinking and Refuting the Performance and Well-Being Relationship in Elite Sport

Richard Alastair Cameron Simpson[1], Ellie Gennings[2], Aura Goldman[3], Kate Walsh[4], Violetta Oblinger-Peters[5]
[1]Leeds Trinity University, United Kingdom; [2]Bournemouth University, United Kingdom; [3]Independent Practitioner, Belgium; [4]Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom; [5]University of Bern, Switzerland

Debates pertaining to the prioritization of, and connections between, performance and well-being have been long-standing in elite sport. In recent decades, efforts have been made to conceptually reconsider and fuse performance

and well-being (e.g., flourishing and thriving; Brown et al., 2017; Simpson et al., 2026). Sufficient progress beyond this, however, requires a broader consideration of the positioning and intentions underpinning this complex relationship. Through global perspectives offered across a range of academics and practitioners, this symposium presents contemporary thoughts, research, and refutations on the performance and well-being dyad in elite sport. Simpson and Gennings start with a conceptual commentary and case study on performance and well-being in elite sport. Specifically, they highlight three conceptual typologies and case reflections from working in elite youth sport. Goldman presents a philosophical account of performance-well-being paradoxes that problematizes a focus on thin legible goods (e.g., outputs, rankings) over thick, lived goods (flourishing, integrity). Next, Walsh examines why the performance-well-being debate looks different for female athletes, drawing on a critical and practice-informed lens to reflect on experiences as an applied practitioner and researcher. Finally, Oblinger-Peters discusses recent empirical findings on meaning in elite sport to examine how meaning can illuminate the dynamic relationship between performance and well-being. Altogether, these four presentations offer thought-provoking insights, recommendations for future research, and implications for practitioners operating in elite sport environments. Delegates are invited to consider how they can rethink and conceptually (re)position performance and well-being within their own research and applied work.

3:30pm - 5:00pm

Individual Differences in Sport Psychology

Location: **A03**

ID: 700 / Symposium 4: 1
Symposium 75 minutes
Topics: Personality
Keywords: individual differences, mental health, imagery, sport activity

Individual Differences in Sport Psychology

Dagmara Budnik-Przybylska[1], Dominika Wilczyńska[2], Aymeric Guillot[3], Leo Lundy[4]
[1]University of Gdańsk, Poland; [2]University WSB Merito, Poland; [3]Université Lyon 1; [4]Trinity College Dublin

This symposium foregrounds individual differences as a unifying framework for understanding psychological health, cognitive adaptation, and performance processes across diverse populations. Integrating evidence from ageing endurance athletes, prenatal exercise interventions, motor imagery research, and personality-based models of mental toughness, the symposium presents the role of individual differences in sport psychology. Evidence from global multi-marathoners reveals marked psychological heterogeneity within a population often idealised as uniformly resilient. Although average depression and anxiety levels remain below clinical thresholds, a meaningful minority experience significant distress, with gender- and age-related patterns and distinct psychological subgroups, including individuals with co-occurring high anxiety and severe depression. Extending this perspective to pregnancy, a randomized controlled trial of supervised prenatal HIIT shows that both high-intensity training and educational interventions enhance executive functioning, but with distinct cognitive profiles. Personality traits and psychological states—particularly depression and fear of childbirth—significantly predict cognitive performance, highlighting dispositional and emotional moderators of cognitive adaptation. Research on motor imagery chronometry in swimmers further demonstrates that temporal congruence between imagined and real movement is shaped by both context and temperament, with traits such as briskness, endurance, perseveration, and emotional reactivity systematically predicting imagery timing and performance. Finally, research in young athletes demonstrates that mental toughness is shaped through experience, mental training including imagery-based techniques. Mental skills and affirmation-based imagery mediate the development of mental toughness, highlighting the role of psychological interventions in building long-term performance capacity. The symposium advances the evidence- based person-centered models in psychology, that recognize diversity and adaptation across the lifespan.

3:30pm - 5:00pm

Welfare Officers at the Olympic Games: Same Badge, Yet Diverse Pathways and Realities

Location: **A10**

ID: 569 / Workshop 7: 1
Workshop
Topics: Best practice, Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: applied practice, welfare officer, Olympic games

Welfare Officers at the Olympic Games: Same Badge, Yet Diverse Pathways and Realities

Michala Bednáriková[1,2], Snežana Stoljarova[3,4], Alina Gherghisan[5], Frank Muller[6,7,8], Kristel Kiens[3,4]
[1]private practice, Slovakia; [2]Slovak Association of Sport Psychology; [3]Tallinn University; [4]private practice, Estonia; [5]Romanian Olympic and Sports Committee; [6]Sportlycée Luxembourg; [7]Luxembourg Institute for High Performance in Sports; [8]Luxembourg Olympic and Sporting Committee

This workshop examines how sport psychology services, delivered under Welfare Officer accreditation, are provided at the Olympic Games through markedly different pathways of inclusion and contextual conditions. Although practitioners may hold the same accreditation, their opportunities for action, influence, and support of athletes and entourage can vary substantially depending on timing of inclusion, pre-existing relationships with athletes and coaches, and the level of integration within the National Olympic Committee (NOC).

During the workshop the participants will explore how these contextual factors shape applied practice, what internal and external challenges they create, and strategies for effective engagement in high-performance, time-limited environments. It will feature five applied sport psychology practitioners with Welfare Officer accreditation from recent Olympic Games, sharing contrasting experiential accounts. Entry circumstances range from long-term involvement within the NOC and established rapport with athletes and coaches to last-minute inclusion in the Olympic delegation,

with first athlete contact occurring in the Olympic Village. Differences emerge in access to athletes, the capacity to engage in preventative versus reactive work, and the perceived legitimacy of the Welfare Officer role.

The workshop aims to share the experiences of practitioners serving as Welfare Officers at the Olympic Games, helping participants who may take on this role in the future learn from applied practice. Learning will be facilitated through two participatory formats: a fishbowl discussion exploring entry circumstances, challenges, ethical considerations, and in-situ decision making, followed by small-group work focused on identifying preventative, reactive, and self-coping strategies for demanding Olympic environments.

3:30pm - 5:00pm

Train Hard, Recover Smart: Empirical Evidence on Athletes' Recovery

Location: **A11**

ID: 505 / Symposium 6: 1
Symposium 75 minutes
Topics: Emotion, Health, Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.), Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: recovery strategies, injuries, sleep, emotions

Train Hard, Recover Smart: Empirical Evidence on Athletes' Recovery

Pia Zajonz[1], Patricia Frytz[2], Tabea Werner[3], Gianluca Di Pinto[4]
[1]Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany; [2]Paris-Lodron-University Salzburg, Centre for Cognitive Neuroscience, Austria; [3]Central Institute of Mental Health, Department of Neuropsychology and Psychological Resilience Research, Mannheim, Germany; [4]Department of Medicine and Aging Sciences, University of Chieti-Pescara "G. d'Annunzio", Chieti (CH), Italy

Competitive athletes frequently experience psychological and physiological stressors (e.g., performance pressure, training loads; Mellalieu et al., 2009). Sufficient recovery after such stressors is crucial to ensure well-being and performance at short- and long-term (Kellmann et al., 2018). To support athletes' recovery process, it is important to better understand the relation between stress and recovery status and athletes' health, as well as additionally determining factors which may impair sufficient recovery, and providing empirical evaluated recovery strategies (Loch et al., 2021). Therefore, in the first presentation of this symposium, Werner presents a longitudinal investigation deepening the understanding of the effect of athletes' stress-recovery status on mental and physical health over time. Second, Frytz focuses on risk factors for impaired sleep recovery. Specifically, she shows that training load predicts higher objective sleep deficit and that psychological and physiological stressors impact subjective sleep quality. In the following two presentations, this symposium targets specific strategies to optimize recovery. Di Pinto examines how pre-sleep relaxation techniques influence affect and next day endurance performance. Especially, Yoga Nidra reduced arousal and increased performance. Finally, Zajonz presents the potential of positive emotions for recovery and subsequent performance in a taekwondo competition. In a single-subject design, she shows that three athletes who listened to music between two fights displayed higher positive emotion, higher perceived recovery, and lower cortisol levels than a control athlete. In conclusion, this symposium highlights the importance and empirical evaluated directions to improve recovery management and hence well-being and performance in athletes.

3:30pm - 5:00pm

Oral Presentations 8: Physical activity, Emotion

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Amanda Rebar**

ID: 115 / Oral Presentations 8: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Motivation, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Social anxiety, body esteem, dance, university students

A Qualitative Study of University Students' Perspectives on Using Dance to Address Social Anxiety and Body Esteem

Min Du, Jennie Hancox, Oliver Hooper, Rachel Sandford
Loughborough University, United Kingdom

Rising rates of social anxiety (SA) and body esteem (BE) concerns among university students highlight the need for innovative interventions that resonate with lived experiences. This study addresses limited qualitative evidence within this population by exploring how dance (a creative and embodied practice) may support SA and BE. Twenty students (aged 18–36; 17 female) with varying levels of self-reported (non-clinical) SA, BE, and prior dance experience participated in semi-structured interviews. Data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis and interpreted through Self-Determination Theory and Achievement Goal Theory. Three themes were developed: (1) cultivating a supportive, inclusive, and psychologically safe dance community, (2) perceived emotional and bodily empowerment through dance, and (3) barriers and facilitators to engagement in dance-based interventions. Findings highlight that dance participation may reduce SA and enhance BE through the satisfaction of basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness), fostered by autonomy-supportive and task-involving environments. Conversely, controlling and ego-involving environments may frustrate these needs and exacerbate SA and body-related concerns. Participants without prior dance experience reported unique barriers to engagement, suggesting the need for tailored strategies to support participation and maximise benefits of dance-based interventions. This study advances understanding of psychological mechanisms through which dance participation may influence SA and BE, and offers practical guidance for designing student-centred, psychologically informed dance interventions in higher education – where the need for innovative mental health support is more pressing than ever. The presentation will highlight these findings and their actionable implications for university wellbeing practitioners and mental health intervention designers.

ID: 269 / **Oral Presentations 8: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Motivation, Physical activity, Social psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: stress, motivation, model, mindfulness

Exercising Under Stress: Latent Profiles of Training Adaptation and Pathways From Mindfulness to Exercise Motivation

Maria Krymtsova, Björn Pannicke, Günter Amesberger, Thomas Finkenzeller, Sabine Würth
Salzburg University, Austria

Chronic stress is known to have detrimental consequences for both physical and mental health. Physical activity is one of the available-for-all stress-buffering strategies (Sharon-David & Tenenbaum, 2017). Still, knowledge remains limited on exercise behavior adaptation to stress and its underlying mechanisms. Based on the MoVo process model (Fuchs, 2007), we hypothesized that its “post-action” components (related to exercise per se) could be expanded to include subjective energy and stress. We further incorporated mindfulness as a prominent stress-protective factor (Duggan et al., 2024). Building on this, we conducted an online survey among active adults (N = 251) and examined a pathway from mindfulness to exercise motivation facets via stress and energy. Mindfulness was associated with lower stress ($\beta = .48$, $p < .001$). Stress, in turn, was related to subjective energy (vitality/fatigue; $\beta = -.67$, $p < .001$), which was marginally related to motivation, which in turn predicted goal intentions ($\beta = .33$, $p = .002$). This model differed across high- versus low-stress groups. Additionally, we explored behavioral adaptations in training under stress. Latent profile analysis revealed three training-to-stress adaptation profiles: individuals who increased training (n = 34), those who decreased (n = 40), and those who maintained routines (n = 177). “Decreasers” were less active than “Increasers” and “Maintainers” ($p = .001$); “Maintainers” had higher mindfulness ($p = .028$) and lower stress ($p = .031$) than “Increasers”, and higher motivation than “Decreasers” ($p = .046$). Overall, mindfulness appears to reduce stress, supporting energy and motivation, while adaptive training habits help sustain exercise under stress, highlighting targets for intervention and further research.

ID: 142 / **Oral Presentations 8: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Social psychology
Keywords: social media, physical activity, body image similarity

Observing Physical Activity Posts on Social Media: Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior with Body Image Similarity among Adults

Kyoungjin Yang
Seoul National University, Korea, Republic of (South Korea)

This study examined how exposure to physical activity (PA) posts on social media influences PA intention and behavior among Korean adults. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen et al., 2007), we tested whether experiential and instrumental attitudes, injunctive and descriptive norms, and perceived behavioral control (PBC) mediated the association between observing PA-related posts and PA frequency, and whether perceived body image similarity (BIS) moderated these pathways. Participants were 339 Korean adult social media users who completed measures of exposure to PA posts, TPB cognitive variables, PA intention, PA frequency, and BIS. Path and multiple-group analysis were conducted using Mplus 7.0. Results showed that exposure to PA posts was positively associated with PA intention both directly and indirectly through experiential attitudes and PBC, whereas a negative indirect effect emerged through descriptive norms. PA intention and PBC, in turn, positively predicted PA frequency. Multiple-group analysis revealed that structural pathways differed by BIS. Specifically, the pathway from PBC to PA frequency was stronger among individuals perceiving high BIS with figures depicted in PA posts, whereas the pathway from injunctive norm to intention was stronger among those perceiving low similarity. These findings indicate that social media PA content influences behavior through distinct cognitive mechanisms and that perceived relevance of body image plays a critical moderating role. From a practitioner perspective, the results suggest that individuals may benefit from interpreting PA content in ways that enhance PBC and focus on relatable body representations, rather than relying heavily on normative comparison.

ID: 343 / **Oral Presentations 8: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Exercise psychology, Physical activity
Keywords: emotion regulation, aerobic physical activity, behavioral dimensions

Does More Aerobic Activity Mean Better Emotion Regulation? Examining Behavioral Dimensions of Physical Activity

Eliane Engels, Maike Mueller
MSH Medical School Hamburg, University of Applied Sciences And Medical University, Germany

Emotion regulation plays an important role in mental health and athletic functioning (Min et al., 2013). Aerobic physical activity, particularly moderate-to-vigorous activity (MVPA), has been proposed to influence emotional

processes via mechanisms related to affective regulation, executive control, and stress physiology (Giles et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2024). However, empirical findings on how aerobic activity relates to emotion regulation remain inconsistent. This study examined associations between multiple behavioral dimensions of aerobic physical activity (frequency, duration, and intensity categories) and difficulties in emotion regulation. A cross-sectional design was used with N = 120 participants (M = 28.87 years, range = 19–65; 54.2% female). Aerobic physical activity was assessed by the short version of the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ-SF; Craig et al., 2003). Emotion regulation difficulties were measured with the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS; Gutzweiler & In-Albon, 2018). Correlational and regression analyses were conducted to explore the relationships between activity parameters and emotion regulation outcomes. Our findings indicate that higher levels of MVPA are associated with fewer difficulties in emotion regulation, particularly in dimensions related to impulse control and acceptance of emotional responses. However, the strength of associations varied across behavioral parameters, with duration showing the most consistent relationship. The findings suggest that aerobic activity may serve as a resource for improving emotion regulation, though the impact appears to depend on specific patterns of activity engagement. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to clarify causal mechanisms and explore whether targeted exercise interventions can improve emotional functioning.

ID: 666 / **Oral Presentations 8: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Exercise psychology, Physical activity
Keywords: affect, physical activity, continuous time

Elucidating the Dynamic Interplay between Integral Affect and Affective Processing in the Context of Physical Activity Behaviour

Geralyn Ruissen
University of Alberta, Canada

Integral affect, or the affective experienced during a behaviour, and affect processing, the anticipated or remembered feelings about a behaviour, are theorized to be dynamically related to moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA; Williams et al., 2019). However, most studies use static snapshots rather than dynamic feedback in daily life. We aimed to test a triadic system linking affect processing, integral affect, and MVPA using continuous time modelling. Further, we examined moderation due to baseline activity status. A community sample of adults stratified on physical activity status (n = 49 active, n =44 low-active) completed a 14-day ambulatory assessment protocol. Affect processing was measured every morning. Additionally, participants wore an accelerometer (Move 4), which triggered integral affect measures every ten minutes when MVPA was detected. Data were analyzed using hierarchical Bayesian continuous-time structural equation modelling. Baseline activity status moderated the triadic system; influencing the (1) presence, (2) direction, (3) causal dominance, and (4) temporal specificity of the dynamics. Overall, regardless of activity status, integral affect emerged as the primary driver of the system. This was evidenced by relatively larger cross-effect sizes, compared to MVPA or affect processing, after controlling for all other dynamic parameters in the model. Integral affect appears to underpin daily MVPA dynamics and represents a promising target for affect-aware, just in time supports. Identifying the timing and direction of effects by person-specific factors such as physical activity history could guide when to prompt and which pathway to target.

3:30pm - 5:00pm Oral Presentations 6: Group dynamics, Leadership

Location: **A13**
Session Chair: **Louise Davis**

ID: 206 / **Oral Presentations 6: 1**
Oral presentations
Topics: Group dynamics, Leadership, Social psychology, Youth
Keywords: shared leadership, psychological safety, commitment

Shared Leadership and Commitment in Youth Team Sports: The Role of Psychological Safety

Gilyoung Jang
Seoul National University, Korea, Republic of (South Korea)

This study examined how shared leadership influences sport commitment and team commitment among youth team sport athletes, with psychological safety as a potential mediating mechanism. Drawing on shared leadership theory (Pearce & Sims, 2002) and the concept of psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999), we tested whether shared leadership predicted both commitment outcomes directly and indirectly through psychological safety perceptions. Participants were 300 adolescent athletes participating in soccer, rugby, field hockey, and basketball who completed measures of shared leadership, psychological safety, sport commitment, and team commitment. Structural equation modeling with bootstrapping procedures was conducted using AMOS 21.0. Results showed that shared leadership was positively associated with both sport and team commitment directly and indirectly through psychological safety. Psychological safety demonstrated significant indirect effects in both pathways, though the patterns differed between outcomes. The indirect effect through psychological safety was stronger for sport commitment compared to team commitment, whereas the direct effect of shared leadership was more pronounced for team commitment. The integrated model accounted for substantial variance in both commitment outcomes. These findings indicate that shared leadership fosters commitment through dual pathways—creating psychologically safe team climates (Bean et al., 2018) and directly strengthening team bonds. Psychological safety may be particularly critical for sustaining sport participation through enhanced enjoyment and reduced fear of mistakes, whereas leadership distribution more directly strengthens collective identity and team attachment. Results suggest coaches should distribute leadership

responsibilities among team members while cultivating psychologically safe environments where athletes feel comfortable taking interpersonal risks.

ID: 552 / Oral Presentations 6: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Leadership, Moral action
Keywords: authentic leadership, moral behaviour, sport performance, mental well-being

Authentic Leadership Predicts Athletes' Performance and Mental Well-being via Psychological Safety and Intra-team Moral Behaviour

Maria Kavussanu[1], Teodors Savko[1], Shuge Zhang[2], Philip Hurst[3]
[1]University of Birmingham, United Kingdom; [2]Zhejiang University, China; [3]Canterbury Christ Church University, United Kingdom

Authentic leadership (AL) is a genuine form of leadership characterised by leader self-awareness, relational transparency, ethical behaviour, and objective decision making. Athletes' perceptions of their coaches' AL have been positively linked to athletes' psychological safety and well-being as well as their perceptions of intra-team moral behaviour. However, the relationship between AL and performance is unknown. In this study, we examined: (a) whether coaches' AL (as measured by athletes' perceptions) predicts sport performance and mental well-being directly and indirectly via its effects on intra-team moral behaviour and athletes' psychological safety; and (b) whether any effects are moderated by athletes' sex. A total of 517 UK athletes (294 female; Mage = 21.34, SD = 5.37) from a variety of individual and team sports completed a multi-section questionnaire. Path analysis within the SEM framework showed that the model had an excellent fit to the data (Robust X2 = 4.49, df = 1, p = .03; CFI = .99, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .02). AL positively predicted both performance and mental well-being of athletes indirectly via increased prosocial teammate behaviour and psychological safety. Multi-group analysis showed that AL positively predicted performance and mental well-being via reduced antisocial teammate behaviour in females but not in males. Our findings suggest that by adopting an authentic leadership style, coaches could increase athletes' psychological safety and their teammates' prosocial behaviour with subsequent positive effects on their performance and mental well-being. The findings also suggest that female athletes are more vulnerable to the antisocial behaviour of their teammates compared to their male counterparts.

ID: 265 / Oral Presentations 6: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Group dynamics, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: interindividual synchronization, collaboration, group processes, performance

Work Together, Move Together—Cooperation and Rapport Promote Interpersonal Synchrony

Clara Scheer[1], Daniel L. Bowling[2], Niklas A. Hungerländer[3], Tecumseh Fitch[1], Lisa Horn[1]
[1]University of Vienna, Austria; [2]Stanford University; USA; [3]Austrian Institute of Technology, Austria

This study investigated whether cooperative interactions in a non-motor task enhance subsequent spontaneous interpersonal movement synchrony. In sport high levels of interpersonal movement coordination are most apparent in explicitly synchronized sports such as rowing or dance, where precise coordination between partners is essential (e.g., Brown, 2006). However, synchrony also facilitates group processes that are critical across a wide range of sports. While prior work links physiological synchrony to team performance (Tamminen et al., 2013), it remains unclear whether simple cooperative interactions promote later movement synchrony. Thirty-four dyads participated in a two-phase experiment (treatment and test phase): During the treatment phase dyads either worked on one jigsaw puzzle together (group together) or individually (group separate). During the test phase, which was the same for both groups, dyads jumped facing each other on two trampolines. Interpersonal movement synchrony was assessed via accelerometers and compared between the groups using a cross-correlation. Initial rapport and mood were measured as moderators and included in an LMM predicting synchrony. Previously cooperating dyads showed significantly greater movement synchrony than those working individually. This effect was moderated by initial rapport, indicating a key role of pre-existing social factors in synchrony. These findings indicate that prior cooperation enhances interpersonal movement synchrony, particularly when dyads share a higher level of initial rapport. From a sport psychological perspective, the results emphasize the importance of social context and relational factors in shaping coordinated movement behavior and overall team performance.

3:30pm - 5:00pm

Oral Presentations 9: Sports injury, Prevention and rehabilitation

Location: **048**
Session Chair: **Daniel Walker**

ID: 611 / Oral Presentations 9: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Health, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: pain management, elite sports, injury, sport practice

Pain Self-Management: Strategies Used by Elite Athletes and Their Short- and Long-Term Effects

Anne-Claire Macquet
French Institute of Sports, INSEP, France

Athletes frequently have to cope with pain. The IOC highlighted the need to improve pain management in elite athletes (Hainline et al., 2018). Regardless of the cause of pain, results showed that athletes have higher pain tolerance than normally active control individuals (e.g., Higolnikov et al., 2018). Anderson and Hanhrahan (2008) distinguished two kinds of pain: controlled pain that can stop with practice and uncontrolled pain due to an injury or a disease that cannot be relieved by stopping sport practice. The former is a positive experience related to satisfaction whereas the latter is a negative and unpleasant experience. They relate to different levels of threat and disability. This paper aims to provide a better understanding of the strategies used to manage sports-related pain and the possible short- and long-term benefits and risks. For example, in an exercise-induced pain context, Lasnier and Durand-Busch (2020) showed that elite endurance athletes used five kinds of strategies (i.e., directing attention away from the pain, using self-talk, goal setting, accelerating the pace and self-monitoring). In the context of sports injuries, Macquet and Trousselard (2025) demonstrated that elite athletes used a repertoire of 14 strategies relating to two functions: problem-focussed and emotion-focussed. They were shown to favour three strategies: modulating activity, diverting attention and seeking instrumental support. It is important to understand the short- and long-term benefits and risks of all these strategies in order to optimize pain management for both elite athletes and the general population (e.g., finishing the fight/worsening the injury).

ID: 151 / **Oral Presentations 9: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Health, Neuropsychology, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Concussion, Rugby, Duty of Care, Attitudes and Knowledge

"I've Not Been Knocked Out, So I'll Probably Be Fine:" Amateur Rugby Players Do Not Know the Risks They Are Taking

Daniel, Dr. Walker[1], Adam, Dr. Qureshi[2], David, Dr. Marchant[2], Rebecca, Dr. Murray[1], Alex, Dr. Bahrami Balani[2]
[1]University of Bradford, United Kingdom; [2]Edge Hill University, United Kingdom

Concussion is prevalent in British amateur Rugby and there is currently contradicting evidence of the attitudes and knowledge of concussion in players (Kraak et al., 2019; van Vuuren et al., 2020; Viljeon et al., 2017). This study investigated the reasons for this contradiction. As concussion is a lived experience, we utilised qualitative interviews using reflexive thematic analysis to assess data obtained from nine amateur Rugby players (7 male, 2 female, Age, M = 24.67, SD = 5.15) that had sustained over three concussions to understand if they are aware of the known risks associated with such injuries. Our findings show that poor duty of care from those around the player with suspected concussion was prevalent, and that this poor duty of care enables poor attitudes toward and limited knowledge of concussion. It was also discovered that a lack of education could explain this poor duty of care that is offered to Rugby players by non-players (including parents, coaches, and match officials). Poor duty of care and lack of education encourage continued participation from the player with suspected concussion. When there are examples of World Rugby failing in their duty of care of the best players in the world, it is unsurprising that players and non-players in the amateur game follow suit. Therefore, the education of both players and non-players in amateur Rugby matches is paramount, as well as World Rugby improving their concussion practices, in tackling the poor attitudes and knowledge base that we see in the amateur Rugby game.

ID: 300 / **Oral Presentations 9: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Neuroscience, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation, Psychophysiology
Keywords: Injury, rehabilitation, electroencephalography, electromyography

Longitudinal Changes in Brain–Muscle Communication From Pre- to Post-ACL Reconstruction

Callum Jarvis, Johnny Parr, Kat Daniels, Thomas Dos'Santos, Michael Callaghan
Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

Persistent neuromuscular deficits after anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction (ACLr) suggest recovery is influenced by central and peripheral factors (Ingersoll et al., 2008). Corticomuscular coherence (CMC) indexes the functional communication between the cortex and skeletal muscle during movement via EEG-EMG synchrony (Liu et al., 2019). Reduced CMC is linked to persistent quadricep dysfunction after ACLr (Sherman et al., 2023), yet existing evidence is cross-sectional. This study provides the first attempt to longitudinally monitor changes in lower-limb CMC from pre- to 9-months post-ACLr and determine test-retest reliability. To date, nine ACL-ruptured males (quadricep-tendon autograft), and eleven controls (CON) have completed three identical sessions (ACL: ~2-weeks pre-surgery, 3-months post-surgery and 9-months post-surgery; CON: baseline, 7-days, 3-months). EEG and lower limb surface EMG were recorded during unilateral isometric knee extension and flexion tasks at 20% of peak MVC. Force-control and β-band CMC (15-30 Hz) over the primary sensorimotor cortex were analysed. Large effects = RBC≥0.5. ACLr injured-limb knee-extension force-control improved from pre- to 9-months post-surgery (RBC≥0.9), with no clear changes for flexion. CON demonstrated improved force-control for both extension and flexion (RBC≥0.86) from baseline to 3-months. There is no evidence of longitudinal changes to β-CMC in either group, and no β-CMC differences between groups at any time-point. Test–retest reliability of β-CMC in CON was poor during extension (ICC[3,1]-0.63-0.56) and variable during flexion (ICC[3,1]≥0.93). The absence of longitudinal and between-

group differences in β-CMC, alongside poor test–retest reliability, limits its utility as a responsive biomarker for monitoring neurophysiological recovery following ACLr.

ID: 704 / Oral Presentations 9: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Health, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: courage, soccer, injury, yellow card

Courage in Soccer: Injury, Received Yellow and Red Cards

Erkut Konter, Yunus Şahinler
İstanbul Gelişim University, Turkey (Türkiye)

Konter and Ng (2012) initially developed Sport Courage Scale (SCS-31) and Sport Courage Model (Konter, 2013). The scale has been adapted a number of countries including USA (Konter, Kueh & Kuan, 2020) and China (Gao, Guo, Zhang, Jin & Dou, 2023).The exact nature of the relationship between courage and injury, receiving yellow and red cards in soccer are quite unclear. Therefore, this is the purpose of this study. SCS-31was built measuring five factors of courage consisting of Mastery-MT (Self-Confidence), Determination-DT, Assertiveness-AT, Venturesome-VS (Coping with Fear), and Altruism-ALT (Self-Sacrifice Behavior). This scale has been used a number of studies including soccer (Konter & Andersen, 2024). Data were collected from 575 male soccer players aged 13 to 26 (492 amateur, 83 professional) administering the SCS-31 and the information form. Soccer players had a mean age of 16.78 ± 3.06 yrs. with an average playing experience of 5.12 ± 3.38 yrs. Collected data was analyzed by Normality Tests, MONOVA, Kruskal-Wallis, Mann-Whitney U and t-test. Data revealed the significant differences ($p<.05$) between courage points of players and their level of play (MT in favour of Professionals and VS in favour of amateurs), injury (DT, AT and Total in favour of injured players), yellow cards (MT, DT AT, VS and Total in favour of receive yellow cards), red cards (AT in favour of receive red cards). More research is needed to have more conclusive results related to courage, level of play, injury and received cards in soccer.

ID: 581 / Oral Presentations 9: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Clinical sport psychology, Emotion, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: trauma, sports injury, emotion, recovery

Athletes' Emotional Recovery Following Severe Sports Injury

Kendra Bullard[1], John Coumbe-Lilley[1], Karrie Hamstra-Wright[1], Amber Shipherd[2]
[1]University of Illinois Chicago, United States of America; [2]Texas A&M University Kingsville, United States of America

Severe sports injury is an inevitable risk of athletic participation, yet its emotional and psychological consequences remain under-addressed in applied practice. While rehabilitation commonly prioritizes physical recovery, athletes often navigate complex emotional responses that extend well beyond the return to play. Limited guidance exists regarding how emotional recovery unfolds over time or how practitioners can meaningfully support this process. This study aimed to determine the self-reported emotional duration and intensity of athletes following a severe sports injury, and to identify implications for sport psychology and rehabilitation practice. Using an inductive realist thematic analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 24 athletes at high school and professional levels. Participants reflected on their injury and rehabilitation experiences, after which they visualized emotional recovery timelines, a self-validation tool used to retrospectively map monthly fluctuations in positive and negative emotional intensity throughout rehabilitation. Five primary themes emerged: (1) the importance of contextual factors (contract, timing, cause, type and knowledge of injury, and pre-post impact), (2) a broad range of negative emotional responses, (3) limited access to professional psychological support, (4) grief as a non-linear process, and (5) emotionally impactful interactions with medical professionals. Findings revealed an enduring, fluctuating emotional recovery pattern, with 87.5% of athletes reporting disrupted emotional coping up to 18 months post-injury. These findings highlight that severe sport injury is a physical event with prolonged emotional and psychological experiences. Practical implications for applied sport psychology and sport medicine professionals are discussed, emphasizing the need for emotionally informed, athlete-centered approaches throughout injury recovery.

3:30pm - 5:00pm

Doing Mindfulness: Dharma Drills for Clarity, Flexibility, and Performance

Location: **130**

ID: 707 / Workshop 6: 1
Workshop
Topics: Meditation (e.g. mindfulness)
Keywords: mindfulness, insight, psychological flexibility, flow

Doing Mindfulness: Dharma Drills for Clarity, Flexibility, and Performance

Michael Gerson[1], Vicki Tomlinson[2], Julie Hayden-Blackburn[3], Eszter Biro[4], Eric Ballelos[5]
[1]National University, United States of America; [2]National Unviersity; [3]National University; [4]University of Western States; [5]Eric Ballelos LLC and Red Rock Volleyball Club

Over the past decade, mindfulness has become central to sport and performance psychology, with research linking it to enhanced attentional control, emotional regulation, reduced anxiety, and increased flow (Aherne et al., 2011; Kaufman et al., 2016). While many applied models emphasize concentration and acceptance, less attention has been given to the role of insight (vipassanā) in optimizing performance. Drawing from contemplative traditions and contemporary neuroscience, this experiential workshop introduces insight as a trainable performance capacity—the ability to clearly recognize the beliefs, attachments, and identity narratives that distort perception under pressure. Using the "dusty mirror" metaphor, participants will explore how overthinking, fear of failure, outcome attachment, and fixed performance identities cloud awareness and disrupt natural skill expression. The workshop is designed with a strong train-the-trainer focus, equipping practitioners with both experiential understanding and practical methods to deliver insight-based mindfulness interventions to their clients. Attendees will engage in structured drills integrating shamatha (attention stability) and vipassanā (clear seeing), while learning how to translate key principles, including the Three Marks of Existence (impermanence, attachment, non-self), into applied strategies that enhance psychological flexibility, reduce fear of failure, and support freer execution. Neuroscience findings related to the prefrontal cortex, amygdala, anterior cingulate cortex, insula, hippocampus, and default mode network will be integrated to ground the approach in empirical evidence. Participants will leave with a clear framework for teaching insight-based mindfulness, step-by-step exercises for implementation, guided reflection prompts, and access to additional resources and readings to support continued learning and application.

5:00pm - 5:30pm **Break**

5:30pm - 6:00pm **Opening Ceremony**
Location: **Convention Center**

6:00pm - 7:00pm **Keynote Speaker: Paul Wylleman**
Location: **Convention Center**
Session Chair: **Alina-Isabela Gherghisan**

ID: 729 / **1st Keynote Speaker: 1**
Keynote talks

"We're gonna need a bigger boat!". The evolving role of sport psychology and sport psychologists in high-performance sport

Paul Wylleman
Vrije Universiteit Brussel & Brussels Olympic Research and Education Centre, Belgium

Developments in high-performance, Olympic and Paralympic sports necessitate a comprehensive perspective when considering the role of sport psychology and the added value of sport psychologists. This keynote will address the critical role of robust support systems, emphasizing inter- as well as intra-disciplinary collaboration. Using examples from past and future Olympic Games, as well from elite sport related research projects, opportunities, challenges and strategies will be explored on how psychological expertise can and should be integrated as a core component in the development, performance and wellbeing of athletes and teams. At the same time this presentation will also highlight the need to focus on the psychological support and development of psychological competences among coaches, staff, entourage and sport officials. Finally, attention will be paid to the need for a 'scientist-practitioner' approach in the education and continued professional development of sport psychologists.

7:00pm - 7:05pm **FEPSAC 2026 Group Photo**
Location: **Convention Center**

7:05pm - 10:00pm **Welcome Reception**
Location: **Convention Center**

Conference Agenda Tuesday

18th European Congress of Sport & Exercise Psychology

Date: Tuesday, 14/July/2026

7:00am - 7:30am

Morning Grappling & Conditioning
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

Every morning before the run, we're doing something a little different. This is a 30-minute conditioning session built around movement drills from the world of BJJ and wrestling: animal locomotion, ground flow, tumbling, partner games. The kind of stuff that looks casual but gets your whole body working in ways you didn't expect.

If you've never trained a grappling sport, it is perfect. There's something genuinely fresh about moving close to the ground, figuring out how your body navigates space, and doing it all with another person. It trains coordination, spatial awareness, and functional strength (and it's fun).

No experience needed, no gear needed. Just show up with comfy clothes and some curiosity, and get properly fired up before the morning run.

7:30am - 8:00am

Morning Run
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

To start the conference day focused, energetic and powerful, we are inviting you to our morning running sessions. It doesn't matter if this is your first run or if you're already a seasoned veteran, we'll be running in separate groups at different paces.

We'll start with a warm-up, then run for 30 minutes, and finish with a group stretch. If you're just looking for a light run to start your day, this is the place for you. If you want to challenge yourself and have a more intense workout, this is the place for you, too.

Bring your running shoes and let's go!

The morning grappling workouts and runs will take place one after the other, not at the same time, so you can join just one or the other, or you can even do both (highly recommended)!

8:30am - 5:00pm

Participant registration.
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

9:00am - 10:30am

What are the challenges in supporting mental health and performance simultaneously? Exploring ethical practice in high performance
Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 698 / Panel 1: 1
Panel discussion

What are the challenges in supporting mental health and performance simultaneously? Exploring ethical practice in high performance

Kristel Kiens[1], Karin Moesch[2], Ashley Stirling[3], Véronique Boudreault[4], Daniel Birrer[5], Sam Cumming[6]
[1]Tallinn University, Estonia; [2]Malmö University, Sweden; [3]University of Toronto, Canada; [4]Université de Sherbrooke, Canada; [5]Swiss Federal Institute of Sport Magglingen; [6]UK Sports Institute

There are numerous studies highlighting mental health challenges in high performance sports - both, for athletes (e.g., Reardon et al., 2019) and coaches (e.g., Frost et al., 2024). This has increased awareness of this topic in recent years. At the same time, high performance context is inherently demanding and performance narrative still dominates, which in turn can become a challenge for mental health. This can bring up ethical challenges for sport psychology practitioners, who are being mainly hired for supporting optimal performance. The dilemma can be about supporting the athletes' mental skills to perform, while seeing the need to support their wellbeing and mental health as well. While there are different ethical guidelines in sport psychology practice depending on the countries, the base principle of first doing no harm still should apply. How do we think about it in a demanding elite sport culture? What are the key factors that need to be considered? In this panel discussion, the panelists will share their own inisght and connection to this dilemma through lived experiences, and then critically discuss this topic from philosophical, environmental, and applied perspectives. We will focus on several key questions around this topic, while opening up the inquiry to the audience, so that we can co-create a wider understanding on the ethical practice in high performance sport.

9:00am - 10:30am

Heart Rate Variability in Sport and Exercise Psychology: Applications of the Vagal Tank Theory
Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 517 / Workshop 11: 1
Workshop
Topics: Emotion, Psychophysiology
Keywords: heart rate variability, self-regulation

Heart Rate Variability in Sport and Exercise Psychology: Applications of the Vagal Tank Theory

Sylvain Laborde[1,2]
[1]German Sport University Cologne, Germany; [2]Normandie Université Caen

Heart rate variability (HRV) has recently gained a lot of attention in sport and exercise psychology (Mosley & Laborde, 2022). The reason for this is that it allows for non-invasive and cost-effective measurement of the activity within the parasympathetic nervous system regulating cardiac functioning, cardiac vagal activity. Based on a recent theoretical development with the vagal tank theory (Laborde, Mosley, & Mertgen, 2018b), this workshop will introduce how cardiac vagal activity can be used as an indicator for health, stress management, emotion regulation, and executive function, considering the 3Rs of cardiac vagal activity functioning: resting, reactivity, and recovery. Further, practical methodological recommendations will be presented (Laborde, Mosley, & Thayer, 2017), in order to get the most of HRV measurements in sports settings, taking into account the many factors that can influence HRV (Laborde, Mosley, & Mertgen, 2018a). Learning objectives: Participants will get first-hand experience of learning how to measure HRV with smartphone apps and ECG devices in different situations such as morning measurements, night measurements, preperformance routines, physical activity, post-training or post-competition recovery, psychosocial stress and relaxation methods. To further enhance experiential learning, brief interactive tasks are included, such as breathing manipulations, short stress induction exercises, or competitive mini-challenges. Further, they will also discover how to analyze and interpret the HRV data in Kubios software. All participants will be provided with the slides of the presentation, and those who volunteer to have their HRV measured will be provided with their HRV files at the end of the workshop.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 12: Group dynamics

Location: **A01**
Session Chair: **Laura Healy**

ID: 287 / Oral Presentations 12: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Group dynamics, Social psychology
Keywords: team dynamics, stress, communication

Communal Coping Strategies of Beach Volleyball Players During Timeouts

Stephanie Bünemann, Finn Schubert
University of Muenster, Germany

In many sports, it is possible to interrupt the game by calling a timeout. They can be used to disrupt the opposing team's positive or own negative momentum (Den Hartigh & Gernigon, 2018). Further, timeouts allow for communication during the game. In beach volleyball, the duo is usually only allowed to communicate with each other without the coach. This makes beach volleyball an ideal context for analyzing team dynamics during a game without coach influence. The present study focuses specifically on the players' communal coping, which is defined as the joint efforts of multiple individuals to deal with shared stressors (Eckardt & Tamminen, 2025). However, a detailed understanding of this construct is still lacking (Eckardt & Tamminen, 2025; Leprince et al., 2018; Pété et al., 2023). A total of N = 106 timeouts from n = 20 professional duos (8 female, 12 male) from the German Championships were analyzed (age: M = 27.4; SD = 5.3). Video material stems from the streaming platform twitch. The verbal statements were transcribed and are being analyzed using qualitative content analysis and building on existing dimensions (Leprince et al., 2018) categorized into coping strategies. Preliminary results indicate a high frequency of problem-focused coping (e.g., analyzing the problem), whereas communal withdrawal (e.g., reduce the effort to achieve a goal) appeared only rarely. The results provide insights into coping behaviors during an ongoing match. Limitations include the focus on verbal behavior. Nevertheless, based on these findings, future research can address the question of effective coping.

ID: 394 / Oral Presentations 12: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Group dynamics
Keywords: team debriefing, teamwork, coach behaviour, debriefing quality

Perceived Debriefing Quality and Coach Behaviour Are Associated with Teamwork Perceptions: A Multi-Method Study

Deniz Durdubas[1], Umut Sezer[2]
[1]Hacettepe University (Türkiye); [2]Eskisehir Technical University (Türkiye)

Team debriefings are a widely used strategy in sport to enhance team learning and reflexivity following games. However, limited research has examined how perceived debriefing quality and coaches' verbal behaviours relate to athletes' teamwork perceptions. This study utilized a multi-method design combining athlete self-reports and behavioural coding of coaches. Data were collected across three waves from 96 athletes (M=19.3, SD=4.2) representing six soccer teams during 18 debriefings. Athletes completed Team Debriefing Quality in Sports (TDQS; recently developed with preliminary validity) and the teamwork (i.e., MATS; McEwan & Beauchamp, 2018) scales. Coaches' verbal behaviours during team debriefings were coded using the Teamwork Coding Scheme (Durdubas & Sezer, 2026) by two independent raters. Longitudinal mixed-effects models were fitted with random intercepts for athletes and debriefings (nested within teams). Fixed effects included wave, game outcome, within- and between-athlete TDQS, and coach phase durations. Higher TDQS was consistently associated with higher teamwork perceptions at both within- and between-athlete levels. Coach behavioural durations to each teamwork phase were associated with specific teamwork perceptions beyond game outcome and wave. Evaluation-focused behaviors were related to higher perceived teamwork execution (β=.41, 95% CI [0.26, 0.57]) and adjustment (β=.29, [0.13, 0.46]); adjustment-focused behaviors were related to higher perceived teamwork evaluation (β=.19, [0.08, 0.32]) and adjustment (β=.22, [0.07, 0.39]); execution-focused behaviors were related to higher perceived teamwork execution

(β=.19, [0.06, 0.34]). Perceived debriefing quality and coaches' teamwork-related verbal behaviours are associated with athletes' teamwork perceptions, highlighting debriefings as a practical tool for enhancing teamwork in sport.

ID: 356 / Oral Presentations 12: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Emotion, Group dynamics
Keywords: Interpersonal emotion regultion, mental health, adolescents, latent profile analysis

Do Athletes Who Use Positive Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Improve Their Teammates' Mental Health?

Joan Pons, Maria Wei Blanes, Victòria Romero, Elena Gervilla
Universitat de les Iles Balears, Spain

Team sports incorporate different components that influence mental health, such as leadership (Lundqvist et al., 2025), cohesion (Balaguer et al., 2022), and social support (Delfin et al., 2024). However, no previous study has examined how interpersonal emotion regulation relates to mental health. Thus, this study aimed to (a) Identify the distinct profiles of interpersonal emotion regulation among team athletes; and (b) Compare the differences in mental health between the identified groups. The sample consisted of 1,818 team-sport adolescent athletes (M = 16.34, SD = 1.76). Participants completed a reduced version of the EROS (Niven et al., 2011) and the GHQ-12 (Goldberg et al., 1997). Data were collected in-person at the sports facilities. Data analysis consisted of latent profile analysis and group comparisons with Games-Howell post-hoc tests. Latent profile analysis revealed the three-class solution as the most suitable solution (BIC = 18,234.46; Entropy = .784). The resulting profiles were labelled 'Positive-focused exchangers', 'Infrequent exchangers' (23.38%), and 'Ambivalent exchangers' (38.94%). Positive-focused exchangers showed the best mental health levels on all mental health subscales (social functioning, depression and anxiety, and loss of confidence and self-esteem), with significant ($p < .001$) differences from the other two groups. Infrequent exchangers exhibited a tendency to show better mental health than Ambivalent exchangers. However, these differences were not statistically significant. The present results indicate that differences in how athletes regulate their teammates' emotions are related to mental health, suggesting the need to integrate this component into future interventions aimed at improving athletes' mental health.

ID: 243 / Oral Presentations 12: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Group dynamics, Leadership
Keywords: Assistant Coaching, Coach Leadership, Cohesion, Professional Sport

Standing Out by Pulling Together: How Assistant Coaches Shape Subgroup Identity and Team Alignment in Professional Team Sports

Marc Glaude[1], Gordon A. Bloom[1], Luc J. Martin[2]
[1]McGill University; [2]Queen's University

Drawing on social identity and optimal distinctiveness perspectives (Leonardelli et al., 2010), gridiron football teams comprise positional subgroups with strong nested social identities. However, it is critical that these identities align with an overarching team philosophy to support functioning and performance (Glaude et al., 2024; Hogg & Rast, 2022), a process especially salient in professional sport where winning is paramount (Mallett & Lara-Bercial, 2016). Given that assistant coaches lead positional subgroups in gridiron football (Sinotte et al., 2015), this study explored professional gridiron football assistant coaches' perspectives on creating optimally distinctive positional subgroup identities that align with the overarching team and contribute to its functioning. Seven current or recently retired assistant coaches from North America's top professional gridiron football leagues (NFL, CFL) completed semi-structured interviews, which were analyzed via reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Results highlighted that assistant coaches built a unified positional subgroup by defining shared values, fostering social bonds, and structuring task-related communication. Participants also emphasized that a positional subgroup's consistent effort and commitment to demanding tasks—often unrecognized outside the team—shaped team-wide norms of dedication and unity. Finally, coaches promoted subgroup alignment with the head coach's vision through reciprocal engagement, participating in team-wide meetings while facilitating the head coach's involvement in subgroup sessions. These findings provide coaches and practitioners with strategies to enhance team functioning in elite sport with distinctive, interdependent subgroups, highlighting the critical role of assistant coaches and their strategies for balancing subgroup distinctiveness and team-wide alignment to maximize cohesion and performance.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 10: Coaching

Location: **A02**
Session Chair: **Andrada Vincze**

ID: 550 / Oral Presentations 10: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Built environment, Coaching, Mental skills training
Keywords: pressure training, coaching

Coach Perspectives on the Feasibility and Applicability of a Novel Pressure Training Framework

Gavin Byrne, Jennifer Meggs, William Low
Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh, United Kingdom

While pressure training (PT) interventions are known to enhance athlete performance, their practical application often lacks a standardized approach. The research team has developed a novel framework to support PT implementation, based on athlete perspectives. This study aims to evaluate coach perspectives on the feasibility and utility of the framework. A focus group methodology was used involving 11 coaches across eight different sports. Sample participants coached athletes operating from developmental to world-class levels. Participants discussed current practices, reviewed the novel framework, and completed a session-planning activity during the focus group. Reflexive thematic analysis was used to identify core themes. Preliminary findings indicate that coaches valued the framework for its flexibility, suitability across various skill levels, and its ability to provide a guide for session design. However, coaches also emphasized their role in removing pressure from environments and shared some concerns regarding risks of PT for athletes and coaches. Key barriers to implementation included practical constraints (logistics and resources) and individual beliefs, such as the perceived necessity of replicating competition-level intensity. Coaches also identified a need for more explicit guidance on the timing of PT and discussed the requirement for external support when administering PT. These findings advance understanding of coaches' perceived barriers to research-informed pressure training practice. Consequently, these findings can be used to adapt the PT framework and better meet the needs of applied practitioners thus enhancing pressure training practice for coaches and athletes.

ID: 432 / Oral Presentations 10: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Mental skills training, Pedagogical psychology, Social psychology
Keywords: Reflective practice, self-awareness, intervention, coach-athlete interactions

Developing Self-Awareness and Understanding of Coach-Player Interactions: A Reflective Intervention

Lena Sloot[1], Daniel J. Brown[2], David Price[1], Martyn Standage[2]
[1]University Of Portsmouth, United Kingdom; [2]University of Bath, United Kingdom

This study evaluates how a structured reflective practice intervention influences a coach's and athletes' experiences of their self-awareness and shared interactions. Research suggests reciprocal influences between coaches and athletes (e.g., Carroll & Allen, 2021), yet shared interactions remain underexplored. Increased self-awareness of their actions could enhance conflict management abilities (Wachsmuth et al., 2018), with reflective practice offering a promising strategy to develop life skills, empowerment, and shared understanding (Huntley, 2023). One male basketball coach and six players from a Women's University Basketball team in the United Kingdom participated in a reflective intervention designed to increase their self-awareness and understanding of their coach-athlete interactions. Across six weeks, participants engaged in four reflective experiential workshops led by the first author: (1) introducing reflective practice, (2) reflecting on past experiences, (3) linking past experiences with interactions, and (4) reflecting on how participants experienced the intervention. Between sessions, participants were asked to reflect on coach-athlete interactions using structured questions adapted from Rolfe (2001). Data were analysed using an abductive content analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008), guided by Bingham's (2023) five steps. Findings indicate that the reflections influenced more-engaged participants' thoughts and actions (n = 4), prompting the coach to adapt his approach. Participants found individual reflections and group discussions about past experiences helpful (e.g., facilitating bonding and mutual understanding). These findings suggest that participants enhanced their self-awareness; however, players' decreasing attendance and other methodological limitations (e.g., a single team) warrant cautious interpretation and discussion in future research. Researcher reflections provide insight into conducting applied research.

ID: 188 / Oral Presentations 10: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Pedagogical psychology
Keywords: PYD, youth sport, coaching, sport pedagogy

Pedagogical Practices Supporting Positive Youth Development in Youth Sport

Tamás Berki
Hungarian University of Sports Sciences, Hungary

This study examined how youth sport coaches support Positive youth development (PYD) through their pedagogical practices, focusing on key PYD outcomes: Competence, Confidence, Contribution, and Character. PYD is a strength-based perspective that views children and adolescents as possessing resources to be cultivated rather than problems to be addressed. A total of 113 youth sport coaches were observed involving athletes aged between 12–18 years. The coaches (M=38.64 years; Male=74; Female=39) represented both individual (n=58) and team sports (n=55)and had an average coaching experience of 12.92 years. Our results showed that coaches put the effort on Competence (M = 40.30), followed by Confidence (M=37.11), while Character (M=23.07) and Contribution (M=22.04) received comparatively less attention. Competence development was mainly supported through verbal instruction, Confidence through general feedback, Contribution through active listening, and Character through role modeling, with broadly similar pedagogical approaches observed across the PYD dimensions. Regarding sport types, coaches in individual sports demonstrated higher levels of Competence and Contribution than team sport coaches. All four PYD dimensions were positively correlated, suggesting that gains in one dimension may support the others. Overall, Hungarian coaches emphasize technical and tactical competence, with less focus on social skills and value development. Confidence is mainly supported through general feedback. Coaches in individual sports showed higher

PYD engagement than team sport coaches. These findings highlight the need for more balanced, developmentally intentional coaching approaches.

ID: 602 / Oral Presentations 10: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Personality
Keywords: Authentic Performance, Elite Sports, Coaching Framework

Authentic Performance in Elite Sport: An Integrative Scientist–Practitioner Coaching Framework for Athletes and Coaches

Daniel Rähse
Olympiazentrum Vorarlberg GmbH, Austria

Elite sport performance requires coaching approaches that address both performance outcomes and athlete well-being; however, prevailing single-theory models often fail to capture the complexity of self-regulation, identity development, and leadership in applied coaching contexts. This presentation introduces an integrative coaching framework developed through a synthesis of literature, systematic practitioner reflections, and semi-structured interviews with Olympic long-list athletes, retired elite athletes reflecting on unmet career needs, and Olympic sport psychologists; interviews were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz, 2014), providing empirical support for identifying limitations in current coaching models. Adopting a multi-layered scientist–practitioner perspective, the framework integrates Basic Psychological Needs Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and cultural sport psychology (Ryba et al., 2024; Schinke, 2009) as its foundation to inform psychologically grounded and culturally competent coaching. This foundation is complemented by existential psychology emphasizing meaning, values, and subjective experience (Längle, 2003; Ronkainen & Nesti, 2015). The intermediate layer incorporates Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Hayes et al., 2006) and emotional intelligence (Laborde et al., 2016) to enhance psychological flexibility and emotional competence in leadership situations, while traditional psychological skills training represents the competition-focused layer. The framework has been applied during Olympic preparation, demonstrating utility for both coach self-development and structuring value-aligned interventions from coaches to athletes. Findings indicate that integrating meaning, emotional regulation, and contextual considerations (Henriksen, Stambulova, & Roessler, 2010) is essential for addressing elite sport demands. The authentic performance framework offers potential to bridge theory and practice, providing a structured yet flexible approach for applied coaching in elite sport settings.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 13: Neuroscience

Location: **A03**
Session Chair:

ID: 379 / Oral Presentations 13: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Neuroscience, Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.)
Keywords: individualized EEG marker (IEM), golf putting, sport performance, neurofeedback training

Effect of a Single Session of Individualized EEG Marker Neurofeedback Training on the Putting Performance of Skilled Golfers

Shih-Huan Chen[1], Chien-Lin Yu[2], Eric Hung[2], Tsung-Min Hung[2]
[1]University of Taipei; [2]National Taiwan Normal Unirversity, Taiwan

Neurofeedback training (NFT) enables self-regulation of neural activity and holds potential for enhancing sports performance, yet EEG-based NFT yields inconsistent results across studies, largely attributable to variations in training protocols and individual differences. This study introduces an innovative individualized EEG marker (IEM) approach—defined as the EEG feature showing the largest difference between successful and unsuccessful putts for each participant—to personalize NFT and address these limitations. Thirty-three skilled golfers (M age = 30.5 ± 13.6 years; M handicap = 13.4 ± 11.1) participated in a crossover design, completing NFT and no-training control conditions in counterbalanced order. In each condition, participants performed 60 putts from 10 feet before and after the intervention while EEG was recorded. A single session of IEM-based NFT significantly increased targeted IEM power ($t = 2.11$, $p = 0.044$) and improved putting performance ($t = 2.93$, $p = 0.006$) relative to control. Of the 33 participants, 19 achieved successful IEM modulation post-NFT. Successful trainees showed greater improvements in putting accuracy ($t = 2.14$, $p = 0.017$) and IEM changes ($t = 5.14$, $p < 0.001$) compared to unsuccessful trainees. These findings demonstrate that personalized IEM-based NFT effectively enhances neural modulation and putting performance in skilled golfers, offering preliminary mechanistic insights and successfully accounting for inter-individual variability. Participants with consistent IEM changes exhibited the largest gains, aligning with theoretical predictions. Future research should optimize multi-session protocols, refine theoretical alignment, and examine transfer effects in diverse athletic and clinical contexts to maximize NFT efficacy.

ID: 587 / Oral Presentations 13: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Motor development, Neuroscience, Neuropsychology
Keywords: resting-state, functional connectivity, fMRI, gymnastics

Resting-State Brain Functional Connectivity Underlying Skill Difficulty (D-Score) in Artistic Gymnasts

Yujiro Kawata[1,2,3], Yumi Takahashi[2], Nobuaki Mizuguchi[4], Takaya Sukizaki[2], Miyuki Nakamura[1], Hiroyuki Tomita[1,2], Mutsumi Harada[1,2], Eiji Kirino[5]

[1]Faculty of Health and Sports Science, Juntendo University, Chiba, Japan; [2]Graduate School of Health and Sports Science, Juntendo University, Chiba, Japan; [3]Institute of Health and Sports Science & Medicine, Juntendo University, Chiba, Japan; [4]Juntendo Administration for Sports, Health and Medical Sciences, Juntendo University, Chiba, Japan; [5]Department of Psychiatry, Juntendo University Shizuoka Hospital, Shizuoka, Japan

In artistic gymnastics, performance is evaluated using the difficulty score (D-score), which reflects the technical complexity of routines. Although the D-score is assumed to depend on advanced motor control and body representation, its neural basis remains unclear. This study examined the resting-state functional connectivity associated with D-scores in artistic gymnasts. Thirteen artistic gymnasts, including international-level athletes, and thirty controls, underwent resting-state fMRI. Seed regions were defined as the cerebellum and sensorimotor cortex. Group differences in connectivity were assessed, and correlations between connectivity and D-scores were analyzed within the gymnast group. Eight functional connections differed between the groups. Notably, connectivity between the cerebellar vermis VI and right lingual gyrus correlated with floor exercise D-scores, suggesting the involvement of visuospatial processing and visuomotor integration required for complex aerial movements. Connectivity between the cerebellar vermis III and right nucleus accumbens was associated with pommel horse D-scores, reflecting reinforcement-learning processes underlying repetitive and rhythmically structured motor patterns. Additionally, connectivity between the right cerebellar lobules IV–V and the left frontal pole correlated with D-scores in the rings, vault, and horizontal bar, indicating higher-order motor planning and executive control. These findings suggest that superior performance in gymnastics is supported by apparatus-specific neural networks that integrate motor control, visuospatial processing, and reward-based learning. Practically, this framework may inform training strategies, including visuomotor feedback training and reinforcement-based practice designs, tailored for event-specific demands.

ID: 288 / **Oral Presentations 13: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Neuroscience
Keywords: external focus, holistic attention, self-organization

Attending to Wind Strength Enhances Movement-Goal Coupling and Inhibitory Neural Control in Skilled Archers

Yin-Hua Chen[1], Ya-Ling Chen[1], Szu-Yuan Chen[1], Wen-Jui Kuo[2]

[1]National Taiwan Sport University, Taiwan; [2]National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University

External and holistic attentional focus enhance performance in athletes, but their impact on perception-action coupling and neural correlates remains unclear. This study used concurrent EEG to examine behavioral and neural effects of attending to wind strength, performance outcome, or holistic movement feeling in eight skilled recurve archers. Participants completed two outdoor competition sessions per condition, providing post-shot ratings of perceived wind strength, shot score, and movement smoothness. Actual wind strength, phase durations (setup, drawing, aiming, clicker reaction time [CRT]), aiming trajectory (before and after clicker fall), and gender were entered into separate generalized estimating equation models to predict shot score for each condition. By accounting for idiosyncratic trial-to-trial dependencies within archers, wind strength emerged as the only consistent predictor, with stronger wind associated with lower scores. Critically, directing attention to wind strength enhanced movement-goal coupling, evidenced by higher scores associated with shorter CRTs and smaller vertical aiming adjustments. At the neural level, the wind-focus condition elicited significant alpha (8–12 Hz) event-related synchronization over FC2 (beta = 0.055, p = .003), F4 (beta = 0.043, p = .028), P3 (beta = 0.056, p = .011), P7 (beta = 0.041, p = .014), T8 (beta = 0.037, p = .030), and CP6 (beta = 0.032, p = .040), which was associated with actual score. This pattern suggests functional cortical inhibition that may suppress task-irrelevant and verbal–analytical processing, facilitating self-organized sensorimotor control. These findings highlight the importance of attending to wind in outdoor archery and provide neurobehavioral evidence linking attentional focus, movement regulation, and brain activity.

ID: 488 / **Oral Presentations 13: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Neuroscience, Neuropsychology, Psychophysiology
Keywords: Motor imagery, EEG, Resting-state, VMIQ-2

Decoding Motor Imagery Potential: Resting-State EEG Biomarkers as Predictors of Individual Performance and Ability

Lin Yu[1,2], Thomas Schack[1,2]

[1]quot;Neurocognition and Action – Biomechanics" research group, Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science, Bielefeld University, Germany; [2]Center for Cognitive Interaction Technology (CITEC), Bielefeld University, Germany.

Motor imagery is a key focus in sports science, cognitive psychology, and medical engineering. While questionnaires and behavioral tasks are commonly used to assess motor imagery ability, neurophysiological measures remain under-explored. This study investigated resting-state EEG biomarkers to predict individuals' motor imagery ability

and performance, quantified via classical metrics. Twenty participants (age = 22.30 ± 2.34, 13 females) completed a hand laterality judgment task (HLJT) and a mental paper folding task (MPFT), along with the Vividness of Movement Imagery Questionnaire 2 (VMIQ-2). Prior to these tasks, resting-state EEG was recorded during 3-min eyes-open and 3-min eyes-closed conditions using a 64-channel ANT system. Spectral power features were extracted, correlated with behavioral and self-report measures, and used in regression models for prediction. Eyes-closed resting-state alpha/mu power (8–13 Hz) was significantly negatively correlated with HLJT reaction times (all rs < –0.469, all ps < 0.037), indicating faster responses with higher alpha power. Eyes-open resting-state beta power (13–30 Hz) over frontal, sensorimotor, parietal, and temporal regions correlated positively with VMIQ-2 scores (all rs > 0.444, all ps < 0.050), where lower beta power linked to better imagery ability. Regression analyses showed that sensorimotor beta power ($F(1,18) = 9.101$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.336$) and temporal beta power ($F(1,18) = 10.611$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.371$) significantly predicted external motor imagery scores. Resting-state alpha/mu and beta oscillations, particularly beta activity over sensorimotor and temporal areas, are associated with motor imagery proficiency and can predict self-reported ability. This identifies resting-state beta activity as a biomarker for motor imagery evaluation.

ID: 449 / Oral Presentations 13: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Mental skills training, Neuropsychology, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19)
Keywords: Paralympics, Neurofeedback, Performance psychology

Winning the Mind Game – Applied Neurofeedback in Modern Mental Training - From Wearable Brain Data to Practical Performance Tools

Tali Spiner Kazula
Mentali, Levinsky-Wingate Academic Center, Israel Paralympic Committee, Wingate Institute

This applied session presents the integration of wearable neurofeedback technology into the mental preparation of Paralympic athletes. Based on a year field study (8.22-8.23) conducted with 10 athletes (men and women, aged 18–45) across six Paralympic sports. Participants explored the use of the FocusCalm system—a wearable device measuring brainwave activity and providing real-time feedback through interactive mobile-based training tasks. Reflected as a score of the user's level of focus, concentration, and relaxation. The study employed interviews to gauge adherence to mental techniques, alongside 3 distinct questionnaires appraising State and Trait anxiety, concentration, and satisfaction derived from mental preparation. Findings demonstrate reduced anxiety levels, improved concentration: t(9)=-2.34, p<.05 p=0.02. Significant improvement was found in the stress index, t(9)=-2.069 p<.05 p=0.03. and in the concentration index after using technology t(9)=-5.46. p<.05, p=.001. And a relationship was found between the mental resilience indices and the results recorded using technology. Differences in technology usage was observed between younger and older athletes. Moderate satisfaction scores (higher, the higher his resilience indicators were, also the younger he was. And inversely proportional to the high score the results achieved and measured in the system). Highlight the need for structured diagnostic processes, individualized adaptation, and continuous professional support when integrating technology into applied sport psychology practice. The session further demonstrates how neurofeedback may complement established psychological skills training approaches, including cognitive-behavioral techniques, mindfulness, and guided imagery. These combined methods appear to support performance under pressure, cognitive flexibility, and the development of psychological resilience. Through applied examples and interactive elements, participants will be introduced to practical uses of neurofeedback in both clinical and field-based settings. These include real-time focus regulation, cognitive training tasks involving attention, agility, and memory, and the use of neurofeedback as a diagnostic support tool. Implications for practitioners working with Paralympic and able-bodied athletes facing competitive stress, uncertainty, and performance demands will be discussed.

9:00am - 10:30am

50,000 Runners, One Psyching Team: Delivering Ethical Sport Psychology at World Marathon Majors

Location: **A10**

ID: 192 / Workshop 10: 1
Workshop
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Consulting/ counseling, Ethics in applied settings, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: marathon, supervision, ethics, competency

50,000 Runners, One Psyching Team: Delivering Ethical Sport Psychology at World Marathon Majors

John Coumbe-Lilley[1], Michele Kerulis[2], Dan Wilesa[2], Meredith Wekesser[1], Kendra Bullard[1]
[1]University of Illinois Chicago, United States of America; [2]Northwestern University

With marathon events hosting more than 50,000 runners from over 130 countries, practitioners must deliver psychologically safe, ethical, and scalable support across a wide range of abilities, motivations, and emotional states.

This workshop introduces the Psyching Team concept, a competency-based interdisciplinary, community-based model that integrates group counseling, sport psychology, and ethical field-based supervision within the Chicago Marathon, a World Marathon Major (AASP, 2024; AASP 2025). Developed and implemented annually since 2020, the Psyching Team has supported approximately 200 trainees and formally supervised 44 graduate-level practitioners while delivering complementary, inclusive psychoeducational services across an 18-week training period, a three-day in-person health and fitness expo, and race day.

Through experiential activities and case examples, FEPSAC members will explore how the Psyching Team concept can be adapted for World Marathon Majors and large endurance events within their own national and regulatory contexts (Meijen et al, 2017).

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Reflect on competency-based graduate trainee development.

2. Apply ethical, field-based decision-making strategies by practicing the use of the OODA Loop to assess psychological risk.

3. Deliver sport psychological skills at scale by engaging in live psychoeducational activities (e.g., imagery, self-talk, mindfulness) designed for mass-participation endurance events.

4. Design an adaptable Psyching Team implementation plan by mapping supervision roles, training pathways, and interdisciplinary partnerships required to translate the Psyching Team concept into participants' own national, regulatory, and event-specific contexts.

9:00am - 10:30am

Navigating Risk: Motivational and Emotional Processes in Extreme and Adventure Sports

Location: **A11**

ID: 534 / Symposium 7: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Emotion, Motivation, Physical activity
Keywords: Emotion regulation, Risk, Well-being, Mental health

Navigating Risk: Motivational and Emotional Processes in Extreme and Adventure Sports

Cecilie Dannerbo[1], Zsófia Nemeti-Fehér[2,3], Maria Stefania Ionel[3,2], Xavier Sanchez[1], Andrei Ion[2], Calum Muskett[4], Tim Woodman[4], Jamie Macdonald[4], Lisa Hepperle[5], Felix Ehrlenspiel[5], Yana Wengel[6], Jessica Love[7,8], Daniel Brown[7,8], Matt Wilkes[7], Kate Shakespeare[9], Richard Thelwell[7]

[1]Laboratory Sport, Activité Physique, Rééducation et Motricité pour la Performance et la Santé (SAPRéM), Department of Sport Sciences, Université of Orléans, Orléans, France; [2]Assessment and Individual Differences – AID Lab, Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Bucharest, Romania; [3]Sport and Exercise Psychology (SEP) group, RIDDLE Lab, Department of Psychology, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania; [4]Bangor University. PhD funding provided by the ESRC WGSSS; [5]Department Health and Sport Sciences, School of Medicine and Health, Technical University of Munich (TUM), Germany; [6]HNU-ASU International College, Hainan University, China; [7]School of Psychology, Sport and Health Sciences, University of Portsmouth; [8]University of Bath; [9]Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

Discussant: **Maria Stefania Ionel** (3,2)

Extreme and adventure sports provide a distinctive context in which individuals voluntarily engage with substantial risk, uncertainty, and intense emotional demands (Brymer & Schweitzer, 2017). In contrast to traditional competitive sport, these environments are characterised by uncontrollable natural forces, ambiguous feedback, and potentially severe consequences. Despite this, participation continues to increase globally (Hornby et al., 2024). Research suggests that high-risk sport contexts uniquely intensify affective and motivational processes, amplifying both adaptive and maladaptive responses to challenge (Martinho et al., 2024). This paradox, voluntary engagement in contexts where failure may carry serious cost, raises fundamental questions about how athletes regulate emotion, interpret uncertainty, and sustain psychological functioning over time. This symposium brings together four distinct empirical perspectives examining complementary aspects of how athletes engage with and make sense of risk in extreme and adventure sports. Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches, the contributions examine (1) how regulatory orientations shape mental health and injury outcomes under uncertainty; (2) how physical activity engagement relates to emotion regulation and mental health; (3) how sport-specific incentives in mountaineering foster motivation and meaning; and (4) how adverse events disrupt trust, risk perception, and performance through the experience of "fear injury". Collectively, the findings highlight how individuals interpret, regulate, and reconstruct risk experiences across time, shaping whether exposure leads to resilience, performance disruption, sustained engagement, or withdrawal. By clearly differentiating these processes across studies, the symposium advances understanding of how individuals sustain, disrupt, or transform participation in high-risk sport, offering targeted implications for research and applied practice.

9:00am - 10:30am

International Perspectives on Applied Sport Psychology Across Performance Contexts: ISSP Science-to-Practice Perspective

Location: **A12**

ID: 691
Invited Symposia
Topics: Best practice, Elite sports and expertise, Ethics in applied settings, Organizational development and quality management
Keywords: Science-to-practice translation, Contextualized practice, Applied Sport Psychology, Organizational Sport Psychology

International Perspectives on Applied Sport Psychology Across Performance Contexts: ISSP Science-to-Practice Perspective

Chair(s): **Alessandro Quartiroli** (UW - La Crosse, United States of America)

Discussant(s): **Alessandro Quartiroli** (UW - La Crosse)

This invited symposium presents an international perspective on how sport psychology research is translated into applied practice across diverse performance settings. Grounded in a scientist–practitioner framework (Schinke et al., 2024), the symposium examines how evidence-informed principles are adapted to contextual demands while maintaining professional and ethical standards. The purpose of the symposium is to illustrate how theory, empirical evidence, and practitioner expertise converge in real-world environments, highlighting both shared challenges and context-specific adaptations. Contributors will draw on applied experiences across multiple domains and geographical contexts, emphasizing the importance of grounding science-to-practice approaches in contextual (Schinke & Stambulova, 2017) and culturally informed perspectives (Ryba et al., 2025). The first presenter will examine science-to-practice translation within intercollegiate athletics in the United States, emphasizing performance, well-being, and organizational coordination. The second presenter will explore applied work within organizational and performance culture contexts in the United Kingdom, focusing on leadership and system-level change. The third presenter will examine work with elite youth athletes and parents in the United Kingdom, emphasizing developmentally appropriate practice and safeguarding within talent pathways. The fourth presenter will address psychological support for referees and officials in Southern Europe, focusing on decision-making, resilience, and performance under scrutiny. Collectively, the symposium demonstrates how applied sport psychology integrates theory, research evidence, and practitioner judgment across competitive levels and cultural contexts. The session aims to stimulate discussion on strengthening global science-to-practice integration and advancing culturally responsive, ethically grounded professional practice.

Presentations of the Symposium

When Evidence Meets Reality: Delivering Sport Psychology in a Numbers-Driven U.S. Collegiate System

Alessandro Quartiroli
UW - La Crosse

This presentation explores the realities of science-to-practice translation within intercollegiate athletics in the United States, drawing on a decade of embedded practice in a highly competitive NCAA Division III environment. The focus extends beyond service delivery to examine the structural conditions that enable, or constrain, the sustainable integration of sport psychology within collegiate performance systems. Working as the sole sport psychology practitioner within a large athletic department, the presenter reflects on the tensions among performance optimization, athlete well-being, and organizational priorities. Administrative emphasis on quantifiable service metrics, year-to-year contract instability, and uneven leadership engagement shaped the scope, visibility, and legitimacy of psychological services. Such dynamics frequently determine whether evidence-informed practice becomes embedded infrastructure or remains peripheral support. In response to resource limitations and cultural resistance, the ONE+ (Single-Session) framework was implemented as a strategic adaptation. Rather than constituting merely a brief therapeutic method, ONE+ is framed as a systems-informed structural model for organizing service delivery, enabling scalable provision, improving equitable access, and strategically aligning individual, team, and coach-focused work within a coherent performance framework. This shift illustrates how theoretically grounded practice can be adapted to complex institutional realities without compromising quality. The presentation argues that effective science-to-practice translation in collegiate sport requires organizational literacy, strategic communication, and systems-level alignment alongside technical competence to sustain psychologically informed performance environments.

From Evidence to Environment: Advancing “culture work” in UK Performance Sport

Chris Wagstaff
University of Portsmouth, UK

Emerging developments in international sport psychology practice reflect a shift from predominantly individual-focused support toward greater engagement with system-level processes in high-performance environments. This session offers reflections on scientist-practitioner work conducted within UK performance sport context, focusing specifically on organisational and performance culture development. Drawing on organisational sport psychology and systems-led approaches, the presentation will address mechanisms for understanding and influencing system dynamics, constraints, relational functioning, and performance preparation within elite sport organisations. “Culture work” in these contexts extend beyond diagnostic audits; they involve multi-method data collection (e.g., interviews, observations, surveys), collaborative sensemaking with stakeholders, and the co-creation of targeted development strategies. Emphasis is placed on aligning strengthening sport system leadership, governance and performance coherence, and embedding sustainable, context-sensitive change processes. Through applied examples, the session will highlight key considerations, tensions, and learning points encountered when translating research-informed principles into complex, real-world performance systems. In doing so, it aims to offer broader insights into the evolving role of sport psychology in shaping organisational environments and contributing to meaningful, sustainable change within elite sport.

Engaging and Supporting Parents in Youth Talent Development Pathways: A Scientist-Practitioner’s Reflection of Delivering a Natio

Chris Harwood
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

Parents are a key agent in initiating children’s involvement in sport, encouraging their long-term participation and development, as well as influencing the quality of their experience in competition. Resultingly, there has been a significant and sustained increase in research on parenting in sport (see Harwood et al., 2019) and a growth in evidence-based parent education and support-based interventions (Thrower et al., 2023). As a scientist-practitioner involved in research, support and delivery to parents through individual consultation and organisational initiatives,

the purpose of this presentation is to share critical reflections of the standards required for meeting parent's needs on talent development pathways. Drawing on the British Lawn Tennis Association's (LTA) tennis parent education strategy, the presenter will first reflect on the importance of early stage interventions that focus on helping parents understand the psychological demands of training and competition. He will illustrate the salience of parent-athlete communication and parental practice of stress management techniques. Secondly, he will reinforce the value of psychosocial and life skills education (see Kramers et al., 2023) to parents, and the role of joint parent-athlete educational sessions that have proved popular within tennis. Finally, he will share some of the challenges around delivery, the importance of attention to the parent-athlete-coach relationship, and the gaps that remain in this area of athlete development.

A Practitioner-Scientist Approach to Psychological Performance in Professional Football Refereeing

Pedro Teques
University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, Portugal.

Professional football refereeing requires sustained perceptual-cognitive efficiency, emotional regulation under pressure, and consistent behavioural management in highly dynamic and socially demanding environments. Drawing on a practitioner-scientist framework, this presentation integrates applied field experience with empirical research conducted in elite refereeing contexts to propose a psychologically grounded model of officiating performance. The first pillar concerns attentional focus: referees must dynamically allocate perceptual resources, inhibit irrelevant stimuli (e.g., crowd noise, player reactions), and maintain decision clarity across prolonged cognitive load. The second pillar addresses emotional regulation, highlighting how pre-match expectations, in-game critical incidents, and performance evaluation processes influence physiological arousal, cognitive control, and subsequent decisions. The third pillar centres on observable game-management behaviours, including non-verbal communication, timing of interventions, and interpersonal relationships with players, conceptualised as behavioural expressions of underlying cognitive-emotional processes. Empirical insights derived from performance observation systems and longitudinal assessments of elite referees are combined with applied case reflections from professional practice. The integration of these perspectives illustrates how attentional control and emotional self-regulation translate into consistent behavioural patterns that enhance credibility, perceived fairness, and match control. This practitioner-scientist model advances a biopsychosocial understanding of refereeing by bridging laboratory-informed constructs with ecologically valid performance indicators. Practical implications include structured psychological training protocols targeting attentional routines, emotional reset strategies, and behavioural calibration in high stakes matches.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 11: Pedagogical psychology, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives

Location: **A13**
Session Chair: **Emine Caglar**

ID: 348 / Oral Presentations 11: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Pedagogical psychology, Personality, Social psychology
Keywords: sensation seeking, child risk-taking, outdoor education

School Context and Teacher Personality in Tolerance of Risky Play and Supervision Beliefs

Gabriele Russo[1], Daniele Coco[2], Alessia Colli[3], Andrea Ceciliani[4]
[1]University of Tuscia, Italy; [2]University of Roma TRE, Italy; [3]University of Modena & Reggio - Emilia, Italy; [4]University of Bologna, Italy

Outdoor-oriented schooling exposes children to more variable and challenging environments in which manageable risk can support autonomy, confidence, and physical literacy; however, teachers act as key gatekeepers in deciding how much risk is tolerated and how closely children are supervised. This study examined whether teachers' tolerance of risky play and supervision beliefs vary by school context (outdoor-oriented vs. traditional) and school grade (pre-school vs. primary), and whether these differences are associated with personality traits, especially sensation seeking. One hundred seventy-five teachers (46 pre-school, 129 primary) completed the Teacher Tolerance of Risk in Play Scale, an adapted teacher version of the Supervision Attributes and Risk-Taking Questionnaire, the Zuckerman Sensation-Seeking Scale, and the Big Five Inventory-10. Linear models and aligned rank transform ANOVAs were used. Pre-school teachers and outdoor-school teachers reported greater tolerance of risky play than primary and traditional-school teachers, respectively, with significant effects of school grade ($p=.001$, $\eta p^2=.06$), and school type ($p<.001$, $\eta p^2=.07$). Sensation seeking showed the strongest positive association with risk tolerance ($p<.001$, $\eta p^2=.23$), and with supervision attitudes that more readily accommodate everyday risk, particularly in outdoor settings ($p=.003$, $\eta p^2=.05$). Higher neuroticism was associated with perceiving children's activities as riskier ($p=.012$, $\eta p^2=.04$). These findings suggest that teachers' responses to risky play reflect an interplay between pedagogical context and individual dispositions. Clarifying these factors may help teacher education and school policy promote risk-benefit informed supervision, support children's autonomy and outdoor participation, and create learning environments that balance safety with developmentally valuable challenge.

ID: 417 / Oral Presentations 11: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Exercise psychology, Pedagogical psychology, Physical activity
Keywords: Affective-Reflective Theory, exercise, health, Self-Determination Theory

May Physical Education Shape Core Affects? Retrospective Affective-Emotional Experiences and Lifelong Physical Activity

Sascha Leisterer-Härtig[1], Lisa-Anna Dietz[2], Anna Eckert[1], Julia Limmeroth[2]
[1]Leipzig University, Germany; [2]University of Kassel, Germany

Educating people to engage in physical activity (PA) and sport throughout their lives is a central goal of physical education (PE). The Affective-Reflective Theory (ART) explains physical activity and sedentary behavior through the development of core affects that are associated with PA and exercise (Brand & Ekkekakis, 2018). ART argues that affective processes are decisive for maintaining a physically active lifestyle in the long term. Positive affective-emotional associations with PA are therefore essential for lifelong PA behavior (Cheval et al., 2020; Chevance et al., 2019). This study, based on Limmeroth et al. (2026), emphasizes affective-emotional experiences in physical education as a means of developing core affects. However, it remains unclear under which conditions positive core affects can emerge in physical education. This mixed-methods study with N = 692 adults investigates, using retrospective data, which affective-emotional experiences adults recall from their former physical education classes based on open-ended responses and the PACES (Jekauc et al., 2020). The ongoing data analysis indicates that both the satisfaction and frustration of the basic psychological needs for autonomy (e.g., participation in decision-making or coercion), competence (e.g., success or failure), and relatedness (e.g., team spirit or bullying) shape affective-emotional experiences in physical education. In line with Limmeroth et al. (2026), the discussion of the results suggests that a basic-needs-oriented approach to physical education may be relevant for the development of positive core affects. To overcome limitations of this retrospective design, future longitudinal studies are necessary to derive robust practical implications for fostering core affects in physical education.

ID: 330 / Oral Presentations 11: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Moral action, Pedagogical psychology, Youth
Keywords: Sport, Youth, Basic Psychological Needs, Support

Teacher Support in Physical Education and Adolescents' Prosocial Behavior: Psychological Needs as a Mediator in Chinese Youth

Laura Primo[1], Juan González[2], Gustavo Carlo[3], Yin Yang[4], Cristina López de Subijana[5]
[1]Comillas University, Spain; [2]Universidad de Granada; [3]University of California, Irvine; [4]Beijing Sport University; [5]Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

Promoting prosocial behavior is a central educational aim during adolescence due to its close links with well-being, social inclusion, and moral development. Although prior research has emphasized the importance of prosocial behaviors, the influence of teachers—within Physical Education (PE)—on adolescents' prosocial development remains underexplored. In addition, limited evidence exists regarding the psychological mechanisms that explain how PE teacher support relates to prosocial behavior. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between perceived support from PE teachers, students´satisfaction of basic psychological needs, and students´ prosocial behaviors. The sample consisted of 558 Chinese students (mean age = 15.7 ± 1.53 years; 59.7% female). Participants completed questionnaires assessing perceived PE teacher support, satisfaction of basic psychological needs, and prosocial behaviors (directional, emotional, compliant, anonymous, public, and altruistic) within PE contexts. PROCESS macro for SPSS model 4 was applied to examine the mediating effect of basic needs satisfaction in exercise and model 8 to examine the moderated mediating effect of school location. Perceived PE teacher support positively predicted all types of prosocial behavior, except altruistic behavior. Satisfaction of basic psychological needs fully mediated the relationships between PE teacher support and each prosocial behavior dimension. School location (urban versus rural) moderated the direct effects of PE teacher support on prosocial behaviors. These findings highlight the role of PE teachers in fostering adolescents' prosocial behaviors through the satisfaction of psychological needs and underscore the importance of autonomy-supportive teaching strategies in rural school settings. This work was supported by the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (VSEMILLA22GLS).

ID: 507 / Oral Presentations 11: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Emotion, Pedagogical psychology
Keywords: emotional competences, affect, physical education

Emotion regulation in Physical Education - An intervention study

Pia Zajonz[1], Christian Andrä[2], Claudia Mächtle[3], Franziska Lautenbach[1]
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Emotion regulation (ER) is a key contributor to children's mental health, academic achievement, and pro-social behavior (Wong et al., 2023). Although meta-analytic evidence indicates that school-based ER interventions yield moderate effects, no existing programs incorporate physical activity (Schlesier et al., 2019). This is surprising, given evidence that physical activity can promote ER (Bahmani et al., 2020). The present study is the first to evaluate a PE-based ER intervention. Sixty-eight fifth-grade students (32 female; M age = 10.25 years, SD = 1.35) participated in a quasi-experimental intervention study. ER was assessed using the Process Oriented Emotions Regulation Questionnaire for Children and Adolescences (POEM-KJ; Maas et al., 2024), and sport-related affect with the Affect Exercise Experience Questionnaire (AFFEX-Kids; Kunz et al., preparation) four times: pre-baseline, post-baseline/pre-intervention, mid-intervention, post-intervention. Movement intensity was recorded via accelerometers

during each PE lesson. The 7-week baseline phase consist of the regular PE classes. During the 14-week intervention phase, students completed one 45-minute ER lesson per week, comprising theory-driven, sport-based exercises targeting a wide range of ER strategies. We hypothesize that ER improves more importantly during the intervention phase, than during baseline, while sport-related affect and movement stay the same. Results of mixed-measures MANOVAs indicated that in boys (but not in girls) functional ER increased significantly during the first seven-week intervention phase, but not during baseline ($p = .031$, $\eta p^2 = .219$). T-tests indicated that movement did not differ between both phases ($p = .11$). Thus, especially boys could profit from a movement-based ER trainings in school.

ID: 575 / Oral Presentations 11: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Elderly, Pedagogical psychology
Keywords: Positive Development in Sport, Sport Pedagogy, Masters Sport, Sport Psychology

Voices of Older Athletes: How Coaches Shape Positive Sport Experiences

Bartira Palma, Larissa Galatti
Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Brazil

Positive Development in Sport (PDS) emphasizes sport experiences that foster personal and social growth across age groups. Nevertheless, research remains concentrated on youth, with limited evidence on older athletes. This qualitative study aimed to investigate the characteristics of coaches' practices in sport settings involving older athletes, exploring their relationship with PDS. Participants included 80 athletes (71.91 ± 7.91 years old), three male coaches (aged 37, 50, and 57), and one female coach (aged 52), recruited from sport centers located in diverse socioeconomic contexts in southeastern Brazil. All participants provided written informed consent. Data collection involved brief individual and small-group interviews with athletes in a competition setting, focus groups with athletes, and semi-structured interviews with coaches. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis informed by positive development theory. Three main themes were identified: 1) coaches provide structure; 2) coaches hold a positive view of the age group; and 3) coaches identify with the athletes. Findings indicate that coaches who adopt behaviors aligned with transformational leadership, respect athletes' autonomy, design challenging and individualized training sessions, and foster a sense of belonging and emotional support contribute substantially to the satisfaction of basic psychological needs and to long-term sport engagement. Athletes recognize and reciprocate these efforts through commitment, valuing both their coaches and the sport environment. In conclusion, coaches who build emotional bonds with older athletes, respect their aspirations, reject ageist stereotypes, and intentionally organize pedagogical practices that integrate technical-tactical and socioeducational dimensions promote sport experiences that foster psychosocial development.

9:00am - 10:30am

Life and Death in Sport: Periodization, Grief, and Return to Play Protocols

Location: **048**

ID: 321 / Workshop 8: 1
Workshop
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Professional development and mentoring, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: grief, return-to-play, meaning-making

Life and Death in Sport: Periodization, Grief, and Return to Play Protocols

Teresa Fletcher
Adler University, United States of America

Athlete deaths are often unexpected, tragic, and can leave teammates, coaches, organizations, and communities devastated. The theoretical foundation for grief work used to consist of a series of tasks or stages, which runs the risk of oversimplifying a dynamic process. Current research and practice includes facilitation of adaptive grieving where individuals are aware of and express emotions freely and generate positive memories. Also, meaning-making, described as a construction of a revised life meaning after experiencing a disruptive life event, in this case a death or deaths (Nadeau, 1998) promotes healthy coping (Brody, 2019; Gaur, 2023; Neimeyer, 2006). Effective grief work and sustainable practice require more than theory and research alone, relying instead on a symbiotic integration of empirical evidence and lived experience (Fonseca & Testoni, 2012). Practical implications of grief work include consideration of the periodized schedule of training, practice, and competition and understanding the pressure to return to play. Participants will gain insight into how to hold space for meaning-making, co-construct rituals, and collaborate with athletes and coaches to develop return to play strategies. Presentation objectives include 1). identify the relevant theories related to grief; 2). describe extenuating circumstances or contextual factors that can complicate grief in sport; and 3). Provide recommendations for facilitating grief relative to the periodization schedule of the team or sport organization. Attendees are encouraged to bring experiences to share and collaborate to develop individual and team strategies for grief and return to play that can also be expanded to include non-death related trauma.

9:00am - 10:30am

Applied Mental Skills for Dancers: Self-Compassion and ACT in Practice

Location: **130**

ID: 199 / Workshop 9: 1
Workshop
Topics: Mental skills training, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: dance, self-compassion, ACT, mental skills

Applied Mental Skills for Dancers: Self-Compassion and ACT in Practice

Josef Bartos[1], Anna Julia Ferenc[2]
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Performing arts, and dance in particular, remain underrepresented within sport and performance psychology (Nordin-Bates, 2012). Dancers, like athletes, rehearse intensively, perform under pressure, and rely on external evaluation to progress (Tarasoff et al., 2017). However, alongside these similarities, important differences emerge. For instance: (1) dance performance is assessed through subjective judgment, leaving out objective measures (Chen et al., 2026), (2) dancers struggle with financial income even in top companies, even though their work is considered admirable, (3) dancers are hired through auditions, a special event not known in the sports environment, (4) dancers have strong tradition of handling difficulties on their own, etc (Bartos, in press). This applied, evidence-based workshop aims to bridge this gap by exploring both the parallels and the differences between dancers and athletes, with a specific focus on self-compassion (Neff, 2003; Mosewich et al., 2013) and the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (Hayes et al., 2006) approach. The workshop conceptualizes self-compassion as a performance skill (Luoma et al., 2007). Participants engage in role-play scenarios and small-group discussions comparing feedback processes in sport versus dance, followed by experiential self-compassion exercises. These methods target the learning objectives: (1) identifying similarities and differences between dancers and athletes; (2) understanding how context-specific vulnerability affects dancers' performance and wellbeing; and (3) applying practical self-compassion and ACT strategies. Participants will receive a handout summarizing key concepts and an easy-to-use self-compassion toolkit.

10:30am - 11:30am

Poster Session 1

Location: **West University of Timisoara**

ID: 135 / Poster Session 1: 1
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Group dynamics
Keywords: Phenomenological Study, psychological safety, team dynamics, sport culture

The Meaning of Psychological Safety among Soccer Players:A Phenomenological Study

Sungho Kwon[1], Gilyoung Jang[1], Seungho Chang[2]
[1]Seoul National University, Korea, Republic of (South Korea); [2]San Jose State University(USA)

This study explored how university soccer players in Korea experience and construct meaning around psychological safety within their competitive team environments. Six active players (ages 19-23, M = 21.2 years; 3 starters, 3 substitutes; representing forward, midfielder, and defender positions across years 1-4) participated in semi-structured interviews lasting 60-90 minutes each. Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's phenomenological method, yielding 78 significant statements that were formulated into 39 meanings, organized into 10 themes, and categorized into three major domains. Results revealed that psychological safety was formed through recognition of personal value, open and accessible communication, and flexible hierarchy with mutual respect. Players experienced psychological safety through tolerance for mistakes, fluctuations in self-confidence, and variations in performance outcomes. The meaning of psychological safety was shaped by cultural and generational shifts in Korean sports, experiences of exclusion and marginalization when injured or underperforming, and individual adaptive coping strategies. This study extends current understanding of psychological safety by demonstrating how it operates within traditionally hierarchical Asian sport cultures undergoing democratic transformation, revealing that psychological safety for these athletes represents not merely interpersonal comfort but recognition of intrinsic worth and potential for autonomous growth. These findings illuminate the cultural specificity of psychological safety formation in collectivist sport contexts and offer practical foundations for fostering athlete-centered environments in Korean competitive sports.

ID: 145 / Poster Session 1: 2
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Motivation, Physical activity, Youth
Keywords: adolescents, self-esteem, exercise adherence intention, benign envy

The Relationship between Adolescents' Self-esteem and Exercise Adherence Intention: Verifying the Mediating Effect of Envy

Taiwoo Kim, Sungho Kwon, Kyoungjin Yang
Seoul National University, Korea, Republic of (South Korea)

Adolescence is a critical developmental period in which self-esteem plays a central role in shaping health-related behaviors, including exercise participation (Belsky et al., 2020; Harris et al., 2006; Sawyer et al., 2012; Strong et al., 2005). Despite established links between self-esteem and physical activity, the psychological mechanisms underlying this relationship—particularly the role of envy—remain insufficiently examined. This study investigated the relationship between adolescents' self-esteem and exercise adherence intention, with a focus on the mediating role of benign and malicious envy. It was hypothesized that (H1) self-esteem would predict envy, (H2) envy would predict exercise adherence intention, (H3) self-esteem would directly predict exercise adherence intention, and (H4) envy would mediate the self-esteem–exercise adherence intention relationship. A cross-sectional survey was

conducted with 464 adolescents (313 male, 151 female) from schools in South Korea, recruited via purposive sampling. Self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, envy using the Benign and Malicious Envy Scale, and exercise adherence intention using the Exercise Adherence Questionnaire. Structural equation modeling (SEM) with bootstrapping was employed for analysis. All four hypotheses were supported. Self-esteem significantly and positively predicted both envy and exercise adherence intention, and benign envy significantly mediated the self-esteem–exercise adherence intention relationship. These findings suggest that benign envy—a motivationally constructive form of envy that drives self-improvement and goal pursuit rather than hostility toward others—functions as a positive catalyst linking self-esteem to sustained exercise behavior. Interventions that enhance adolescent self-esteem while channeling envy constructively may effectively promote long-term exercise participation and wellbeing.

ID: 137 / Poster Session 1: 3
Poster presentation
Topics: Group dynamics
Keywords: sport commitment, socially oriented goals, social identity, groupness

Socially Oriented Goals, Social Identity, and Sport Commitment in Recreational Team Sports

Sungho Kwon[1], Heejung Jung[1], Seungho Chang[2]
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This study examined how socially oriented sport-related goals, such as building close relationships with teammates or gaining recognition from them, are associated with sport commitment in recreational team sports and under what conditions this association is strongest. Grounded in goal content and social identity perspectives, we tested whether social affiliation and social recognition goals were associated with sport commitment through social identity and whether perceived groupness moderated the goal-to-identity pathway. Using a cross-sectional survey design, participants were 263 recreational team-sport athletes (176 men, 87 women) recruited from soccer, volleyball, basketball, and baseball clubs. Participants completed validated self-report measures assessing social goal contents, social identity, perceived groupness, and sport commitment. Mediation and moderated mediation analyses were conducted to examine indirect associations and conditional processes. Social identity fully mediated the association between affiliative goals and sport commitment. Recognition goals showed an indirect association with commitment through social identity, with no direct association observed. Perceived groupness moderated the path from social affiliation to social identity, such that the indirect association between affiliative goals and commitment was stronger at higher levels of groupness. No moderation effect emerged for social recognition. Overall, the results suggest that socially oriented goals may be linked to sport commitment through social identity, and that perceiving the team as a “real group” may be particularly important for affiliative goals. From an applied perspective, practitioner- or coach-led interventions may benefit from combining goal-setting strategies that emphasize affiliative motives with team practices designed to enhance group structure and entitativity.

ID: 181 / Poster Session 1: 4
Poster presentation
Topics: Built environment, Health, Physical activity, Social psychology
Keywords: physical activity, love for nature, eco-friendly behaviors, Theory of Planned Behavior

Fostering Environmental Awareness: Links Between Love for Nature and Environmentally Physical Activity Related Behaviors

Yannis Theodorakis, Aristea Karamitrou, Charalampos Krommidas, Aikaterini Violatzi, Maria Angeli, Evangelos Galanis, Mary Hassandra, Nikos Comoutos
University of Thessaly, Greece

The present study aims to investigate the associations between engagement in physical activity, emotional connectedness to nature, and both attitudes toward and intentions to engage in environmentally related physical activity behaviors. Participants were 672 students aged 9 to 13 years (M = 11.28) who completed a series of validated instruments assessing physical activity levels, love and care for nature, and—based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)—attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control (PBC), and intentions to perform pro-environmental behaviors. A serial–parallel mediation analysis revealed that physical activity significantly predicted love for nature ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$), which in turn predicted attitudes ($\beta = .25$, $p < .001$), subjective norms ($\beta = .24$, $p < .001$), and PBC ($\beta = .25$, $p < .001$). These three TPB constructs subsequently and positively predicted students’ intentions to engage in environmentally friendly behaviors (Attitudes: $\beta = .25$, $p < .001$; Subjective norms: $\beta = .23$, $p < .001$, and PBC: $\beta = .37$, $p < .001$), which ultimately predicted environmentally related physical activity actions ($\beta = .12$, $p < .01$). The study revealed that higher physical activity was associated with a stronger love for nature, which in turn promoted positive attitudes toward environmental protection. This connection also influenced students’ attitudes toward energy conservation, social pressure to act sustainably, and their perceived ability to save energy. Overall, fostering physical activity and engagement with nature in education is important for shaping young people’s environmental attitudes and behaviors. The study underscores the importance of integrating opportunities for physical activity and nature engagement within educational programs, in shaping both the intentions and actual behaviors of young people regarding environmental sustainability.

ID: 198 / Poster Session 1: 5
Poster presentation
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Leadership, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: Performance Psychology, Applied Case Study, Entrepreneurship

Applying Sport Psychology Principles in Entrepreneurship: A Professional Reflection with Cyber and Crypto Founders

Asaf Blatt
Ono Academic Studies/College of Management Academic studies, Israel

Sport psychology has increasingly expanded beyond the athletic domain to support performance in diverse high-pressure contexts (Fletcher, 2011). This professional reflection presents applied work with two entrepreneurs from the cyber and cryptocurrency sectors through the lens of sport psychology. Both founders independently approached the practitioner seeking support for performance demands related to fundraising, leadership, and sustained functioning under uncertainty (Hase et al., 2019). The poster describes the referral process and outlines key similarities between working with elite athletes and entrepreneurs. Interventions included performance profiling, pre-performance routines tailored to investor pitch meetings, stress regulation and recovery strategies, goal setting, task and social cohesion, and shared leadership processes. These tools, commonly used in applied sport psychology, were adapted to the entrepreneurial context and integrated into an ongoing individual consulting process. Alongside these similarities, the two cases highlight unique stressors less commonly observed in sport settings, such as pressure related to equity dilution, sudden withdrawal of investors, and long-term financial uncertainty tied directly to personal identity and livelihood. These differences required flexible application of sport psychology principles and continuous recalibration of intervention targets. This unique applied practice illustrates how core competencies developed in sport psychology training can be effectively transferred to entrepreneurial performance contexts. The poster aims to highlight the conceptual and functional parallels between sport and entrepreneurial performance, emphasizing how both domains involve sustained pressure, uncertainty, and performance-critical decision-making. Drawing on these similarities, it demonstrates how sport psychology can contribute to entrepreneurial functioning, while also requiring adaptations to meet domain-specific psychological demands.

ID: 236 / Poster Session 1: 6
Poster presentation
Topics: Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Motor development, Neuroscience, Neuropsychology
Keywords: Developmental Coordination Disorder, postural control, EEG, balance-N1

Using EEG to Measure Cortical Control of Reactive Balance Recovery in Children With Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)

Griet Warlop[1], Callum Jarvis[1], Richard S. Mills[1], Toby J. Ellmers[2], Greg Wood[1], Aiden Payne[3], Elmar Kal[4], Samuel Wood[1], Sally Payne[5], Thomas O'Brien[6], Johnny Parr[1]
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Children with DCD experience marked balance and postural control difficulties, increasing vulnerability to falls and related negative health outcomes. Knowledge of underlying mechanisms remains limited. A key neurophysiological marker of balance recovery is the balance-N1, a negative sensorimotor EEG potential occurring 100-200ms following a postural disturbance. This postural error signal typically increases when recovery is challenging due to larger or unexpected perturbations or poorer intrinsic balance ability. However, in some clinical populations or during dual-tasking, the balance-N1 amplitude and latency can become impaired, and balance suffers. This study investigates how children with DCD differ from typically developing (TD) counterparts in processing balance perturbations, focusing on balance-N1 and its modulation across varying conditions. Eleven children with DCD (age: 12.4±1.7) and 10 TD children (age: 12.5±1.6) participated in a balance perturbation task. They were stood on a treadmill that shortly delivered 72 sudden backwards-falling perturbations of unpredictable timing. EEG was recorded to capture balance-N1 responses to initial exposure of the perturbations and modulations based on trial repetition, perturbation size, size expectancy, and presence of a dual task. Real-life falls were recorded by parents using a 4-week fall diary. Further data collection and analyses are pending. Results are expected to clarify whether balance N1 amplitudes scale with intrinsic balance difficulties, potentially yielding greater amplitudes in children with DCD, or whether error processing dysfunctions in DCD attenuate the balance N1 response under varying task conditions. A clearer understanding of the aetiology of these difficulties in DCD will inform intervention designs to improve balance and reduce falls.

ID: 266 / Poster Session 1: 7
Poster presentation
Topics: Social psychology
Keywords: Group dynamics, psychological safety, team outcome

Psychological Safety and Team Dynamics: The Case of Dyadic Relationship Quality Between Team Members

Ender Şenel[1], Sophia Jowett[2], İlhan Adiloğulları[3]
[1]Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Türkiye; [2]Guildhall School of Music and Drama, UK; [3]Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Türkiye

The quality of interpersonal relationships is a fundamental determinant of well-being and performance in sports, yet the focus has predominantly remained on the coach-athlete dyad (Jowett, 2017). This study addresses a critical gap by providing a rationale for how athlete-to-athlete dyadic relationship quality (DRQ) predicts group-level outcomes through the mechanism of psychological safety. Grounded in the conceptualisation of the 3Cs (closeness, commitment, and complementarity) and Edmondson's (1999) framework, it was hypothesised that high-quality peer relationships characterised by trust and support provide the "scaffolding" necessary for athletes to feel safe taking interpersonal risks, thereby enhancing collective functioning. Participants included 314 athletes (Mage = 20.42, SD = 4.78) from various team sports in Türkiye, including football, basketball, and volleyball. Data were collected using validated self-report measures, including the Quality of Relationships Inventory (QRI), the Psychological Safety Scale, the Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ), and the Characteristics of Resilience in Sports Teams (CREST). Structural equation modelling (SEM) revealed a good model fit ($\chi 2/df < 3.0$, CFI = .97, SRMR = .04). Findings indicated that DRQ significantly and directly predicted psychological safety ($\beta = .35$, $p < .001$), team cohesion ($\beta = .35$), team resilience ($\beta = .51$), and collective efficacy ($\beta = .54$). Furthermore, psychological safety partially mediated these associations, highlighting that connected athletes perceive their environment as safer for vulnerability, which in turn reinforces team resilience and efficacy. These results suggest that psychological safety is a shared responsibility among all team members, not just leaders. In practice, coaches should foster open communication and peer support systems to cultivate the relational climate necessary to navigate the high-stakes demands of elite sport.

ID: 260 / Poster Session 1: 8
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Group dynamics, Social psychology
Keywords: Goal commitment, team cohesion, collective efficacy, psychological safety

Psychological Safety as a Pathway to Reducing Vulnerabilities Under Pressure in Football

Ender Şenel[1], İlhan Adiloğulları[2]
[1]Mugla Sitki Kocman University, Türkiye; [2]Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Türkiye

Elite football environments subject athletes to intense competitive and organisational pressures (Arnold et al., 2013; Rice et al., 2016), requiring robust team-level adaptation (Morgan et al., 2019). While individual resilience is well-documented (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013), there is a lack of clarity on how team-based resources—specifically goal commitment, cohesion, and collective efficacy—interact to foster psychological safety and mitigate vulnerabilities under pressure. Data were collected via standardised scales (e.g., Team Cohesion Questionnaire, Psychological Safety Scale) from 280 elite-level football players in Türkiye. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to test the hypothesised mediation model. The SEM indicated a good model fit ($\chi 2/df < 3.0$, CFI > .90, RMSEA < .08). Findings revealed that goal commitment significantly predicted team cohesion and collective efficacy. These constructs, in turn, were positively associated with psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999), which acted as a critical mediator in reducing vulnerabilities under pressure. Notably, while collective efficacy did not directly predict vulnerability, its indirect effect through psychological safety was significant. Goal commitment also showed significant indirect paths to reduced vulnerability via the serial mediation of cohesion and safety. This study highlights that goal-oriented structures and shared beliefs provide the necessary "scaffolding" (Patil et al., 2023) for psychological safety to flourish. Fostering a cohesive and safe team climate is essential for enhancing collective resilience and protecting elite athletes in high-stakes environments.

ID: 285 / Poster Session 1: 9
Poster presentation
Topics: Violence
Keywords: parental beliefs, maltreatment, youth sports

"You Must Turn All Eyes Blind": Parental Beliefs in Normalisation of Maltreatment in Youth Sports

Johanna Uuemäe, Andero Uusberg, Aave Hannus
University of Tartu, Estonia

Interpersonal violence in sports is a widespread problem with serious harms and no simple solutions. In youth sports, parents are capable of both fostering positive experiences and inadvertently normalising instances of maltreatment with their behaviour. However, the beliefs of parents guiding their behaviour have yet to be explored in depth. Informed by the reasoned action approach (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011), this study aimed to elicit the beliefs that parents of youth sports participants hold, which may potentially contribute to the normalisation of maltreatment in the context of youth sports. Semi-structured individual interviews (n = 24) and focus group interviews (n = 7) were conducted with parents of youth sport participants (N = 48), representing a range of sports, including a strong emphasis on ballet. Thematic analysis revealed that parents hold a variety of beliefs that may discourage them from perceiving maltreatment as a problem and disinhibit their intentions to intervene. These beliefs include seeing benefits in so-called tough coaching, wanting to fit into the sports culture as agreeable parents, and feeling helpless

when going against the system. This study draws attention to parents as active agents in the youth sports culture, whose beliefs, and therefore their behaviour, influence the system they are socialised into. This knowledge can be used to develop more effective interventions targeting changes in parental beliefs to encourage positive maltreatment-opposing behaviours.

ID: 358 / Poster Session 1: 10
Poster presentation
Topics: Emotion, Health, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Mental workload, competitive anxiety, burnout, youth football

Mental Workload, Competitive Anxiety, and Burnout in Youth Football

Verónica Tutte Vallarino[1], Antonio Núñez Prats[2]
[1]Universidad Católica del Uruguay, Uruguay; [2]Universitat de les Illes Balears (UIB- Spain)

High-performance youth football is characterized by high cognitive and emotional demands, which may increase vulnerability to psychological exhaustion. Mental workload has been identified as a relevant construct for understanding the subjective cost associated with sport performance (DiDomenico & Nussbaum, 2008). Recent evidence suggests that mental workload and competitive anxiety are associated with higher levels of burnout (Núñez et al., 2025; Tutte et al., 2025). However, few studies have simultaneously integrated these variables in youth football samples, particularly from a multivariate perspective. A descriptive and correlational study was conducted with 169 youth football players (M = 15.3 years, SD = 1.7; range = 13–18). Participants completed measures of mental workload (NASA-TLX), precompetitive anxiety (CSAI-2R), and burnout (IBD-R). Descriptive analyses, correlations, and multiple regression models were conducted to examine associations between mental workload, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion. Moderate to high levels of mental workload and precompetitive anxiety were observed. Emotional exhaustion was positively associated with somatic anxiety, cognitive anxiety, and frustration, extending previous findings in sport psychology research. Somatic anxiety emerged as the strongest positive predictor, followed by cognitive anxiety and frustration. Self-confidence and perceived performance were negatively associated with emotional exhaustion. Findings highlight the central role of mental workload and competitive anxiety in understanding burnout in youth football and reinforce existing evidence on the importance of emotional regulation processes. These results emphasize the need for interventions targeting anxiety regulation, frustration management, and the strengthening of psychological resources.

ID: 380 / Poster Session 1: 11
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Group dynamics, Social psychology, Violence
Keywords: interpersonal violence, empowerment, hierarchical structures

The Role of Empowerment in Interpersonal Violence Prevention: Examining Hierarchies and Power Dynamics - A Scoping Review

Helena Schmitz, Janina Jaspers, Jeannine Ohlert, Bettina Rulofs
German Sport University Cologne

Interpersonal violence, prevalent both inside and outside sport (Rulofs et al., 2022), is strongly linked to risk factors such as power dynamics, hierarchical structures, and dependency relationships within sport organizations (Parent and Fortier, 2018; Roberts et al., 2020). Empowerment is viewed by some researchers as a promising concept for violence prevention, particularly in addressing challenges stemming from hierarchical dependencies by redistributing power and reshaping social dynamics. However, existing research lacks a standardized definition and a comprehensive theoretical foundation of empowerment that explicitly addresses its role in hierarchical structures. This scoping review aims to bridge this gap by developing a theoretical framework for empowerment in sport and examining its relationship to violence prevention. The review takes an interdisciplinary approach combining psychological and sociological perspectives along insights from applied fields such as education, social work and organizational settings. A systematic literature search following PRISMA guidelines (Tricco et al., 2018) was conducted across nine databases, including peer-reviewed studies published in English. Data were analyzed using thematic synthesis with a focus on the mediating role of empowerment in power distribution and hierarchical structures. Findings indicate that empowerment operates across three interrelated levels - individual, interpersonal, and structural - and functions as a dynamic, multi-level process that strengthens individuals in lower-power positions. This review introduces a novel three-level model of empowerment in sport, highlighting the importance of aligning individual, interpersonal, and structural processes to effectively address power imbalances and support violence prevention.

ID: 420 / Poster Session 1: 12
Poster presentation
Topics: Emotion, Health, Human factors, Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.)
Keywords: sleep quality, mood, ultramarathon

Peri-Run Changes in Mood and Subjective Sleep Quality in Ultramarathon Runners: A Multi-Point Observational Study

Katarzyna Ciechanowska, Kamila Litwic-Kaminska, Piotr Morawski
Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Poland

Ultra-endurance events represent a model of extreme physical and psychological load, in which adaptation involves both emotional regulation and recovery processes. This study examined peri-run changes in mood and sleep across repeated measurements and tested sex differences. Among 74 recruited runners, 62 started the race, and 41 provided complete datasets (36 finishers, 5 DNF). Participants were aged 20–60 years (M = 39.9, SD = 11.1) and included 29 men and 12 women; all DNF cases were men. The Brunel Mood Scale and Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI)-based sleep measures were used. Five assessments were conducted during the peri-run period: at baseline (approximately two months before), on the day before the start, immediately after the race, and at 3 and 24 hours post-run. Time effects were tested using Friedman ANOVA, and sex differences were examined with Mann–Whitney U tests. Significant time effects were found for several mood dimensions. The largest changes occurred post-run and at +3h and +24h relative to baseline, especially for vigor and fatigue. Sleep quality was poorer on race-related nights than at baseline and during the preparatory period. Sex differences were observed for depression, vigor, and fatigue, as well as for selected sleep indicators, at specific time points. The findings support the use of multi-point designs in ultra-endurance research and identify the immediate post-run hours and the first recovery day as priority windows for monitoring and intervention. The results also support including sex-stratified analyses in future studies and applied recovery protocols.

ID: 429 / Poster Session 1: 13
Poster presentation
Topics: Psychophysiology
Keywords: Psychological Program, Mental Stress, Salivary Cortisol, Junior Karate Athletes

Effect of a Psychological Program on Mental Stress and Salivary Cortisol in Junior Karate Athletes

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Psychological stress is a common challenge for junior karate athletes, particularly during adolescence, and can negatively impact both well-being and performance. Salivary cortisol serves as a key biomarker of physiological stress. This study aimed to examine the effect of a structured psychological stress-relief program on perceived mental stress and salivary cortisol responses in junior karate athletes aged 14–16 years. Thirty athletes participated in a multi-week intervention including relaxation exercises and guided mental imagery, delivered by a qualified sport psychologist. Using a pre–post experimental design, perceived stress was measured via the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), and salivary cortisol levels were assessed as a physiological indicator. It is expected that the program will reduce perceived stress and promote adaptive cortisol regulation. Findings from this study may provide evidence-based guidance for integrating psychological interventions into karate training to enhance mental well-being and performance stability across athletes.

ID: 448 / Poster Session 1: 14
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Health, Physical activity, Physical literacy
Keywords: lifestyle behavior, mental health, psychiatric disorders, university students

Mental Health Problems and Unhealthy Lifestyle Patterns in Swiss University Students: A Latent Profile Analysis

Markus Gerber, Jan Hochuli
University of Basel, Switzerland

Mental health is a fundamental human right and public health priority. University students worldwide exhibit high rates of mental disorders despite available prevention and treatment, and many remain untreated. This study examined whether Swiss first-year students with distinct lifestyle profiles differ in mental health outcomes. Data were drawn from an international study including over 50 universities in more than 20 countries. In a cross-sectional design with self-selection sampling, 352 first-year students at the University of Basel (Mage=20.8±2.56 years; 66.5% women) completed assessments of sociodemographic factors, lifestyle behaviors, and mental health. Logistic regression analyses examined associations between lifestyle behaviors and mental health problems. Latent profile analysis identified lifestyle classes; between-class differences were tested using multinomial logistic regression models adjusted for covariates. The results show that a healthier lifestyle score was associated with lower prevalence of depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, obsessive–compulsive disorder, substance use, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and bipolar disorder. Favorable sleep, physical activity, social connections, lower substance use, adaptive stress coping, and reduced screen time were linked to fewer mental health problems. Three lifestyle classes emerged: one healthier and two less healthy (high substance use; socially isolated). Students in the healthiest class showed fewer mental disorders. Employment status and BMI predicted class membership. Within two classes, women more frequently screened positive for internalizing disorders and suicidal ideation, whereas men reported higher substance use. In conclusion, healthier lifestyle behaviors were associated with reduced prevalence of multiple mental disorders, underscoring the relevance of lifestyle medicine for prevention and treatment in university students.

ID: 474 / Poster Session 1: 15
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Mental skills training, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.)
Keywords: Sports Films, Cinematherapy, Sport Psychology, Sports.

Victory in the Frame: Can Sports Films Act as a Mental Coach?

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This study aims to examine how sports films can be integrated into psychological skills training through a cinematherapy approach, providing a theoretical foundation based on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, Self-Efficacy Theory, and Achievement Motivation Theory. Within this framework, sports films are proposed as a vehicle for vicarious learning, where athletes can enhance self-efficacy by observing and identifying with characters. Furthermore, achievement motivation theory suggests that films can shape athletes' need for achievement and fear of failure, reinforcing mastery-oriented behaviours. The study employed document analysis, a qualitative method. A total of 31 sports-themed films with IMDb user ratings ≥7.0 were analysed. The films were independently viewed by three researchers, who coded the scenes using a consensus-based coding framework based on established psychological skill categories (Behavioural, Cognitive, Emotional, Motivational, Social) to ensure reliability. The findings indicate that sports films can serve as a "mental coach" by offering vivid, vicarious experiences. Through identification with characters, athletes can develop emotional awareness, goal-setting, and internalised competitiveness. The dual-process model of motivation further suggests that films can shape athletes' automatic regulatory processes, reinforcing constructive attitudes towards discipline, focus, and teamwork. For example, within motivational skills, the transformation of competition into an internal driving force is demonstrated by the line, "A wise man learns more from his enemies than from his friends" (Rush). Sports films represent an effective complementary method that supports traditional training by enhancing mental resilience and providing coaches with a novel communication tool. Future studies are recommended to test these effects using experimental methods.

ID: 495 / Poster Session 1: 16
Poster presentation
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Elite sports and expertise, Mental skills training, Talent identification/development
Keywords: psychological competencies, athlete development

Mapping Psychological Competencies Across Athlete Development: A Cross-Sport Document Analysis

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Psychological competencies are widely recognised as essential for talent development and elite sport performance (Durand-Bush et al., 2023). However, existing frameworks often focus on specific sports or performance levels, leaving a gap in understanding how these competencies evolve across different developmental stages and sport contexts. This study aims to develop a generic, sport-overarching model of psychological competencies that considers the athlete's stage of development. Fifteen sport federations affiliated with a national governing body each developed and submitted formal psychological developmental pathway documents, generated through collaborative workshops with coaches, sport psychologists, and technical directors. A cross-sport document analysis was conducted using qualitative content analysis to extract, cluster, and interpret recurring psychological competencies and to examine their positioning across different stages of athlete development. The analysis reveals substantial agreement on key psychological competencies across sports (e.g., resilience, self-confidence), alongside variation in how competencies are defined and developmentally sequenced (e.g., enjoyment-driven motivation emphasised in early stages, perseverance and goal-directed self-regulation more prominent in later stages). These patterns were synthesised into an initial, integrative model that captures shared psychological competencies while respecting developmental progression. The resulting model provides a foundation for further refinement and practical implementation within diverse sport contexts. By translating sport-specific developmental pathways into a sport-overarching, stage-sensitive model, this study supports more consistent and evidence-informed approaches to psychological development in talent development systems. This framework supports practitioners in designing stage-appropriate training environments and interventions that align with athletes' psychological development across sport contexts.

ID: 513 / Poster Session 1: 17
Poster presentation
Topics: Group dynamics, Social psychology, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: peer relationships, youth sport, psychometric validation, team cohesion

Initial Validation of a Peer Relationship Questionnaire in Youth Team Sports: A Pilot Study

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Peer relationships within sports teams are key predictors of adolescents' psychosocial well-being and team functioning. Despite their importance, existing measurement tools rarely capture the specific nature of peer relationships in the context of youth team sports. The aim of this study was to develop and conduct an initial psychometric evaluation of a questionnaire designed to assess the quality of relationships among members of youth sports teams aged 15–18 years. The construction of the instrument was based on the integration of theoretical perspectives on peer relationships, team cohesion, and social identity. The questionnaire consists of 17 items. The development process included a literature review, construct operationalization, item pool generation, and expert assessment of content validity. A pilot study was conducted with a sample of 50 volleyball players aged 15–18 years. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using the eigenvalue > 1 criterion and internal consistency analysis were performed. The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. The results suggested a one-factor structure of the instrument and satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.80$). Given the pilot nature of the study and sample size, the results should be interpreted with caution. The findings provide preliminary evidence of the questionnaire's structural validity and internal consistency, suggesting its usefulness in research on peer relationships in youth sports and its potential application in sport psychology practice. Further studies involving larger and more diverse samples are necessary to achieve full validation of the instrument.

ID: 522 / Poster Session 1: 18
Poster presentation
Topics: Built environment, Consulting/ counseling, Mental skills training, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: sport and exercise psychology, psychological skills training, thematic analysis

"Every Athlete Needs to Understand How Their Head Works." Qualitative Investigation of the Practice of Sport Psychology in Czechia

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Sport and exercise psychology (SEP) is an evolving field with global recognition, yet its development in Czechia remains underexplored. This study examined how Czech SEP specialists work with athletes, the techniques they use to enhance performance, and their perceptions of the field's current state. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five specialists representing diverse educational and professional backgrounds and varying lengths of applied SEP experience. Participants held psychology and sport psychology qualifications obtained both domestically and abroad. All practiced independently, with some affiliated with organizations, and had experience with athletes and teams across performance levels. Thematic analysis identified common practices and challenges. Specialists emphasized athletes' self-awareness and self-regulation, frequently employing psychological skills training techniques such as concentration enhancement, imagery, arousal and anxiety regulation, and goal setting. The perceived effectiveness of these techniques was context-dependent and shaped by specialist-athlete agreements. Education and training strongly influenced professional practice, with foreign programs and hands-on experience often cited as key sources of applied knowledge. Findings indicate a fragmented state of SEP in the country, marked by limited formal education opportunities and the absence of a recognized certification system. This study underscores the need for standardized training, promotion of evidence-based practices, and stronger professional collaboration. It also highlights the importance of specialist supervision and the need to further evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. While limited by the small sample size, it provides an overview of applied practice within a national context, highlights issues relevant internationally, and can inform further international cooperation.

ID: 532 / Poster Session 1: 19
Poster presentation
Topics: Esports
Keywords: Esports, Arab world, Olympic Esports Games, mental skills training

Opportunities and Challenges for Integrating Sport Psychologists into Esports: A Descriptive-Analytical Study of the Arab Context

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The recent announcement of the inaugural Olympic Esports Games in the Arab region marks a historic shift, yet the psychological support systems for these athletes remain underdeveloped. This study examines the limited integration of sport psychologists within Arab sports organizations amidst the rapid growth of competitive gaming. Using a descriptive-analytical approach, empirical data were collected through a structured survey administered to a purposive sample of 124 participants, including professional esports players (n=88) and coaches (n=36) from five Arab countries. The survey instrument evaluated three dimensions: perceived need for psychological support, barriers to integration, and specific performance stressors. Descriptive results indicate that 78% of participants experience high competitive pressure, while 82% report a lack of access to specialized mental training. Inference analysis reveals a significant positive correlation ($r = .64$, $p < .01$) between the presence of structured mental skills training and reported team communication efficiency. Findings highlight that while athletes recognize the necessity of stress management and focus-enhancement techniques, institutional pathways for sport psychologists are nearly non-existent. The study concludes that the upcoming Esports Olympics necessitate urgent collaborative frameworks between academic institutions and esports organizations to professionalize the mental preparation of Arab athletes and ensure sustainable performance.

ID: 620 / Poster Session 1: 20
Poster presentation
Topics: Physical activity, Physical literacy, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Mental health, mental health literacy, physical activity

No Myth: Be Literate, Be Well, Be Fit (MentiFit)

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Adolescence is a sensitive developmental period marked by rapid biological, psychological, and social changes that increase vulnerability to mental health difficulties and unhealthy lifestyle patterns. Global and national data indicate rising emotional and behavioral problems among youth, alongside insufficient help-seeking and declining physical activity (WHO, 2022; UNICEF, 2021). Mental health literacy (MHL) and physical literacy (PL) are recognized as key protective factors supporting psychological well-being and lifelong engagement in health-promoting behaviors (Whitehead, 2010; Zhang et al., 2023). However, their interrelationships and the effects of integrated interventions remain underexplored. The aim of the MentiFit project is to examine the effects of PL-focused, MHL-focused, and combined PL–MHL school interventions on adolescents' literacy, physical activity, and mental health. The study will be conducted in Croatian primary schools with adolescents aged 12-14 years using a mixed-methods approach with a quasi-experimental pre–post design, including three intervention and a control groups, over a three-month period. Interventions will be implemented within regular school classes. Prior to the intervention, PL and MHL instruments will be adapted and validated; intervention content will be developed based on a literature review, focus groups with students and interviews with experts in the field. Outcomes will be assessed using questionnaires and objective measures of physical activity (wearable devices) before and after the intervention. Expected outcomes include validated instruments, evidence-based interventions, and educational materials. By addressing the gap in combined literacy interventions, MentiFit contributes to preventive education and adolescent health promotion, offering a novel approach to integrating physical and mental health literacy interventions.

ID: 621 / Poster Session 1: 21
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Emotion, Health, Motivation
Keywords: ULTRA-ENDURANCE, MOTIVATION, PERFORMANCE, EMOTIONS

Myth or Misclassification? Who Is Who Among Ultra-Endurance and Extreme Sport Athletes: A Cluster Analysi

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This project investigated the psychological profile of ultra-marathon runners, employing a comprehensive test battery designed to examine the link between personality traits, motivational states, self-esteem, performance outcomes and narcissistic tendencies. Contrary to traditional perspectives that linked participation in extreme sports to a “death wish” (Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2017), this study identifies a distinct psychological profile characterizing ultra-marathon runners. N=127 participants were administered a test battery (i.e. TIPI, RSES, NPI, SMS-II, PFAI, DERS, SSS) to identify patterns in the dataset. Our analysis is limited to ultra-marathon runners; we deliberately use published data on other extreme-sport participants to inform comparative interpretation. Individuals’ scorings were assessed, along with correlation analysis and K-means cluster analysis, highlighting relationships between individuals’ traits. Ultra-marathon runners tend to score higher in conscientiousness (females: M=5.44 vs. M= 4.71; males: M=5.38 vs. M= 4.57) and emotional stability (females: M=4.61 vs. M= 4.14; males: M=5.18 vs. M= 4.64) compared to normative data, and lower in extraversion and openness to experience, often associated with risk-taking behaviors. They also exhibit moderate to high levels of self-esteem (RSES > 25) and below average narcissistic tendencies (NPI <10). Cluster 1 – older, highly educated, high performing athletes, characterized by external motivational drives, lower self-esteem and greater fear of failure; Cluster 2 – younger runners with lower performance scores, driven by intrinsic motivation and showing greater resilience. These results empirically differentiate ultra-marathon runners from other extreme-sport participants (e.g. skydivers), portraying them as predominantly intrinsically motivated, emotionally stable and conscientious individuals.

ID: 646 / Poster Session 1: 22
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Physical activity, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity)
Keywords: Physical activity measurement, Accelerometry, Mental health, Asylum seekers

Discrepancies Between Self-Reported and Objectively Measured Physical Activity Among Asylum Seekers

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The study aimed to examine discrepancies between subjective and objective assessments of physical activity and sedentary behavior among asylum seekers, and explore whether these discrepancies were associated with psychological distress. A cross-sectional design was used. Data were collected from asylum seekers (n= 30, mean age 31.36, 21 females) living in a refugee camp. Objective physical activity was measured using tri-axial accelerometers worn at the hip over a week (for an average of 5.5 days, and 11.2 hours/day), while subjective activity was assessed through the International Physical Activity Questionnaire. Psychological symptoms were measured using psychometrically validated mental health questionnaires. The results showed that, compared to the objective measures, participants underestimated self-reported sedentary behaviour (p<.001) and light physical activity (p=.005), and markedly overestimated vigorous activity (p=<.001); no significant differences were found for moderate physical activity. Discrepancy scores for sedentary behaviour demonstrated small to moderate, non-significant positive associations with mental health indices (r=.30 - 38), while no associations were found for any type of physical activity and mental health indices (r=.01 - .09). Attrition analyses further indicated that individuals who did not comply with accelerometer wear tended to report higher anxiety and higher sedentary time. Overall, the findings highlight substantial limitations of self-reported physical activity measures among asylum seekers and demonstrate that subjective assessments may not accurately reflect movement patterns in this population. The results underscore the importance of integrating culturally adapted self-report tools, improving adherence to objective monitoring, and employing multimethod approaches in future research and intervention planning within humanitarian contexts.

ID: 663 / Poster Session 1: 23
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Emotion, Youth
Keywords: cognitive skills, psychosocial skills, adolescence, different sports

Association Between Sport Participation, Cognitive Skills, and Psychosocial Profiles in Adolescence

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Over the years, scientific literature has widely recognized the positive influence of sport on cognitive skills and well-being. However, research often overlooks non-competitive adolescents, prioritizing adult or elite populations. This study investigates how different sports categories, classified based on their cognitive and social demands, are associated with cognitive and psychosocial profiles. We present cross-sectional results (T1) from 292 adolescents (12-19 years) divided into five groups based on the nature of the athletic environment: non-contact team sports, contact team sports, non-contact individual sports, artistic sports, and non-sport participants. Cognitive skills were assessed using the Number-Letter task (flexibility), Arrow Flanker task (attention), and Stop-Signal task (inhibition). Participants also completed self-report questionnaires regarding the psychosocial domain (self-esteem, emotional intelligence and regulation, quality of peer relationships). Statistical analyses (ANCOVA), controlling for age and gender, revealed different profiles. In inhibition, non-contact team sports outperformed non-sport participants. Moreover, they demonstrated better reaction times and accuracy in flexibility compared to non-sport participants, non-contact individual sports, and contact team sports, while artistic outperformed contact team sports. Age predicted better performance in inhibition and attention, with males showing better performance for the latter. Regarding questionnaires, non-contact team sports reported higher self-esteem compared to non-sport participants and non-contact individual sports, with males reporting higher scores than females. Preliminary data suggest that sport practice in adolescence is associated with specific advantages in cognitive skills and higher self-esteem, varying according to the specific sport. Future analyses (T2) will allow to better understand the stability of these profiles over time.

ID: 673 / Poster Session 1: 24
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Esports, Mental skills training
Keywords: esports, applied sport psychology, applied challenges, sustainable performance

Opening the Doors of Esports: Expectations versus Reality

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Sport and Exercise Psychology (SEP) practitioners are increasingly entering into esports, yet the transition from traditional sports to this performance domain can be challenging and overwhelming (Horne et al., 2024). Drawing on over a decade of combined professional esports experience, this presentation critically examines the mismatch between expectations and reality when working in elite esports. Although traditional psychological principles—such as mental skills training, motivation, resilience, and team dynamics—are transferable (Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2025), esports organizations often expect practitioners to operate as broad “performance coaches” covering multiple out-of-game domains (Watson et al., 2021). Limited resources and survival-oriented structures frequently prevent the implementation of multidisciplinary support models (Zentgraf et al., 2024), placing responsibility for performance, well-being, and professional development on a single practitioner. Beyond role ambiguity, systemic developmental gaps characterize esports. Many players transition directly from adolescence into professional competition without

structured pathways for life skills or dual careers, fostering grind-oriented cultures and inconsistent learning behaviors (Abbott et al., 2022). SEP practitioners can address these gaps by embedding deliberate practice structures and performance habits within daily training (Laborde et al., 2020), while shaping learning environments from a holistic ecological perspective (Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2024). However, short competitive cycles and roster instability reinforce “quick-fix” psychological interventions, which conflict with the time-dependent nature of psychological change (Swettenham & Whitehead, 2022). Sustainable impact requires clear role boundaries, accreditation-based professional standards (Ramaker & Pedraza-Ramirez, 2023), and organizational alignment around long-term development rather than immediate results.

ID: 677 / Poster Session 1: 25
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Esports, Motivation, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity)
Keywords: Esports, Achievement goals, Competitive anxiety, Physical self-concept

An Explanatory Model of Achievement Goals, Physical Self-Concept, and Competitive Anxiety in Indian eFootball Players

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This study aimed to develop an explanatory model linking achievement goals, physical self-concept, and competitive anxiety in Indian competitive eFootball players, and to examine group differences across levels of play and contextual variables. Two hundred Indian competitive eFootball players (Mage=23.1, SD=3.5) completed the 3×2 Achievement Goal Questionnaire-Sports (AGQ-S), the Sports Anxiety Scale-2 (SAS-2), and two subscales of PSDQ-S: Global Physical Self-Concept (GP) and Global Self-Esteem (ES). Competitive experience ranged from M(SD)=6.4(2.8) to M(SD)=8.4(2.8) years across player levels. Structural equation modeling and Kruskal-Wallis tests were used. The SEM demonstrated acceptable fit, $\chi^2(18)=26.41$, p=.091, CFI=.993, RMSEA=.048. Task-approach goals positively predicted physical self-concept (β =.337, p<.001), and other-approach goals predicted self-esteem (β=.187, p=.014). Higher self-esteem was associated with lower somatic anxiety (β =−.196, p=.012), reduced worry (β =−.154, p =.043), and fewer concentration difficulties (β =−.240, p<.001). Players reporting greater parental support exhibited higher levels across achievement goal orientations, including task-avoidance (H = 15.35, p = .002), as well as stronger physical self-concept (H=9.02, p=.029), indicating that parental support broadly enhances motivational engagement and physical self-concept. Players aspiring to compete professionally showed higher task-avoidance (H=10.19, p=.006), self-approach goals (H=11.16, p=.004), physical self-concept (H=7.57, p=.023), and somatic anxiety (H=8.77, p=.012), indicating stronger motivational investment and elevated competitive pressure. Promoting mastery-focused goals and strengthening self-esteem may help reduce competitive anxiety and support well-being in Indian eFootball players. Contextual factors such as parental support and career aspirations play a meaningful role in shaping achievement motivation and self-perception within the emerging Indian esports landscape.

ID: 718 / Poster Session 1: 26
Poster presentation
Topics: Perception & attention, Personality, Professional development and mentoring, Youth
Keywords: self-belief, perceived control

From Fixed Beliefs to Functional Tools: Training Self-Belief and Perceived Control in Youth Football

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This presentation aims to address the discrepancy between training performance and match execution in elite youth football by examining how self-belief influences players’ ability to act under pressure. From a theoretical perspective, contemporary approaches in performance psychology suggest that passivity in high-stress situations is not primarily a learned condition but rather a default response, while perceived control, agency, and adaptive cognition must be actively developed. Based on this foundation, the approach presented here follows a practice-based design derived from applied work with youth players in high-performance environments and conceptualizes self-belief as a functional, situational tool rather than a fixed trait. The intervention consists of three core components: identification and externalization of belief patterns, restructuring through situational self-talk, and integration into short, repeatable pre-performance routines, with particular emphasis on moments of cognitive shutdown or avoidance behavior during competition. Observations from applied settings indicate increased behavioral engagement, greater willingness to take responsibility in high-pressure situations, and improved transfer of training performance into matches. These results suggest that training perceived control and adaptive self-belief may be critical for performance consistency in youth football, and the presentation concludes with a discussion of practical implications for coaches and practitioners seeking to move from deficit-oriented models toward a dynamic, trainable understanding of self-belief in elite development contexts.

ID: 111 / Poster Session 1: 27
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Clinical sport psychology, Personality, Well-being and quality of

life
Keywords: Eating disorders, Athletic identity, Systematic Review, Meta analysis

The Weight of Identity: A Systematic Review & Meta-Analysis of Athletic Identity & Eating Disorders in Sport

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Athletes show elevated risk of eating disorders (EDs) compared to the general population (Ghazzawi et al., 2024), yet sport-specific frameworks do not fully account for this vulnerability (Stoyel et al., 2021). Identity processes are central in clinical ED models (Verschueren et al., 2024) but largely absent from athlete-focused models. Athletic identity (AI; the extent to which individuals internalise the athlete role; Brewer et al., 1993) has been proposed as a risk factor, although evidence is mixed. This review provides the first quantitative synthesis of AI-ED associations. The review was pre-registered on PROSPERO (CRD420251023330; April 2025) and followed PRISMA guidelines. Four databases (PsycINFO, PubMed, SPORTDiscus, Web of Science) were searched for studies reporting AI-ED associations. Records were screened, extracted, and appraised by the first author, with ≥20% independently reviewed. A three-level random-effects meta-analysis estimated pooled effects, with moderator analyses of study and sample characteristics. Of 635 records, 12 studies (N=3,872) met inclusion criteria; 46 effect sizes from 11 studies (N=3,160) were meta-analysed. Studies were cross-sectional, Western-based, and mostly fair quality. One study reported significant associations between ED symptoms and specific AI subdomains. The pooled association was small and non-significant (r=.05, p=.21), with high heterogeneity (I^2=87.2%). Significant moderation was observed for study quality (r=.06, p=.04), use of validated identity measures (r=.11, p<.001), and proportion of lean-sport participants (r=.09, p=.01). Findings indicate a small but potentially meaningful AI-ED association, particularly in higher-quality studies and lean-sport contexts, highlighting robust measurement and methodological rigour. Identity-informed approaches may support screening, prevention, and early intervention in athletes.

ID: 117 / Poster Session 1: 28
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Exercise psychology, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Mindfulness, Self-compassion, Self-criticism

Athlete Students' Subjective Perceptions of the Mindfulness-Based Training Program on Mindfulness, Self-Compassion, and Self-Criti

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Purpose:

This study aimed to explore athlete students' subjective perceptions regarding the effects of an eight-week mindfulness-based training program on mindfulness, self-compassion, and self-criticism. It examined how athletes internalized the program and how it influenced their daily lives, athletic performance, emotional regulation, and interpersonal relationships.

Methods:

Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured focus group interviews with 14 participants selected via simple random sampling. Two focus groups were conducted, each held in two sessions. An inductive content analysis approach was employed to analyze the data. Coding and theme development were carried out using MaxQDA 2024. Codes were organized into sub-themes and overarching themes that captured athletes' experiences with mindfulness, self-compassion, and self-criticism. Researcher triangulation and systematic coding procedures were used to ensure credibility and analytical rigor.

Results:

Athletes reported increased present-moment awareness, reduced automatic pilot tendencies, and better refocusing during training and competition. They stated that mindfulness practices helped them stay calmer in stressful situations, recover more quickly from mistakes, and regulate emotions more effectively. Self-compassion gains included being kinder to oneself, reducing harsh judgments, and viewing mistakes as normal experiences. Athletes further noted positive transfer effects into sport performance and social interactions, such as improved communication and empathy with less interpersonal tension. Reductions in self-criticism were reflected in decreased punitive inner dialogue, rumination, and negative self-talk, supported by techniques like breathing, grounding, and mindful pauses.

Conclusion:

The mindfulness-based program enhanced athletes' awareness, emotional flexibility, and self-compassion while reducing self-critical tendencies, supporting overall psychological well-being and functioning.

ID: 144 / Poster Session 1: 29
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Health, Physical activity, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation, Social cognition
Keywords: Down syndrome, mental health

Role of Exercise in Enhancing Cognitive Function and Mental Health in Children with Down Syndrome Aged 9-14 Years: A Randomised Tr

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Exercise Effects on Children with Down Syndrome: This experimental study investigates the multifaceted benefits of a culturally tailored exercise intervention for children with Down syndrome in Sulaimani, Iraq. Down syndrome remains one of the most prevalent genetic conditions affecting child development, with cognitive limitations and mental health challenges significantly impacting quality of life. While exercise has demonstrated promising effects in typically developing populations, there is a lack of evidence-based interventions designed explicitly for children. The study enrolled thirty-eight children aged 9 to 14 years with Down syndrome, randomly assigned to either a structured 12-week combined aerobic and resistance exercise program or a control group. The intervention was carefully designed to accommodate the specific physical and cognitive needs of this population while respecting cultural contexts. Comprehensive assessments evaluated multiple outcome domains: cognitive function through pediatric-adapted testing protocols, mental health status using child-appropriate anxiety and depression inventories, and physiological markers including resting heart rate, blood pressure, and serum brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF)—a crucial neurotrophin associated with neuroplasticity and cognitive development.

Results demonstrated statistically significant improvements in the exercise group across all measured domains. Participants showed enhanced cognitive performance, reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression, and favorable physiological adaptations, including improved cardiovascular parameters and elevated BDNF levels. These findings suggest that structured, accessible exercise programs represent an effective, non-pharmacological intervention for simultaneously enhancing cognitive function, mental well-being, and physical health in children with Down syndrome. The study underscores the importance of developing culturally appropriate, evidence-based exercise protocols for neurodevelopmental populations in diverse healthcare settings.

ID: 161 / Poster Session 1: 30
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Coaching, Decision making and judgement, Emotion, Motivation
Keywords: regulatory fit, creativity, self-efficacy, motivation

Regulatory Focus and Sport Performance: First Narrative Review in Sport and First Empirical Examination in Sport Climbing

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Regulatory Focus (RF) distinguishes two motivational orientations (Higgins, 2012): promotion (seeking gains) and prevention (avoiding losses). In sport, RF may influence creativity – the ability to make original yet effective decisions (Fardilha & Allen, 2020). In sport climbing, where performance depends on adapting to ever-changing route constraints, creativity and self-efficacy – beliefs in one's capability to execute tasks – are linked to better performance (Llewellyn et al., 2008; Medernach et al., 2025). This two-study research reviews RF in sport and examines its relationship with creativity, self-efficacy, and climbing performance. In study 1, a narrative review synthesised 19 studies on RF in sport. In study 2, a cross-sectional survey (N = 99 sport climbers; 40 female) examined links between RF profiles, climbing self-efficacy, general creativity and climbing performance. Study 1 showed that promotion reliably supports performance in tasks involving exploration and creative decision-making, whilst prevention is more common, and useful, in roles emphasising vigilance and risk management. Study 2 found that promotion correlated positively with self-efficacy ($\rho = .26$, $p = .01$) and creativity ($\rho = .57$, $p < .001$), and fully mediated this relationship ($\beta = 0.104$, $p = 0.048$, 95% CI [5.16e-4, 0.0944]). Whereas prevention correlated negatively with creativity ($\rho = -.31$, $p < .001$), and did not mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and creativity ($p = .58$). Findings underline the importance of motivational orientations across sports. Promotion fosters creativity and adaptability and may provide a motivational pathway through which self-efficacy is linked to creativity. Prevention is less conducive to creativity but seems advantageous in situations requiring caution.

ID: 163 / Poster Session 1: 31
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Cognition, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement
Keywords: effort, deception, sport psychology, head fake

Mobilizing Effort in Complex Motor Tasks: Try-Harder Instructions in Deceptive Actions

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In simple, cognitive tasks instructions to try harder can mobilize effort and have been shown to improve performance (Steinborn et al., 2017), temporarily increasing the amount of cognitive resources used for the task (Kahneman, 1973). This study examines whether effort instructions could also improve performance in motor tasks of differing complexity. Basketball passes with and without head fakes were examined in a reaction-time paradigm. Try-harder instructions were presented in 25% of trials, prompting participants to "give a 110%" in that trial. To investigate if

athletic expertise modulates effort mobilization, basketball novices and experienced players were tested. A previous study (Steinborn et al., 2017) suggested a large effect size for try-harder instructions (ηp2 = .81). For the interaction between the factors “type of pass”, “ISI”, and “type of instruction” of f = √2 ∗ .25, a power of 1 − β = .80, and an α-value of .05, a sample size of at least 19 participants was calculated for each group. Results demonstrated that try-harder instructions generally improved performance, facilitating faster initiation times and movement execution. We also found a significant interaction between the factors “type of instruction (standard vs. effort)” and “expertise (novices vs. experienced players)” [F(1,52) = 13.27, p = .038]. Post-hoc tests revealed that novices benefited more from try-harder instructions than experts, suggesting that effort mobilization yields greater improvement when motor programs are not yet fully stabilized. The findings extend previous research on effort mobilization, demonstrating that try-harder instructions can improve performance even in complex (motoric) tasks.

ID: 241 / **Poster Session 1: 32**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Cognition, Exercise psychology, Physical activity, Psychophysiology
Keywords: auditory information, ecological sound, modeling, endurance

Auditory Modeling in Endurance Cycling: Effects on Performance and Perceived Effort

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The role of auditory information derived from biological motion in sports has recently been highlighted, but the application of auditory modeling in endurance sports, remains underexplored. This study aims to examine the effects of auditory modeling on cycling performance and perceived effort. Physically active university students participated in a within-subjects study over five days, with an interval of at least 48 hours between each session. On the first day, the anaerobic threshold power output was determined with an incremental test; on the second day, such threshold was checked with a custom test; in the other three days an exhaustion test was administered, under three conditions in counterbalanced order. Specifically, participants were provided with visual information about cycling frequency (RPM on cycloergometer screen), together with: (1) ecological sound of pedaling on a cycloergometer; (2) metronome sound; or (3) no sound (control). The dependent variables included time to exhaustion, cycling frequency, perceived effort, and a set of psychological and physiological measures. Data collection is still ongoing. We expect that participants perform better in both auditory conditions, compared to the control condition. If temporal cues are the only relevant information, there should be no difference between the two auditory conditions; if ecological sound provides relevant information beyond temporal cues, participants should perform better with ecological sounds compared to metronome. The outcomes of the present study will clarify the mechanisms underlying the effects of auditory modeling on motor performance and psychological and physiological parameters in endurance sports.

ID: 268 / **Poster Session 1: 33**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Cognition, Neuroscience, Perception & attention, Psychophysiology
Keywords: Cardiorespiratory fitness, Inhibitory control, P3 amplitude, Emotional Stroop task

Cardiorespiratory Fitness and Behavioral Performance in an Emotional Priming Stroop Task: The Mediating Role of P3 Amplitude

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Cardiorespiratory fitness (CRF) is associated with better inhibitory control; however, whether this relationship extends to inhibitory control under emotionally salient conditions and the underlying neural mechanisms remain unclear. Accordingly, this study investigated whether P3 amplitude mediates the relationship between CRF and inhibitory control during the emotional priming Stroop task. In a cross-sectional study, 66 middle-aged adults (50–60 years) completed an emotional priming Stroop task while electroencephalography was recorded. CRF (i.e., $\dot{V}O_2$peak) was estimated using the YMCA submaximal cycle ergometer protocol. Behavioral performance (i.e., response times [RTs] and accuracy) and neuroelectrical (i.e., P3 amplitude) indices were calculated and analyzed for neutral, congruent, and incongruent Stroop conditions. Pearson correlations and mediation analyses were conducted to examine the relationships among CRF, behavioral performance, and neuroelectrical indices, and whether P3 amplitude mediated the relationship between CRF and behavioral performance under emotionally salient conditions. Higher CRF was associated with faster RTs; larger P3 amplitudes were associated with faster RTs across all Stroop conditions. However, higher CRF was associated with larger P3 amplitudes only in the incongruent condition. Mediation analyses revealed that P3 amplitude significantly mediated the association between CRF and RTs only in the incongruent condition (95% CI [−3.560, −0.024]), whereas no significant mediation effects were observed in the neutral or congruent conditions. No significant mediation effects were found for accuracy. These findings provide preliminary evidence that P3 amplitude may serve as a neural mechanism linking CRF to inhibitory control under emotionally salient, high cognitive demand conditions.

ID: 298 / **Poster Session 1: 34**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"

Topics: Best practice, Mental skills training, Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.), Self
Keywords: self-talk, tennis, performance

The Role of Self-Talk Use in Winning Tennis Matches

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The study examines the role of positive and negative self-talk in winning tennis matches. The research records the self-talk used by junior tennis players and examines it in relation to performance outcomes. 39 international junior tennis players (27 males,12 females) competing in either a national U18 tournament or an ITF Junior tournament were randomly selected at the beginning of the competition and then systematically observed for self-talk episodes recorded in relation to their content, valence (positive/ negative), type (spontaneous/ goal-directed), match score at the time of occurrence, and subsequent performance effects. Tournament progression was documented to assess performance success. Additionally, 22 self-selected players completed the Organic Self-Talk Questionnaire for Sport (OSTQS – Karamitrou et al. 2025), allowing comparison between observed self-talk behaviours and athletes' self-reported tendencies. The findings provide insight into how self-talk patterns differentiate winning from losing players. The winners used 75,32% positive self-talk, while the players who lost the match expressed only 56,39% positive self-talk statements. Analyzing the effect of self-talk on the next point, 61,34% of the points were won after positive self-talk. Conversely, only 31,76% of the points were won following a negative comment. The effect on winning the following game indicates a 64,08% win rate after positive self-talk and 29,80% win rate after negative self-talk. The questionnaire results were statistically analyzed in relation with tournament advancement (e.g. 'I can't take it anymore' was significant ($p<0.005$) in favor of the players with better tournament results). The discussions point out correlations between observed data and questionnaire responses.

ID: 305 / Poster Session 1: 35
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Motivation
Keywords: effort dynamics, effort-performance relationship, theoretical integration, experimental design

Linking Effort and Performance: Extending the Theory of Challenge and Threat States in Athletes

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Effort is central to performance (Campbell, 1990; Inzlicht et al., 2018), but its relationship with performance is complex and influenced by factors such as task difficulty or individual capacity (Brehm et al., 1983; Shenhav et al., 2013). Given the complexity of performance, orienting frameworks such as the Theory of Challenge and Threat States in Athletes (TCTSA; Jones et al., 2009) are helpful. The TCTSA represents a promising framework as it focuses on challenge- or threat states (CAT states), and their influence on performance. Although the links of the TCTSA are well validated (e.g., Meijen et al., 2020) and effort is implied as mediator (Jones et al., 2009), effort is not yet explicitly included in the TCTSA.

Across four studies, we aimed to test if performance can be explained better when effort is explicated and integrated in the TCTSA. In study 1, we systematically reviewed effort definitions and operationalizations, integrated existing definitions, and provided recommendations for defining and measuring effort. Based on this, in study 2, we investigated experimentally that effort mediates CAT states and performance in a cognitive task with a negative link from effort to performance. Study 3 replicated study 2 in an endurance task. In study 4, we examined that CAT states and performance-expectancy shape the magnitude and maintenance of effort across time. Integrating effort expands the TCTSA to more adequately and fully capture competitive reality and provides a guiding framework to study and regulate the pervasive and sometimes debilitating effects of effort in sport.

ID: 457 / Poster Session 1: 36
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Perception & attention
Keywords: Affordances, Interception, Perception, Cognition

Mastering the Moment: How Target Distance, Target Speed and Additional Load Shape Affordances for Interceptive Actions in Football

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To perform well, athletes must perceive both individual and social affordances within sporting environments (Hettinga et al., 2017). Interceptive action is often crucial to sporting success (Travassos et al., 2012), yet research investigating interceptive affordance perception in open-play competitive sporting environments is extremely limited. This novel research investigates how dynamic factors such as target distance, target speed, and additional load influence affordance perception for interceptive actions against opponents. Across three pre-registered studies, university level footballers (n = 26) made action-based judgments on whether they could successfully intercept a target moving perpendicularly towards the space between themselves and an opponent. The position of the target

systematically varied in its proximity to the participant versus the opponent. Participants consistently overestimated their interceptive ability (M = 1.11, p <.001), persisting with manipulations to target speed (M = 1.17, p <.001), and additional load applied to players and opponents (M = 1.13, p <.001). However, exploratory mixed-effects modelling revealed that participants successfully updated their interceptive affordances with increases to relative target distance (β = -4.34, p <.001), and additional load (β = -0.85, p <.001). Participants were less sensitive to increases in target speed (β = -0.24, p = .176). These findings have wide ranging implications across many sporting and non-sporting contexts, providing new insights to understanding affordance perception in competitive sporting situations and other fast-paced environments. Additionally, this work has practical applications to coaching, highlighting opportunities to enhance interceptive decision-making during matches.

ID: 465 / Poster Session 1: 37
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Perception & attention
Keywords: Decision-making, perceptual-cognition, blurred, fine-grained

The influence of visual spatio-temporal frequencies on decision-making behaviour in sport.

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Decision-making in sport relies on detecting key visual information, comprising a range of spatio-temporal frequencies. Low spatial (blurred) and high temporal (dynamic) frequencies access the dorsal neural pathway, and high spatial (fine-grained) and low temporal (static) frequencies access the ventral neural pathway. The present study uniquely examines the interaction between varying spatio-temporal frequencies for decision-making, via a motor response in a sport-specific time constraint with gaze-tracking metrics. Skilled (N = 15) and novice (N = 14) participants (power analysis calculated based on effect size estimate [Ryu et al., 2018]) completed a decision-making task, where they observed large-screen displays of a penalty-pass scenario in netball, and passed to an on-screen teammate within 3-seconds. The displays featured a factorial combination of spatial (original, blurred, fine-grained) and temporal (dynamic, static) frequencies. Results revealed significantly greater accuracy for skilled compared to novice groups, and for static compared to dynamic conditions (ps<.05). While there was no significant effect of spatial frequency on accuracy, there were quicker response times and fewer number of fixations for blurred compared to fine-grained conditions (ps<.05). Area of interest analysis revealed that during dynamic trials, novices spent more time fixating on the teammate they passed to, while skilled participants spent more time on other teammates (ps<.05). The findings indicate resilience or adaptation to the varying spatio-temporal frequencies, although the spatial frequency differences in time and gaze may infer the neural pathways contributing to decision-making. Future interventions manipulating spatio-temporal frequencies may train these neural pathways to detect key information for decision-making.

ID: 469 / Poster Session 1: 38
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Mental health, High-performance sport, Policy

Promoting mental health in elite sport: perspectives from European organisational leaders

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Objective: High-performance sport environments can foster positive mental health in all their members (Henriksen et al., 2024). Nonetheless, despite the important role that organisational leaders and policymakers play in designing and implementing whole-environment mental health policies, their perspectives on mental health promotion remain largely understudied.

Methods: To address this gap, we adopted a multi-method qualitative design. We first conducted a large-scale qualitative survey with 92 participants from Belgium, France, Spain, and Sweden. We then conducted 20 in-depth interviews with organisational leaders and policymakers in the same countries to explore the themes identified in the survey data. All data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis.

Results: We identified four themes: (1) truths and misconceptions around mental health; (2) multi-level involvement in mental health policies; (3) cooperation as a key for successful policies; and (4) the need for sport and clinical psychology in elite sport. Our participants understood the nuances of mental health, although they sometimes appeared overly focused on mental ill-health. Their views also reflect how they describe current practices and policies. While there is consensus on the importance of promoting mental health in elite sport, assigned roles and responsibilities of organisational leaders remain inconsistent across contexts.

Conclusion: Although mental health is acknowledged as a core theme in elite sport, gaps persist in guidelines and best practices for mental health promotion. Our findings suggest the need to clarify organisational roles and promote coordinated, multi-level mental health strategies that integrate sport and clinical psychology to strengthen consistent, collaborative elite sport policy implementation.

ID: 479 / **Poster Session 1: 39**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Elite sports and expertise, Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: ROC analysis, professional athletes, mental health disorders, mental health prevalence

Insights from the Romanian version of the International Olympic Committee Sport Mental Health Assessment Tool 1 in Elite Athletes

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Discussant: **Zsófia Németi-Fehér** (University of Bucharest)

Accurate identification of mental health concerns in elite athletes remains challenging, given the overlap between sport-related stress responses and clinical symptomatology, and concerns regarding the sensitivity of current screening approaches (Anderson et al., 2023; Bär & Markser, 2013). To investigate whether the Sport Mental Health Assessment Tool-1 (SMHAT-1; Gouttebarge et al., 2020) screening tool accounts for potential mental health outcomes, we administered the Romanian version of SMHAT-1 to 368 active elite Romanian athletes (ages 15-38, M = 20.47, SD = 5.34) registered within the Romanian Olympic and Sports Committee (COSR). Factorial validity was estimated with a confirmatory factorial analysis. Sensitivity and specificity were estimated via Receiver Operating Characteristics (ROC) analysis (Wyshak et al., 1991). Results showed strong predictive accuracy for General Anxiety Disorder-7 (AUC = .854, sensitivity = .771, specificity = .822) and depression assessed with Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (AUC = .868, sensitivity =.853, specificity = .782). Moderate accuracies in classifying participants above and below the recommended thresholds were observed for the Athlete Sleep Screening Questionnaire (AUC = .767), Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test Consumption (AUC = .768), and the Brief Eating Disorder in Athletes Questionnaire (AUC = .743). Finally, the accuracy in predicting outcomes of the Cutting Down, Annoyance by Criticism, Guilty Feelings, and Eye Openings Adapted to Include Drugs for substance misuse was weaker (AUC = .609). Findings suggest that current screening cut-off values may overlook significant cases of sleep disturbance, disordered eating, and alcohol misuse. Future research should refine cut-off values to improve the detection of mental health issues.

ID: 527 / **Poster Session 1: 40**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Perception & attention, Psychophysiology
Keywords: information search, decision strategy, arousal, paced breathing

Decisive Breath: How Breathing-Induced Activation Shapes Motor-Cognitive Decision Processes

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Heuristics constitute adaptive decision strategies in time-pressured, dynamic contexts inherent to sport (Raab, 2012). Selective prioritization of a dominant cue may be further enhanced under increased psychophysiological activation. The arousal-biased competition (ABC) theory (Mather & Sutherland, 2011) posits that heightened activation biases information search toward the most task-relevant cue, yet implications for decision strategies remain largely unspecified. Across three studies (total N = 175, individually determined from Faul et al., 2009; Maas & Hox, 2005), I sought to extend the ABC assumptions to decision making in sport, implementing fast-paced breathing (FPB) as a novel activation-induction technique (Laborde et al., 2022).

Study 1 (n = 58) systematically investigated the autonomic mechanisms of FPB. Reciprocal parasympathetic withdrawal ($p < .001$, $d = 1.52$) and sympathetic activation ($p = .031$, $d = 0.24$) were elicited at 55 breaths/minute, indicating elevated activation.

Study 2 (n = 63) tested the influence of FPB on search and choice behavior in a basketball substitution scenario. Under high activation, search became more selective, and participants showed 54% higher odds of adopting heuristic strategies ($p = .006$).

Study 3 (planned n = 54) embeds this investigation within a representative, immersive basketball task and will serve to demonstrate the assessment of motor-cognitive interactions under increased activation.

Together, these findings indicate that FPB-induced activation shifts decision processes toward more selective search, consistent with the ABC theory. These influences translate to heuristic choice behavior, advancing theoretical predictions. Future research should specify how selective cue prioritization varies across activation levels and motor-cognitive demands.

ID: 571 / **Poster Session 1: 41**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Elite sports and expertise, Motivation, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19)
Keywords: Choking under pressure, Resilience, Self-confidence, Sport Performance

The Relationships Between Choking Under Pressure, Resilience, Self-Confidence, and Performance Among Athletes

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In the context of competitive sports, managing psychological pressure plays an essential role in maintaining optimal performance, and factors such as resilience and self-confidence can significantly influence how athletes react to stressful competitive situations (Weinberg & Gould, 2019). This study aims to analyze the relationships between choking under pressure, resilience, self-confidence and performance among athletes. The sample consisted of 104 Romanian athletes aged between 18 and 30 years old (M=21.92, SD= 2.74) practicing various individual sports such as: tennis, table tennis, swimming, athletics, karate, figure skating, who participate in national and international competitions. The measures included the Sport Performance Perception Questionnaire (Gomez et al., 2023), the Competitive State Anxiety Inventory (Martens et al., 1980), the Brief Resilience Scale (Smith et al., 2008) and the Self-Confidence Scale (Goldberg et al., 2006). The results showed that pressure correlates negatively with confidence (r= -.481), confidence correlates positively with performance (r=.296), resilience correlates negatively with pressure (r= -.501), and resilience correlates positively with confidence (r= .344). Results also show that the resilience predicts in proportion of 25% pressure. The results highlight the significant role of psychological resilience and self-confidence in the context of athletic performance under pressure. This study offers practical implications for sports psychologists, highlighting the importance of developing resilience and self-confidence in order to reduce the negative effects of psychological pressure and optimize athletic performance. Future research could explore the relationships between pressure, resilience, and performance using longitudinal or experimental designs to highlight causal relationships.

ID: 592 / **Poster Session 1: 42**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Cultural sport psychology
Keywords: athlete career development, career transitions, Lebanese sports, athlete migration.

Athletic Development in Conflict-Affected Context: Can the Lebanese Context be Informative of How Athlete Reach Excellence in Adv

Nathalie Jbeily, Denis Hauw
UNIL Lausanne, Switzerland

Over the past decades, research on athlete careers has moved toward more holistic and culturally informed perspectives. However, most existing models are still built on Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) contexts, leaving other environments largely underexplored. This study focuses on Lebanon as a case of a chronically unstable, conflict-affected context and explores how elite athletes make sense of their career development within such conditions.

Adopting an interpretivist perspective, this qualitative study used an inductive thematic analysis. Twenty-one Lebanese elite athletes (aged 19–45), involved in international or professional sport despite systemic constraints, were purposively recruited to reflect a wide range of experiences. Data were collected through in-depth life story interviews, allowing athletes to revisit key moments, challenges, and turning points in their careers.

The analysis identified three central patterns. First, career pathways were often non-linear and shaped by limited structure, with athletes navigating opportunities as they arose. Second, repeated disruptions linked to economic crises, political instability, and institutional limitations, were not isolated events but a defining feature of development. Third, migration emerged less as a planned step and more as a necessary strategy to sustain a sporting career. Across these patterns, athlete development appeared less as a structured progression and more as an ongoing effort to adjust to changing conditions.

This study contributes a contextually grounded perspective on athlete development in conflict-affected environments and reflects on the transferability of dominant talent development models to non-WEIRD contexts, emphasizing the need to situate athlete careers within broader sociopolitical realities.

ID: 609 / **Poster Session 1: 43**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: Environment, sport injuries, psychosocial, rehabilitation

A Holistic Ecological Approach to Injury Prevention and Management in Youth Sport: A Scoping Review

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Injuries are a major concern in youth sport. Traditionally, injury research has focused on biomedical and psychological characteristics of the individual athlete. Newer trends suggest that injuries result from dynamic interaction between athletes and their surroundings. The objective of this scoping review was to identify positive and negative environmental factors associated with injury prevention and management in youth sport. It was pre-registered in Open Science Framework, conducted according to guidelines of The Joanna Briggs Institute, and reported according to PRISMA-ScR checklist. We systematically searched five databases in November 2024 and

updated in October 2025. A total of 39 studies were selected, where 5 were reviews, 23 used qualitative, 5 used quantitative, and 6 used mixed-method designs. Based on the holistic ecological approach, 40 factors were identified and categorized into preconditions (e.g., lack of resources and equipment), processes (e.g., support from peers), structure (e.g., busy training/match schedule), and culture (e.g., normalizing of pain and injuries). In all categories, factors influencing both positively and negatively were identified, yet focus was primarily on negative influences. Our findings support the importance of environmental factors in youth sport injury prevention and management, yet these factors have so far been studied in isolation rather than as parts of the broader environment. Collectively, they provide an initial sense of how the environment facilitate injury prevention and management, but based on the current literature, we cannot say how these factors work together. Future research should examine how the identified factors interact and cohesively influence injuries in youth sport.

ID: 642 / **Poster Session 1: 44**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Sport participation, Adolescent mental health, Longitudinal cohort

Dose and Type of Sport Participation as Determinants of Adolescent Mental Health Trajectories: A Prospective Cohort Study

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[1]ENS Rennes, France; [2]Accare, Netherlands

Objectives. Sport participation is widely promoted as beneficial for youth mental health, yet growing evidence suggests that its associations vary across participation characteristics and contexts (Hoffmann et al., 2022). Despite increasing interest in sport as a developmental resource, longitudinal evidence examining how specific participation characteristics relate to mental health remains limited. This study examines associations between sport participation characteristics and mental health at two developmental stages and over time from childhood to adolescence. Methods. Data were drawn from the Amsterdam Born Children and their Development (ABCD) cohort (n = 1,882), with participants assessed at ages 10–12 (T1) and 14–16 (T2). Sport participation (weekly hours, sport type) and mental health, assessed with the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ; emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, and peer problems), were measured at both waves. Structural equation modeling with full information maximum likelihood estimation will be used. Path models will estimate associations between sport participation characteristics and SDQ outcomes at T1 and T2. Baseline-adjusted longitudinal models will test whether sport participation at T1 predicts changes in mental health at T2. Quadratic terms will assess nonlinear dose–response patterns, and moderation by sex and sport type will be evaluated using multi-group analyses. Results. We hypothesize that moderate sport participation will be associated with more favorable mental health outcomes, whereas both low and very high participation may be associated with increased difficulties, with variation by sport type and sex. Conclusion. Integrating stage-specific and longitudinal analyses, this study clarifies how structured sport engagement shapes mental health development across adolescence.

ID: 655 / **Poster Session 1: 45**
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Esports, Social cognition
Keywords: exergaming, cognition, social dynamics, interpersonal interaction

The Social Context Matters! How Physical Activity and Social Interaction Influence Executive Functions

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Meta-analytic evidence indicates that acute physical activity (PA) enhances executive functions (EFs; Chang et al., 2025). Yet, most research has examined PA in individual settings, with limited consideration of the inherently social nature of many PA contexts, despite evidence that social interaction (SoI) engages brain regions involved in EFs (Best, 2012). This gap limits a comprehensive understanding of EF benefits in intervention settings. Therefore, the present research systematically examines the independent and interactive effects of PA and SoI on EFs. Three sequential studies were conducted using 2×2 within-subjects designs manipulating PA (PA/no PA) and SoI (SoI/no SoI). Participants (N = 192; M = 20.84, SD = 2.13, 44.3% female) completed four (exer)game conditions, each followed by EF post-assessments (Eriksen Flanker Task; Stroop Task). Participants performed the (exer)game individually (no SoI) or in dyads (SoI) under physically active (PA; 64–76% HRmax) or seated conditions (no PA). Cognitive demands varied across studies: Study 1 (high), study 2 (relatively low), and study 3 (goal-directed coordinated activity in SoI conditions). In study 1, PA improved inhibition (η^2p = 0.09–0.17). SoI led to a speed–accuracy trade-off, with faster responses but reduced accuracy (η^2p = 0.04–0.14). In studies 2 and 3, PA did not enhance EFs, whereas SoI reduced shifting performance (η^2p = 0.18–0.24). No interaction effects were found. Overall, the cognitive effects of PA and SoI depended on task demands, with PA showing benefits in the high-demand condition and SoI impairing EF performance under relatively low task demands. These findings highlight the importance of considering social context in PA–EF research.

ID: 676 / Poster Session 1: 46
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: ACL injury, kinesiophobia, knee self efficacy

Understanding Kinesiophobia After ACL Injury: the role of Knee Self-Efficacy and Perceived Susceptibility to Sport Injury

Valentina Tomaselli, Irene Leo
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Kinesiophobia is a debilitating fear of movement due to the risk of pain or re-injury, particularly common among athletes recovering from anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) injuries (Bullock et al., 2022). Although it often decreases during rehabilitation (Lee et al., 2008), understanding factors that influence this fear, such as perceived susceptibility to sport injury (Gnacinski et al., 2017) and knee self-efficacy (Stigert et al., 2023), is crucial. A sample of 144 Italian athletes (M_Age=23.01; SD=4.45) who had experienced an ACL rupture completed Knee Self-Efficacy Scale (KSES; Thomeé et al., 2006), Tampa Scale of Kinesiophobia (TSK; Monticone et al., 2010) and Perceived Susceptibility to Sport Injury Scale (PSSI; Gnacinski et al., 2017). Multiple linear regression revealed that higher KSES predicted lower TSK (β=-0.09; p<.001), whereas higher PSSI predicted higher TSK (β=0.62; p<.001). Age had a small protective effect (β= -0.26; p<.05) and time since injury was not significant (β=0.01; p=0.809). The model explained 38.8% of the variance in TSK (adjusted R^2=0.388). A structural equation model (SEM) was conducted to examine whether KSES mediates the relationship between PSSI and TSK, serving as a protective factor. Results indicated a significant indirect effect of PSSI on TSK through KSES (β=0.348; p=0.001), alongside a significant direct effect (β=0.631; p<0.001). Time since injury did not significantly influence the outcome. These findings suggest that knee self-efficacy plays a crucial role in ACL athletes' recovery, highlighting the importance of targeting this factor not only during rehabilitation but also in the years following injury.

11:30am - 1:00pm

The Realities and Experiences of Thriving in High-Performance Sport. Discussing the Path to Sustainable Performance and Well-Being

Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 476 / Panel 2: 1
Panel discussion

The Realities and Experiences of Thriving in High-Performance Sport. Discussing the Path to Sustainable Performance and Well-Being

Daniel Birrer[1], Daniel Brown[2], Chris Wagstaff[4], Violetta Oblinger-Peters[3], Nadja Ackeret[1], Ana Maria Branza[5]
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High-performance sport is often defined by relentless demand for, and cultures associated with, excellence and winning. While such environments can enable performance, they also pose significant challenges to athletes' long-term psychological health and well-being. Contemporary thriving literature offers an important shift in perspective: success is not merely coping or surviving under pressure, but about fostering environments where athletes can grow and remain deeply connected to meaning, vitality, and well-being, alongside achieving performance outcomes. Thriving, in this sense, represents a dynamic process that integrates performance with psychological health, personal development, and supportive relationships within sport systems. This panel will critically explore what thriving looks like in elite sport and how it may be cultivated within individuals and performance systems. Applied sport psychologists involved in organisational programmes will discuss current initiatives aimed at fostering supportive, development-oriented environments. A former Olympic medalist, now practising as a sport psychologist informed by existential approaches, will provide reflections on the lived realities of pursuing excellence. An additional female athlete or coach will contribute perspectives on gendered experiences and the socio-cultural contexts shaping thriving in high-performance settings. Finally, a research-based perspective will connect these applied experiences to empirical findings on thriving, sustainable performance, and mental health in elite sport. Together, the discussion will explore how athletes, coaches, and sport systems can move beyond short-term performance outcomes toward conditions that support long-term thriving. Audience participation will be encouraged through discussion and interactive exchange.

11:30am - 1:00pm

ENYSSP: A Network Supporting Young Specialists in the Field of Sport Psychology

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 542 / Symposium 10: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: early-stage practitioners, career development

ENYSSP: A Network Supporting Young Specialists in the Field of Sport Psychology

Laur Nurkse[1], Pia Zajonz[2], Ionuț Alexandru Iscru[3], Helena Schmitz[4], Fabrizio Sors[5], Zsofia Szekeres[6], Grzegorz Więcław[7], Sanja Vrančić[8], Evangelos Manolopoulos-Dekaristos[9], Bernadette Ramaker[10]
[1]Estonian Military Academy, Estonia; [2]Humboldt-University of Berlin, Germany; [3]University of Thessaly, Greece; [4]German Sport University Cologne, Germany; [5]University of Trieste, Italy; [6]Cardiff Metropolitan University, United Kingdom; [7]Independent practice, Poland; [8]Independent practice, Croatia; [9]Independent practice, Greece; [10]Independent practice, Netherlands
Discussant: **Laur Nurkse** (Estonian Military Academy, Estonia); laur.nurkse@performania.eu

The early stages of a career in sport and exercise psychology are often marked by numerous challenges. Young specialists are required to make important decisions regarding their professional trajectory, navigate transitions from education to applied practice or research, secure employment opportunities, and adapt to diverse professional roles. Since the election of its first Managing Council in 2003 and the establishment of its statute in 2004, the European Network of Young Specialists in Sport Psychology (ENYSSP) has served as a guiding and supportive community for students and early-career professionals in the field. For over 20 years, ENYSSP has aimed to enhance the professional, educational, and personal development of young specialists by fostering connection, collaboration, and knowledge exchange across Europe. This network meeting provides an open and interactive space to introduce ENYSSP's mission, activities, and support structures, while actively engaging participants in reflecting on their own professional needs. Through its three departments – Research, Education, and Applied, and Research – ENYSSP offers opportunities for skill development, mentoring, international collaboration, and peer support. The annual ENYSSP conference, in particular, represents a safe and inclusive environment where members can share experiences, challenges, and aspirations, often leading to strong professional relationships and lasting friendships. The session will encourage participants to first identify their current professional needs. It will then explore what support is available through ENYSSP and how to make effective use of these opportunities. Finally, participants will engage in discussions on how the network can be further improved.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Capturing Dynamic Cognition–Action Interaction in Sport: Methodological Advances Beyond Static Decision Tasks

Location: **A01**

ID: 647 / Symposium 8: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: decision making, embodied cognition, representative design, computational modeling

Capturing Dynamic Cognition–Action Interaction in Sport: Methodological Advances Beyond Static Decision Tasks

Laura Voigt[1], Maša Iskra[1], David Mann[2], Arne Nieuwenhuys[3]
[1]German Sport University Cologne, Germany; [2]Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam; [3]University of Auckland

Decision making in sport unfolds under time pressure, during movement, and in dynamically evolving environments. Nevertheless, sport psychology has traditionally relied on paradigms that separate decision making from action, present options statically, and require simplified responses (e.g., button presses; Iskra et al., 2025). Embodied and ecological approaches challenge this separation and call for methodologies that capture continuous cognition-action interaction (Gordon et al., 2021; Voigt et al., 2023). To address the complexity of naturalistic actions, both computational modelling approaches and controlled experimental paradigms have been proposed (Maselli et al., 2022). Yet, no single study can simultaneously maximize internal validity and ecological validity. Rather, a coherent research programme is required to progressively build valid and generalizable knowledge (Raab et al., 2022). This symposium presents complementary advances in computational modelling, experimental designs, and progressive research programmes. First, Mann and colleagues introduce a computational model to quantify in-match football decision making from tracking and event data. Second Iskra and colleagues present an immersive basketball task that manipulates cue patterns to infer compensatory versus non-compensatory strategies during full-body pass execution. Third, Voigt and colleagues demonstrate how a selection-execution task in table tennis can be combined with computational modelling to test effort-reducing effects of simple rules. Finally, Nieuwenhuys presents a progressive research programme to discuss how affective states and performance pressure alter action capacity and bias perceptual-motor decision processes in representative high-stakes tasks. Together, we critically examine how task characteristics, movement demands, and dependent variables shape theoretical inferences about decision processes.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Oral Presentations 14: Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)

Location: **A02**
Session Chair: **Darrell L. Phillips**

ID: 373 / Oral Presentations 14: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Any other topic
Keywords: Self-regulation, Performance, Space analogs, Analog astronauts

Analog Astronauts' Psychophysiological Profile and the Type of Task Situations in a Space Analog Habitat – a Pilot Study

Malgorzata Siekanska[1], Lukasz Tota[1], Agata Kolodziejczyk[2,3]
[1]University Of Physical Culture In Krakow, Poland; [2]Faculty of Space Technologies, AGH University of Krakow, Poland; [3]Analog Astronaut Training Center, Krakow, Poland

Space analog habitats are facilities that simulate space conditions to enable studies of one or more aspects of actual space missions (Mintus, 2022). Such facilities provide full isolation, allowing complex research on the psychological and physiological impact of extra-terrestrial conditions on humans. The study aimed to examine the psychophysiological profiles of analog astronauts in relation to the specificity and type of task situations in an analog space habitat. Five subjects (Mage= 20.4, nfemales = 3) took part in a 1-week mission, for the purpose of which they were asked to complete scientific and technological experiments. Other tasks included daily reports, workouts, preparing meals, and mental training. Self-regulatory competence scales (i.e., the ACS-90 and a modified version of the SRL-SP) were administered. Body composition and aerobic fitness were determined prior to the start of the 7-

day habitat stay. Maximal physiological indices (max) and threshold parameters (RCP—Respiratory Compensation Point) were evaluated using a graded exercise test performed on a motorized treadmill. All participants scored high on the ACS-90 subscale (AOP), thus suggesting their strong performance-related action orientation. The scores on the SRL-SP motivation-subscale varied and revealed some potential problems in coping with difficulties. While differences in engagement in scientific and technological experiments depend more on self-regulatory competences, the adherence to other tasks and the level of activity were found to be related to both psychological and physiological characteristics. This pilot study provides information that can prove helpful in analog astronauts' qualification process, and pre-mission preparation (e.g., development of coping abilities when facing difficulties).

ID: 132 / Oral Presentations 14: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: music performance anxiety, descriptive population study

Music Performance Anxiety in Hungarian Musicians: A Cross-Sectional Population Study

Kaya Ariel Woytynowska
University of Pécs, Hungary

Music performance anxiety (MPA) is common and impairing in musicians (Burin & Osório, 2017; Fernholz et al., 2019), yet Central and Eastern European population data remain scarce. Building on a prior descriptive survey (Kenny et al., 2014), we report a cross-sectional psychosocial profile of Hungarian musicians and examine anxiety correlates and coping patterns. Hungarian musicians (N = 362; M age = 39.3, SD = 14.6; 73.5% women) completed an online survey (September-November 2025) including the Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory–Revised (K-MPAI-R; Kenny, 2009), the Trait scale of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger et al., 1970; Sipos & Sipos, 1983), the Competitive Sport Anxiety Inventory–Revised (CSAI-2HR, Tóth et al., 2025), a Kenny coping methods scale, and demographics (education, performance context, self-reported health conditions). We report descriptive statistics, subgroup differences, coping frequencies, and multivariable predictors of MPA. Mean K-MPAI-R total score was 97.2 (SD = 41.6). Higher MPA was strongly associated with trait anxiety and performance-related state anxiety, and inversely associated with state self-confidence. Younger musicians (<30) and participants reporting health conditions showed higher anxiety indicators. Forty percent of participants exceeded the established K-MPAI clinical cut-point as an indicative benchmark (Kenny, 2023; ≥105). The most frequently endorsed coping methods were increased practice, positive self-talk, and talking with a friend. Hungarian musicians show substantial MPA levels with strong links to higher trait anxiety and other health conditions, underscoring occupational and educational relevance in the region (Ostwald, 1987; Kenny, 2023).

ID: 409 / Oral Presentations 14: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: sports, performing arts, comparison, performance psychology

Psychological Research Jointly Investigating Athletes and Performing Artists: A Scoping Review

Veronika J. Lubert[1], Valérie J. Halter[1], Michael J. Schmid[2]
[1]School of Music, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Lucerne, Switzerland; [2]Institute of Sport Science, University of Bern, Bern, Switzerland

Sport and performing arts are widely assumed to share psychological characteristics, yet existing reviews draw on separate bodies of evidence from each field. This scoping review addresses this gap by synthesizing empirical studies that included both athletes and performing artists, with the aim of mapping study characteristics and psychological constructs examined across these mixed samples. Following JBI and PRISMA-ScR guidelines, we systematically searched four databases for empirical studies published in peer reviewed journals or doctoral theses that included athletes and at least one subgroup of musicians, dancers, or actors. After screening and full-text assessment, data were charted and mapped thematically. Forty-nine studies met the inclusion criteria; 63% were quantitative, 31% qualitative, and 6% mixed-methods. Regarding domain representation, 31 studies investigated musicians only and seven dancers only, while ten included both musicians and dancers, and one included all three domains. Additionally, 13 studies included control groups from the general population, and two included high-performing academics. Across studies, psychological constructs clustered into six thematic areas: (1) motivation and self-regulation, (2) mental health and wellbeing, (3) cognition and neurocognitive processes, (4) optimal performance states and psychological resources, (5) personality and dispositional factors, and (6) developmental and contextual factors. Most studies (39%) reported both similarities and differences between sports and arts, while 35% exclusively reported differences and 26% exclusively commonalities. This review highlights the need to consider the heterogeneity of the domains and the assumptions underlying individual studies. The findings indicate that transferring sport-psychology frameworks to performing arts requires careful attention to domain-specific contexts.

ID: 464 / Oral Presentations 14: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing

arts, military), Psychophysiology
Keywords: Firefighters, live-fire exposure, cognition

Effects of Live-Fire Exposure on Risk-taking Behaviour, Reflection Impulsivity, and Spatial Working Memory in Firefighters

Jannic Wälde, Günter Amesberger, Sabine Würth, Thomas Finkenzeller
Department of Sport and Exercise Science, University of Salzburg

During intense live-fire operations, firefighters align their behaviour to fulfil their mission. This goal-directed behaviour is shaped by inner cognitive and emotional processes. Under extreme heat stress, evidence for behavioural and cognitive impairment in settings such as firefighting remains ambiguous and underexplored (Thompson et al., 2024). This study aims to gain insights in how live-fire exposure alters risk-taking behaviour, reflection impulsivity, and working memory. A sample of 25 male firefighters (age: M = 34.31, SD = 9.32 years) performed an 18-minutes live-fire exposure in a container. Pre- and post-exposure, risk-taking behaviour was assessed by the Balloon Analogue Risk Task (BART), reflection impulsivity by the beads task and working memory by the spatial span task. Additionally, physiological and subjective parameters were recorded. Post exposure mean body core temperature reached 38.88 °C (SD = 0.42). Multilevel modelling revealed a reduced probability of pumping the balloon (β = −0.02, p = .002) following live-fire exposure. The beads task showed no significant change in the probability of drawing another bead after fire exposure (β = 0.06, p = .789). Likewise, no post-intervention alterations in working memory were observed (β = 0.14, p = .651). These findings propose that live-fire exposure specifically reduces risk-taking behaviour, whereas impulsive behaviour and working memory remain merely unaffected. Extreme heat stress alters the influence of affective signals, which may lead to an affect-driven aversion to losses in BART, rather than sensation seeking. However, deliberative reflection impulsivity processes remained intact, as well as working memory (Kahneman, 2011; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). A missing control condition may confound these interpretations.

11:30am - 1:00pm Oral Presentations 17: Personality

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Chris Englert**

ID: 436 / Oral Presentations 17: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Personality, Physical activity
Keywords: Personality, psychological needs, self-compassion, exercise

The Role of Personality Traits in Determining Basic Psychological Needs and Self-Compassion in Exercise Participants

Melek Erol[1], Gözde Ersöz Ay[2]
[1]Marmara University, Institute of Health Sciences, Exercise and Sport Psychology Graduate Student, İstanbul, Türkiye; [2]Marmara University, Faculty of Sport Science, Department of Physical Education and Sport Teaching, İstanbul, Türkiye

Exercise behavior is important for health, yet low participation rates indicate that the psychological factors influencing this behavior should be further examined. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory and the Big Five personality framework, this study aims to examine how personality traits predict psychological needs and self-compassion levels among individuals who engage in exercise. A total of 124 individuals aged 18–50 years voluntarily participated in the study (nmen= 48,Mage=21.80±4.48;nwomen=76, Mage= 22.46±4.29).Data were collected using a personal information form, the Big Five Personality Inventory, the Basic Psychological Needs Scale, the Self-Compassion Scale, and exercise stage of change. Descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression analyses were used to analyze the data. The results indicated that the strongest and most significant predictors of the competence need were extraversion (β=.779, p<.001) and conscientiousness (β=.819,p<.001).Openness to experience significantly predicted only overall need satisfaction (β =.650, p=.013), whereas agreeableness and neuroticism did not have a significant effect on basic psychological needs. In terms of self-compassion, the most prominent findings were related to neuroticism; it significantly predicted over-identification (β=.485,p=.004), self-judgment (β=−.320,p=.010), and total self-compassion (β=.881,p=.046). These findings suggest that extraversion and conscientiousness play an important role in fulfilling basic psychological needs by enhancing perceptions of competence among individuals who engage in exercise. In contrast, neuroticism reflects a maladaptive profile in relation to self-compassion, being associated with higher self-judgment and over-identification. This highlights the importance of promoting positive personality traits and addressing neurotic tendencies through psychological interventions in exercise contexts.

ID: 452 / Oral Presentations 17: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Personality
Keywords: performance, personality, competition

Exploring the Links Between Personality, Perfectionism, and Dispositional Flow in Athletes

Higinio González-García[1], Amaia Ramírez[2]
[1]Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR), Spain; [2]Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR), Spain

Previous research has examined the relationships between perfectionism and flow. However, the combined contributions of personality traits and perfectionism to the different dimensions of flow remain underexplored. Thus, this study aimed to examine whether personality traits, conceptualised within the Big Five framework, and perfectionism predict the dimensions of dispositional flow in athletes. A sample of 216 athletes (Mage = 25.30; SD = 8.67; 129 men) from various sports and competitive levels participated in the study. This sample size is consistent with recommendations for the analysis, given the complexity of the model and the number of estimated paths. The

software Mplus and the partial least squares path modelling (PLS-PM) package were used to analyse the data. Results indicated that extraversion was the most consistent positive predictor across multiple flow dimensions. In contrast, agreeableness and conscientiousness were negatively associated with specific components, such as a sense of control and clear goals, whereas emotional stability was positively associated with the experience of time. In conclusion, it is important to highlight the influence of personality in the flow experience, which may hinder the performance of those athletes who have not developed certain personality traits. Also, it is noteworthy that extraversion is the most salient personality variable for flow. This has practical psychological implications for identifying athletes who may perform less in certain situations, such as those with higher scores of agreeableness and conscientiousness.

ID: 538 / Oral Presentations 17: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Consulting/ counseling, Mental skills training, Personality
Keywords: ACT, psychological flexibility, personality traits, dominance

Is Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Everyone?

Tanja Kajtna, Anze Spreizer
Faculty of sport, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

A large body of research demonstrates the effectiveness of ACT-based interventions in improving various aspects of mental health and overall functioning (Hayes et al., 2006; Hayes et al., 2011; Kashdan & Rottenberg, 2010; Yadavaia et al, 2014). The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of ACT interventions in order to improve psychological flexibility (Doorley et al., 2020) with respect to participants' personality traits. 60 young physically active adults aged between 20 and 25 years participated – 29 participated in the experimental group - training included 8 interventions that took place once a week, 31 participated in the control group, which had no intervention. All participants completed Big Five Questionnaire (BFQ - Caprara, et al., 1997) and Multidimensional psychological flexibility inventory (MPFI - Rolffs et al., 2018) questionnaires at baseline, before the interventions started and MPFI was applied again after 10 weeks in both groups. Our results showed that after 8 training sessions psychological inflexibility decreased in the experimental group and interestingly, a decrease in psychological flexibility occurred in the control group. When we correlated personality traits, as measured with the BFQ, with changes in psychological flexibility and inflexibilty, we found that dominance negatively predicted the effect of change in most psychological flexibility processes in the experimental group. We can thus conclude that the role of personality traits is important when using ACT with clients and that the answer to the title question is "no" - we should consider the clients' personality before using ACT interventions with them.

ID: 619 / Oral Presentations 17: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Emotion, Health, Motivation
Keywords: ULTRA-MARATHONS, PERFORMANCE, MOTIVATION

Beyond Sensation Seeking: Rethinking Ultra-Endurance Participation Through an Integrative Framework

Priscilla Fabrizi[1], Abel Nogueira Lopez[2], Dominik Stefan Mihalits[1]
[1]Sigmund Freud University Vienna, Austria; [2]University of Burgos, Spain

Sport psychology has associated extreme sports participation with the "adrenaline buzz" (Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2017). Recent scholarship suggests that extreme-sport engagement may reflect complex psychological processes beyond risk-oriented explanations. Other studies have linked voluntary risk-taking behaviours to "physical mastery, personal control, self-sufficiency and efficacy" (Brymer & Houge Mackenzie, 2017, p. 7). Building on this discourse, this study proposes an integrative framework for understanding ultra-marathon participants as a distinct psychological phenomenon. We examine how personality traits, motivational states, self-esteem, performance outcomes and narcissism interact to shape the psychological profile of ultra-endurance athletes. N=127 participants were administered a multi-dimensional battery of tests designed to identify psychological patterns. Participants provided demographic and sport-related information, including training history and performance indicators. Test scoring, correlation and cluster analysis highlighted relationships between individuals' traits, revealing a profile that diverges from traditional perspectives. Ultramarathon runners tend to be conscientious and emotionally stable, demonstrating higher scores compared to norm data (conscientiousness – females: M=5.44 vs. M:4.71; males: M=5.38 vs. M=4.57; emotional stability – females: M=4.61 vs. M=4.14; males: M=5.18 vs. M=4.64). Cluster analysis revealed two clusters: Cluster 1 (majority) with higher conscientiousness and emotional stability; Cluster 2 (smaller) with relatively higher sensation seeking and lower self-regulation, yet still closer to the general sample than to classic risk-seeking profiles. Ultra-marathon runners are driven less by sensation seeking and more by self-regulatory, mastery-oriented and internally structured motivational processes. These findings offer a refined theoretical perspective on ultra-endurance participants and challenge prevailing assumptions within sport psychology.

ID: 443 / Oral Presentations 17: 5
Oral presentations

Topics: Health, Personality, Physical activity
Keywords: Volition, Physical Activity, VEQ-I, PID-5

Could Volition Enhance Physical Activity Levels? A Mediation Analysis in a Cohort of University Students Using PID-5

Matteo De Angelis[1], Vincenzo Prigitano[2], Francesca Greco[3], Maurizio Bertollo[1,4], Faten Hamdi[5], Gian Pietro Emerenziani[2]

[1]Department of Medicine and Aging Sciences, University of Chieti-Pescara "G. d'Annunzio", Chieti, Italy; [2]Department of Experimental and Clinical Medicine, Magna Graecia University; [3]Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, University of Calabria; [4]Behavioral Imaging and Neural Dynamics Center, University of Chieti-Pescara "G. d'Annunzio", Chieti, Italy; [5]High Institute of Sport and Physical Education, University of Jendouba, El Kef, Tunisia

The aim of this study was to examine whether Volition may increase Physical Activity (PA) levels in adults . The Personality Inventory for the DSM-5 (PID-5) has previously been used with non-clinical university populations (Bach et al., 2017); therefore, the same approach was adopted in the present study. A total of 124 university students (70 males, 54 females; mean age = 21.12 ± 2.04 years) completed the PID-5 (Adult Version), the Global Physical Activity Questionnaire (GPA-Q), and the Volition in Exercise Questionnaire (VEQ-I) (Gallotta et al., 2021). A mediation analysis was conducted using the PROCESS function (Hayes, 2022) for R (R Core Team, 2025). The maladaptive personality traits (PT) were used as Independent Variable (X), Volition factors as Mediators (M) and PA levels as Dependent Variable (Y). All PT were tested, however, only "Grandiosity" and "Deceitfulness" were statistically significant. Similarly, among the personality domains, only "Antagonism" and "Disinhibition" were significant. Volition Inhibition (VI), Volition Facilitation (VF), and the Self-Confidence (SC) item were included as mediators. No direct effect between PT and PA levels has been found. Results indicated that maladaptive personality traits were associated with higher levels of volition (VI, VF, SC), which in turn predicted higher PA levels. These results showed that individuals with maladaptive PT might possess higher Volition — specifically increased VI/VF/SC — that translates into a stronger drive to initiate and maintain PA behaviour. Hence, practically, sport psychologists should target volition, for example by setting realistic objectives, to maximize exercise adherence, rather than attempting to modify the PT.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Embodied Self-Talk and Dynamic Imagery: Applied Strategies for Enhancing Attention and Self-Regulation in Sports

Location: **A10**

ID: 261 / Workshop 12: 1
Workshop
Topics: Mental skills training, Neuroscience, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Perception & attention
Keywords: mental imagery, applied sport psychology, motor performance, attention and self-regulation

Embodied Self-Talk and Dynamic Imagery: Applied Strategies for Enhancing Attention and Self-Regulation in Sports

Amit Abraham PhD, Eric Franklin
Institute for Franklin Method, Switzerland

Mental imagery and self-talk are two widely used psychological skills in sport. Yet, they are rarely trained in conjunction with actual sports performance and scenarios. This applied workshop presents an evidence-based embodied approach to self-talk and dynamic imagery, which are systematically integrated into physical movement and sports performance, with the goal of improving cognitive (attentional focus, self-regulation) and motor (balance, breathing) spheres of sports performance under varying sensory, cognitive and environmental demands, whilst relying upon the Equivalence Theory and PETTLEP Model. Participants will (a) experience how positive self-talk affects movement quality, coordination, and perceived effort during execution; (b) apply dynamic imagery embedded in movement to support attentional focus and self-regulation; and (c) identify practical strategies for integrating embodied psychological skills into training, performance, competition and recovery settings. This workshop involves active participation through guided experiential exercises and demonstrations. Participants engage in rhythmic movement, balance and orientation challenges, and breathing-based regulation. These activities are paired with anatomically grounded imagery and contrasting self-talk cues while performing coordinated movements under increasing cognitive load (e.g., dual-tasking, levels of exercise complexity, etc.). This approach is informed by scientific research on motor imagery, self-talk, attention, and action-perception coupling, suggesting that psychological skills are most effective when trained within movement itself (e.g., Abraham et al., 2019; Gose & Abraham, 2021; Guillot & Collet, 2008). Participants will receive a digital handout summarizing key exercises, applied self-talk and imagery frameworks, and guidance for adapting the methods to sport and movement practice.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Oral Presentations 15: Youth

Location: **A11**
Session Chair: **Sascha Leisterer-Härtig**

ID: 463 / Oral Presentations 15: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Physical activity, Youth
Keywords: Active Transportation, Physical Activity, Child Autonomy, Active Schools

The Shrinking Horizon: A Generation Effect on Children's Independent Mobility

Rita Cordovil[1], Luis Paulo Rodrigues[2], Henrique Brito[1], André Pombo[3], Asas Research Group[1]
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Over recent decades, children's independence and physical activity have decreased drastically, jeopardizing their health and well-being. This study aims to describe and compare Portuguese parent-sibling dyads data on children's independent mobility. A total of 5210 parents of children aged 5 to 17 from all Portuguese NUTS3 regions completed the Active Streets Around Schools (ASAS) online survey. Paired sample t-tests were used to compare the age for the different mobility licenses between generations. Frequency analysis was used to analyze barriers to independent mobility. Findings confirm a trend toward later independence. On average, children are granted "mobility licenses" one to three years later than their parents were. Current mean ages for unsupervised activities are: walking to school (11.5 years), crossing major roads (10.5 years), using public transport (12 years), and being outdoors after dark (13 years) (all ps<0.001 when compared to parents). While children learn to ride bicycles ten months earlier than their parents did (mean age 6.7), they are restricted from cycling on main roads until age 12.3. Parents identified four primary barriers to autonomy: Motor traffic (49.5%); Fear of abduction (35.5%); Risk of assault (35.4%); Weight of school backpacks (26.8%). The data reveals a well-established intergenerational shift toward increasingly restrictive independent mobility. This growing parental overprotection and environmental concern significantly limits children's opportunities for autonomous development and healthy lifestyles.

ID: 573 / **Oral Presentations 15: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Human factors, Social psychology
Keywords: social justice, equity, psychological assessment, positive development

Measuring Critical Consciousness in Youth Sport: Psychometric Evidence from Brazil

Evandro Peixoto[1], Amanda Romano[1], Maynara Silva[1], Martin Camiré[2]
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Sport has been recognized as a context that may foster athletes' critical consciousness, defined as the ability to recognize, analyze, and challenge oppressive social forces. Grounded in Paulo Freire's theory, the Critical Consciousness in Sport Scale (CCSS) was developed to assess critical reflection, political efficacy, and critical action in response to racism, homophobia, sexism, and classism in sport. Initial content validity and exploratory analysis supporting the CCSS in an adult athlete sample (Peixoto et al., 2025). This study aimed to estimate additional validity evidence and reliability of the CCSS in Brazilian youth athletes. Study 1 included 280 athletes (Mage = 17.07) and Study 2, 220 athletes (Mage = 15.80), aged 12–24, from diverse sports and competitive levels. Confirmatory factor analyses tested the 36-item three-factor structure. Measurement invariance was tested across age (12–18 vs. 19–24) and gender. Item Response Theory analyses (Rating Scale Model) examined item difficulty and fit. Study 2 also tested validity evidence based on relations with other variables using the Life Skills Transfer in Sport Scale. The CCSS showed good model fit (Study 1: CFI = .952, TLI = .948, RMSEA = .108; Study 2: CFI = .985, TLI = .984, RMSEA = .081). Subscales demonstrated strong reliability. The model was invariant across age and sex. IRT results indicated adequate item fit and appropriate distribution of item difficulty. CCSS scores correlated positively with life skills (e.g., teamwork, persistence, respect, responsibility). Findings provide strong psychometric support for the CCSS in Brazilian youth athletes, supporting its use to investigate critical consciousness.

ID: 286 / **Oral Presentations 15: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Youth
Keywords: Youth Sport, Engagement, Disengagement, Organization

Exploring Engagement and Disengagement in Youth Sport Through the Lens of a Multi-Level Sport Organization

Elin Sievert[1], Louise Davis[1], Camilla Knight[2,3,4], Bård Erlend Solstad[3], Andreas Stenling[1,3]
[1]Department of Psychology & Umeå School of Sport Sciences, Umeå University, Sweden; [2]Department of Sport and Exercise Science, Swansea University, UK; [3]Department of Sport Science and Physical Education, University of Agder, Norway; [4]Greenhouse Sports, UK

Multiple individual and psychological factors influence engagement and disengagement in organized youth sport (Battaglia et al., 2024). However, how broader organizational contexts and systems surrounding young people influence their engagement remains critically under-explored. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how the Swedish Gymnastics Federation understand, implement, and evaluate policies and strategies, that facilitate engagement and prevent disengagement in youth gymnastics. A secondary aim was to explore how these practices align or misalign across different levels of the federation. A qualitative description methodology (Sandelowski, 2010) was used. Eight focus groups and five interviews were conducted with a total of 34 participants, across four levels of the Swedish Gymnastics Federation: the National Office, National Committees, Regional Offices, and Club Boards. We employed the three flows of activity outlined by Miles et al., (2019), including data condensation, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions. Data analysis led to the construction of three interconnected themes: 1) Navigating a Complex Organizational Structure, 2) The Clash of Good Intentions, and 3) The Operational Grind. These themes reveal alignment and misalignment regarding the existing policies, strategies, and initiatives aimed at facilitating engagement. Sport organizations, particularly those operating across multiple structural levels, may benefit from strengthening shared understandings of engagement related policies and strategies, and ensuring that implementation and evaluation processes are aligned throughout the system. These findings necessitate the creation of social and structural coherence, as well as development of targeted strategies that actively support engagement and reduce disengagement.

ID: 681 / Oral Presentations 15: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Youth
Keywords: Community Youth Sport, Equity and Access, and Sport Systems

Reimagining Youth Sport: Insights from Canadian sport leaders

Sasha Gollish
University of Toronto

Community sport plays a critical role in supporting physical, social, and developmental outcomes for youth. Unfortunately, participation in Canada remains uneven and shaped by persistent structural and systemic challenges. This study sought to generate a system-level understanding of community youth sport in Canada and was guided by the overarching research question “From coast to coast to coast, what could a reimagined equitable, diverse, inclusive, and accessible youth sport system look like?”. Interviews from 45 Canadian community sport organizational representatives were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. The interviews (Mlength = 36 (SD = 6.5); Range 23 to 48.5 minutes) highlight five interconnected themes influencing youth sport experiences: (a) Youth-Centred Approaches (sub-themes: Listening to and Centering Youth Voice; Belonging, Safety, and Feeling Welcome; Enjoyment as the Foundation for Retention); (b) Diversity, Access, Equity, and Inclusion (sub-themes: Structural Access to Participation, Systemic Exclusion, Bias, and Discrimination, Financial Barriers and Economic Exclusion); (c) Leadership Capacity and Relational Practice (sub-themes: Mentorship & Role Modelling; Collaborative Culture); (d) Program Delivery and Program Quality (sub-themes: Intentional Program Design; Program Sustainability and Continuity); and (d) System Structure and Alignment (sub-themes: System Fragmentation and Silos; Performance Prioritization and Pathway Realignment; Funding Structures and Resource Allocation; Transparency, Accountability, and Evidence Use). These findings position community youth sport as a complex, relational system in which equitable participation is shaped by both upstream structures and downstream experiences. This study offers evidence-informed insights to support policy, practice, and research aimed at strengthening community youth sport systems across Canada.

ID: 510 / Oral Presentations 15: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Self, Youth
Keywords: Possible selves, youth, self-concept

Looking to the Future: Exploring the Possible Selves of Youth Athletes in Talent Development Systems

Roisin Kelly, Chris Harwood, Fieke Rongen
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

Intensive engagement in sport has been hypothesized to challenge the development of a rounded self-concept and identity in youth athletes (Brown, Glastetter-Fender & Shelton, 2000). Despite limited chances of attaining a professional sports career (Güllich, 2014), youth athletes commit to demanding training programs thereby reducing their opportunities for identity development (Brewer & Petitpas, 2017). Possible Selves Theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986) addresses the future orientated aspect of the self-concept, offering a novel perspective for exploring these concerns. This study, the first of its kind, explored the possible selves of youth athletes to understand who they hope, expect, or fear to become in the future. A pre-interview task (Oyserman & Markus, 1990; Ronkainen & Ryba, 2020) followed by semi-structured interviews, explored the possible selves of talented UK youth athletes (n = 18; 13-18 yrs) (7 female, 11 male and 1 undisclosed). Abductive reflexive thematic analysis generated themes related to the concepts of the hoped-for, feared and expected possible selves. Regardless of age most participants referred to a hoped-for athlete self. Despite the perceived achievability of the athlete-self, participants also presented hoped-for selves with alternative careers should they be unsuccessful in sport. Whereas participants’ hoped-for selves were based on careers, feared selves were predominantly concerned with undesirable personality changes and ‘losing who they are now’. Research into how possible selves change during adolescence, and how possible selves are shaped by and shape responses to salient events may inform how practitioners can support the healthy development of the self-concept and identity in youth athletes.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Oral Presentations 16: Motivation, Exercise psychology

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Francesca Vitali**

ID: 127 / Oral Presentations 16: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Exercise psychology, Mental skills training, Motivation
Keywords: self-talk, swearing, motivation, physical performance

The Role of Swearing in Sport and Exercise: A Multi-Study Self-Talk Perspective

Noam Manor[1], Gershon Tenenbaum[1,2,3]
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This presentation integrates findings from three complementary studies examining swearing as a functional form of self-talk (ST) in sport and exercise. Swearing is a highly emotive and linguistically potent form of expression that has been shown to produce ergogenic and hypoalgesic effects, yet it remains largely absent from sport and exercise psychology research, particularly within ST frameworks. In Study 1, we developed and validated the Use of Swear Words in Sport and Exercise Questionnaire (USWSEQ) in a large sample of athletes, coaches, and recreational exercisers (N = 513). Factor analyses supported a robust two-factor structure distinguishing situational swearing from self/other degradation, demonstrating good reliability and construct validity. In Study 2, we examined the motivational functions underlying swearing in the same population using the Reasons for Swearing in Sport and Exercise Questionnaire (RSSEQ). Results supported a three-factor model reflecting stress and emotional catharsis, mental strength enhancement, and coping with physical discomfort and pain, with significant differences across gender and professional roles (ps < .05). In Study 3, we experimentally examined the effects of swearing on physical performance and psychological states in trained individuals (N = 111). Compared with a neutral word condition, and by directly comparing different types of swear words, repeating swear words improved performance outcomes, attenuated motivational decline under fatigue, and increased perceived mental toughness (ps < .05). Overall, these findings support the role of swearing as a functional form of motivational ST, extending existing frameworks by incorporating an ecologically valid and emotionally charged linguistic strategy in real-world sport settings.

ID: 240 / **Oral Presentations 16: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Motivation
Keywords: Motivation, Decision Making, Physical Activity

The Influence of Effort Intensity and Duration on Exercise Choices

Ian Taylor, Lucie Leonard, Nicole Gwynne-Mayer
Loughborough University, United Kingdom

Anticipation of physical effort during exercise can be aversive or attractive, however, the causes of these distinct motivational states are not understood. Based on this shortcoming, the present study examined a) whether the duration and intensity of effort have different motivational properties and b) if the extent that physical exercise is coherent with core values (i.e., autonomous) altered the motivational properties of physical effort. Three studies answered these questions by giving participants 24 choices between two exercise scenarios which varied in either effort duration or intensity. Studies 1 (n = 116 ; 74 females, Mean age = 29.95) and 2 (n = 63; 35 females; Mean age = 35.13) employed hypothetical choices, and study 3 (n = 30; 27 females; Mean age = 20.37) required participants to perform their choice. Multilevel logistic regression models demonstrated that individuals relatively low in autonomous motivation were universally averse to effort intensity and duration. Moderately autonomous participants reported that they were less averse to effort intensity, compared to effort duration in hypothetical choices. However, effort duration and intensity were equally aversive during consequential choices. Highly autonomous participants reported that they were either ambivalent or attracted to both forms of effort in hypothetical choices. However, they were averse to effort duration and ambivalent to effort intensity during consequential choices. In conclusion, a) the evaluation of effort duration and intensity typically differs across hypothetical and consequential exercise scenarios, b) effort duration tends to be more aversive than effort intensity, however, c) autonomous motivation towards exercise alters the motivational properties of effort.

ID: 478 / **Oral Presentations 16: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Exercise psychology, Mental skills training, Motivation
Keywords: Elite sports school, self-efficacy-belief, need for achievement, motivation

The Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on Psychological Variables in Competitive Sports

Sebastian Schröder, Christine Stucke, Tabea Linkohr, Melanie Schulz
OVGU-University, Germany

Motivation is a prerequisite for athletic competition and is influenced by existing motives. This leads to a high level of self-efficacy-belief, which is being investigated in terms of its influence by the pandemic. The present study examined a total of 658 athletes (349 female, 309 male) surveyed between 2016 and 2025 on their need for achievement motives (AMS Sport, Elbe, Wenhold & Müller, 2005), sport motivation (SMT, Fintrup & Schuler, 2007) and self-efficacy beliefs (Jerusalem & Schwarzer, 1999) in the context of competitive athletics promotion. All participants were enrolled in the Magdeburg sports school system and ranged in age from 9 to 16 years (mean age=11.43; SD=1.13). Groups were subdivided based on time period and classification: pre-pandemic, pandemic and post-pandemic, with comparable average age. A comparison of the post-pandemic group (N=128) with the pandemic group revealed differences in goal setting (p=.044, d=.23), with the pandemic group (mean=34.29, SD=6.2) scoring lower than the post-pandemic group (mean=35.61, SD=5.51), which means that competitive sporting goals are set at a lower level. The three groups also differed in the development of the "fear of failure motive" in the longitudinal section of three measurement points, with the pandemic group showing significantly increased values and the results differing at the various points in time without these being significant (p=.079, F=2.582; partial η^2=.033). No statistically significant disparities in self-efficacy expectations were observed between the groups. These findings should be used to implement goal-setting coaching in this area in particular, in line with the existing motivational structure.

ID: 168 / Oral Presentations 16: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Motivation, Motor development, Physical activity, Physical literacy
Keywords: primary school, physical activity

How the Social Dimension of Physical Literacy Relates to Physical, Cognitive, and Affective Dimensions and Physical Activity

Hannah Hüttemann, Lena Henning, Maike Tietjens
University of Münster, Germany

Considering rising prevalences of inactivity (Tremblay et al., 2016), physical literacy has gained popularity as framework for promoting lifelong physical activity. Earlier conceptualizations emphasized physical, cognitive, and affective dimensions (e.g. Whitehead, 2001), whereas recent frameworks added a social dimension, encompassing social skills and context related to physical activity (e.g. Keegan et al., 2019). Despite theoretical relevance, the social dimension remains least researched (Barnett et al., 2023). Therefore, this study aimed to investigate 1) associations between the social physical literacy dimension and other dimensions and 2) how their interplay relates to primary school children's physical activity. 227 children (M = 9.60 years, SD = 0.63 years, 58 % males) were assessed for motor skills (TGMD-3, Wagner et al., 2017), motivation (BREQ, Beck & Dreiskämper, 2019), enjoyment, and social skills, operationalized with scales of the Life Skills Scale for Sport, including teamwork, communication, social skills, and decision-making, (Cronbach's alpha = .66-.84, Cronin & Allen, 2017), and physical activity as minutes and activity days per week (MoMo-AFB, Schmidt et al., 2016). Children showed high values in all dimensions. Social skills were moderately associated with motor skills (r = .18-.25) and enjoyment (r = .44) and strongly with motivation (r = .63). All dimensions (beta = .023-.226) were significantly associated with minutes (R squared = .191) and activity days per week (R squared = .145) in multiple linear regression models. The findings emphasize the relevance of social dimensions for promoting physical activity. Future studies should consider interindividual differences in social skills and their interplay with other physical literacy dimensions to effectively tailor individualized interventions.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Advancing the Female Perspective in Sport Psychology: From Individual Resilience to Environmental Optimization

Location: **A13**

ID: 357 / Symposium 9: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Coaching
Keywords: Female sport, Gender equality, Optimizing ecosystems, Sport experiences

Advancing the Female Perspective in Sport Psychology: From Individual Resilience to Environmental Optimization

Bård Erlend Solstad[1], Louise Davis[2], Faye Didymus[3], Ådne Ausland[1], Amber Mosewich[4]
[1]University of Agder, Norway; [2]Umeå University, Sweden; [3]Leeds Beckett University, United Kingdom; [4]University of Alberta, Canada

Researchers must conduct purposeful and targeted research with girls, women, and female participants in sport by considering biological, psychological, and social factors alongside the gendered contexts that influence sport experiences for them (Edwards et al., 2014; Handelsman, 2024; Lundberg et al., 2024; Murata et al., 2024). We posit that addressing these contexts requires the active engagement of men, transitioning from passive bystanders to agents of change (Flood, 2019; Scambor et al., 2014). Grounded in this systemic approach, we present four perspectives on the barriers, resilience, and education of females in sport. First, we examine the Swedish handball context, where despite high participation, only 17% of elite-certified coaches are female. Qualitative analyses showed how structural constraints and limited recruitment pathways shaped access to these roles. Second, we present a longitudinal case study of a female coach navigating high-performance adversity. Audio diaries highlighted the heavy weight of emotional labor and the necessity of strategies like cultivating calm to maintain boundaries. Third, we introduce the FIDES Coach Education Program, a biopsychosocial intervention designed to address these gaps. Results indicated that the most significant growth for coaches occurred in access to practical tools, alongside marked increases in confidence guiding female athletes and comfort discussing sensitive health topics. Finally, we critically examine self-compassion, challenging the focus on individual responsibility by highlighting how sport environments co-construct compassionate practice. Collectively, this symposium advances the female perspective by proposing a paradigm shift: moving from "fixing females" to optimizing their ecosystems (Edwards et al., 2024; Lundberg et al., 2024).

11:30am - 1:00pm

Delivering the PsychMapping Exercise: A Practical Learning Experience

Location: **048**

ID: 466 / Workshop 14: 1
Workshop
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Elite sports and expertise, Self, Any other topic
Keywords: PsychMapping, Exercise, Holistic, Tool

Delivering the PsychMapping Exercise: A Practical Learning Experience

Roisin Bolger[1], Konstantina Gianniki[2], Arno Robin[3], Alexander T. Latinjak[4]
[1]Leipzig University, Germany; [2]University of Thessaly, Greece; [3]University of Orleans, France; [4]University College Dublin, Ireland

The PsychMapping Exercise (revised version; Latinjak et al., 2025) is an applied, evidence-informed mapping procedure based on the integrative PsychMapping model (Latinjak & Hatzigeorgiadis, 2021). The revised version offers a more structured delivery sequence, clearer practitioner prompts, and an enhanced summary map to support reflection, case conceptualisation, and action planning. While the authors contend that the exercise's flexible nature makes formal validation impractical, research exploring practitioner and client experiences has supported its applied value (Latinjak & Mathas, 2024). This 90-minute workshop is for students, early-career practitioners, and professionals seeking hands-on experience in delivering PsychMapping, while also being relevant to experienced consultants and multidisciplinary teams. By the end of the session, participants will be able to: (a) explain the purpose and rationale of the PsychMapping Exercise; (b) complete a PsychMapping summary map for their professional development; (c) identify practical steps for planning and facilitating a PsychMapping session with a client; and (d) select strategies to build confidence and delivery expertise across contexts. The workshop will begin with a 20-minute introduction and demonstration, followed by 50 minutes of guided individual and small-group practice focused on completing a summary map. During this phase, participants will use structured prompts, role-play activities, and rapid feedback cycles to practise questioning, summarising, and action planning. A final 20-minute whole-group debrief will consolidate challenges, implementation considerations, and practical solutions. At the end of the session, participants will leave with PsychMapping worksheets, a delivery guide, their completed summary map, and recommendations for skill development to support implementation in practice.

11:30am - 1:00pm **Integrating the Learning–Modification–Application Model into Psychological Periodization in Team Sports**

Location: **130**

ID: 297 / Workshop 13: 1
Workshop
Topics: Best practice, Group dynamics
Keywords: Periodization, Systematic-work, Team-sport

Integrating the Learning–Modification–Application Model into Psychological Periodization in Team Sports

Lael Gershgoren[1], Iris Orbach[1,2], Asaf Blatt[1]
[1]The college of management Academic Studies, Israel; [2]Wingate Institute, Israel

Psychological periodization is a fundamental component of systematic athletic development and optimal performance (Lidor et al., 2007). Nevertheless, the literature addresses mostly individual sports and clients. Within applied team-sport contexts, periodization-based psychological interventions are rarely presented (Eys et al., 2019), leaving insufficient structure across the season and a weak integration with the physical, technical, and tactical preparation. This workshop introduces an integrative framework of the Learning–Modification–Application model (LMA; Blumenstein & Orbach, 2018) in a season-long psychological periodization process for teams. Designed for sport psychology practitioners working with teams, this evidence-based practice workshop emphasizes hands-on methods and real-life implementation from our experience with basketball, handball, and soccer teams. Through demonstrations, structured simulations, and small-group exercises, attendees will practice tailoring a psychological team annual intervention based on the team's macro-meso-micro cycles. Accounting for technical, physical and tactical contents, practitioners will facilitate social, emotional, and cognitive team processes such as cohesion, communication, shared mental models, leadership, and collective-efficacy. Practical examples from our work with sport teams will further illustrate how the LMA model enhances athletes' ability to progressively learn team psychological skills, modify them under increasing stress conditions, and apply them effectively in competitive environments. In conclusion, participants will leave the session with practical tools ready for immediate field use: templates for season-long psychological interventions, sample LMA-based session plans, and a replicable model for coordinating psychological, tactical, physical, and technical preparation. This applied framework provides a coherent and adaptable method for optimizing both individual and team performance in competitive team-sport environments.

1:00pm - 2:30pm **Lunch break**

Midday Mindfulness

Location: **A10**

2:15pm - 2:35pm Back-to-back sessions, new people, new ideas, a brain that won't slow down. This is a small pause in the middle of it all to replenish for the second half of the day. Every day after lunch, Gábor Barta and Gergő Gacs will guide you through 20 minutes of mindfulness: a gentle mix of breathing-based meditation, body scan, visualization, and a mindful walk. Nothing intense, nothing complicated. Just a chance to actually land in your body for a bit before the afternoon kicks off. We'll help you connect with yourself and be fully present so you can experience the conference to the fullest! No previous experience with meditation needed, you just have to show up and be present!

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Joining Hands in Research and Practice: A Critical Discussion on the Past, Present, and Future of Relationship Work in Sports**

Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 692 / Panel 3: 1
Panel discussion

Joining Hands in Research and Practice: A Critical Discussion on the Past, Present, and Future of Relationship Work in Sports

Svenja Wachsmuth[1], Louise Davis[2], Laura Healy[3], Sophia Jowett[4], Bård Erlend Solstad[5], Sam Thrower[6], Nadja Walter[7], Rebecca Anne Zakrajsek[8]

[1]University of Tübingen, Germany; [2]Umea University, Sweden; [3]Nottingham Trent University, UK; [4]Tandem Performance, UK; [5]University of Agder, Norway; [6]Oxford Brookes University, UK; [7]Leipzig University, Germany; [8]University of Tennessee, USA

Interpersonal relationships form the cornerstone for performance, development, and wellbeing across all sport environments, whether situated in elite sport, talent development, or grassroots settings. These relationships involve individuals with diverse roles and backgrounds, including athletes, coaches, support staff, and parents. Within sport psychology two relational domains have received particular scholarly attention and were highlighted in recent FEPSAC keynotes: the coach-athlete relationship (Jowett, 2026) and relationships involving parents (Knight, 2022).

In light of increasingly complex sport environments, heightened attention to well-being and safeguarding, and growing sociocultural and demographic diversity across sport systems, revisiting and advancing relationship-focused research has become essential. Building on decades of scholarship (Jowett, 2025) and responding to persistent gaps between research and applied practice, the newly established International Network for Relationships in Sport (INRiS) convened in 2025 to critically examine the current state of relational work in sport. The group's aim was to reflect on past progress, identify methodological and transitional challenges, address shortcomings (e.g., related to theoretical approaches, underrepresented groups, design issues), and stimulate new momentum for advancing the study and practice of 'relationships in sport' within the sport psychology community. To extend this dialogue, INRiS now seeks to engage additional researchers and practitioners into this conversation during the FEPSAC Congress 2026 through a panel discussion featuring six invited discussants:

• Dr. Laura Healy (Nottingham Trent University, UK)

• Dr. Sophia Jowett (Tandem Performance, UK)

• Ass. Prof. Bård Erland Solstad (University of Agder, NOR)

• Dr. Sam Thrower (Oxford Brookes University, UK)

• Dr. Nadja Walter (Leipzig University, GER)

• Prof. Rebecca Zakrajsek (University of Tennessee, USA)

The session aims to (a) offer reflections on the status-quo of relationship-focused work in sport, (b) present critical questions that may guide future research and applied initiatives, and (c) engage the audience into the collective dialogue about how the field can move towards a new era of relationship work within sport psychology. The panel brings together experts representing various sociocultural contexts, theoretical perspectives, research methodology, and applied experiences. This variety ensures a rich, multidimensional exploration of how relational work can evolve and meet the needs of contemporary sport environments.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Police Deadly Force Consulting: Integrating Operational Realities and Evidence Based Performance Psychology**

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 189 / Workshop 17: 1
Workshop
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Perception & attention
Keywords: law enforcement, deadly force, critical incidents, perceptual disruption

Police Deadly Force Consulting: Integrating Operational Realities and Evidence Based Performance Psychology

John Heil[1], Roy Bedard[2]
[1]Psychological Health Roanoke, United States of America; [2]RRB Training, United States of America

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Subclinical Levels of Distress: Multiple Psychodynamic Lenses in Sport Consultation**

Location: **A01**

ID: 205 / Symposium 11: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Psychotherapeutic approaches (e.g. psychodinamic, systemic)
Keywords: psychodynamic, clinical sport psychology, mental health

Subclinical Levels of Distress: Multiple Psychodynamic Lenses in Sport Consultation

Ohad Nahum[1,6], Réka Zsanett König[2,6], Aura Goldman[3], Maria Stefania Ionel[4,5,6]
[1]The Academic College of Tel Aviv–Yaffo, Israel; [2]Department of Elite Sport, Swiss Federal Institute of Sport Magglingen, Magglingen, Switzerland; [3]Independent Practitioner and Researcher; [4]Sport and Exercise Psychology Group, RIDDLE Lab, Department of Psychology, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania; [5]Assessment and Individual Differences – AID Lab, Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Bucharest, Romania; [6]Clinical & Sport Psychologist in Private Practice

A substantial proportion of athletes experience distress that remains below diagnostic thresholds yet meaningfully affects performance, relationships, and well-being (Gouttebarge et al., 2015; Reardon et al., 2019). Subclinical levels of distress (SLD) are easy to miss because athletes may remain high functioning while experiencing meaningful strain. This symposium provides a practical, integrative framework across three psychodynamic lenses, with clear take-home principles for consultation. This focus aligns with consensus recommendations to broaden athlete mental health assessment beyond diagnosable disorders, including attention to subclinical indicators (Henriksen et al., 2020). We define SLD as subtle, hard to verbalise, and easily overlooked as normal stress, yet often enacted in training, competition, and relationships, affecting well-being and performance. The symposium comprises three presentations. The first argues that SLD is difficult to articulate, clinically meaningful, and that psychodynamic

formulation strengthens case understanding and intervention. The second conceptualises SLD as the bodily encoding of conflict and rising allostatic load. The third uses one athlete case to illustrate supervision from both supervisee and supervisor perspectives, attending to parallel process. Each presentation includes a brief clinical vignette illustrating applied work with SLD in consultation. The symposium concludes by integrating the three approaches into a shared set of practice principles that help consultants identify early signs of distress, stay close to lived experience, and support flexibility and resilience without prematurely pathologising the athlete.

2:45pm - 4:15pm

Oral Presentations 19: Cognition

Location: **A02**
Session Chair: **Faye Didymus**

ID: 551 / Oral Presentations 19: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Exercise psychology, Psychophysiology
Keywords: exercise, cognition, priming, warmup

Combined Cognitive and Exercise Priming Improves Running Times

Hannah Mortimer[1], Jesús Díaz-García[2], Neil Dallaway[1], Christopher Ring[1]
[1]University of Birmingham, United Kingdom; [2]University of Extremadura, Spain

The effects of combined cognitive and physical warmups on running have yet to be determined. Accordingly, we compared the effects of combined and standard warmups on 1-mile running time trial performance. Experienced recreational runners (11 men, 14 women) completed three counter-balanced sessions. In each session, they completed one of three warmups (physical only, physical plus low cognitive load, physical plus high cognitive load) immediately followed by four laps of a 400m outdoor running track. The physical warmup comprised three activities: 1200m easy jog, 800m alternating jogs and strides, and 3-min active stretching drills. The combined warmups required completion of four easy or four hard 3-min cognitive tasks before and after the physical activities. We measured readiness to run after warming up, perceived exertion, heart rate and running kinematics while running, and mental fatigue after running. Compared to the standard physical warmup both combined warmups improved running times by 8-11 s (2-3 %), increased readiness to perform, reduced perceived exertion, lowered heart rate, and reduced perceived mental fatigue. Most (92%) ran faster after low combined warmup than physical only warmup, and most (84%) ran faster after high combined warmup than physical only warmup. Performance across the combined warmups did not differ, with 52% faster after the high warmup than the low warmup. In conclusion, combined warmups with interleaved short cognitive and exercise tasks improved 1-mile time trial performance. Combined warmups can prime athletes to run faster by increasing readiness to perform and reducing perceived and actual effort.

ID: 484 / Oral Presentations 19: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Elite sports and expertise, Exercise psychology, Psychophysiology
Keywords: Ultrarunning, ultra-endurance, sport psychology, performance

Physiological and Psychological Determinants of Ultrarunning Performance

Annabel de Jong, Allison Matthews, Mark Hinder, Nathan Pitchford
University of Tasmania, Australia

Within the ultrarunning community, performance is colloquially described as “90% mental, 10% physical”, suggesting an interplay between psychological and physiological factors. However, research typically explores variables in isolation or neglects heterogeneity between events. The current study addresses this limitation by employing an interdisciplinary approach to develop a predictive model of ultrarunning performance. Ultramarathon participants (n = 48; projected n = 69 by March 2026) underwent graded exercise testing, psychometric surveys, and physiological/cognitive assessments (Cold Pressor, Stop-Signal, and Serial Sevens tasks). Performance was quantified as percentile finishing time relative to gender-matched event winners. Selection of the initial 18 candidate variables was informed by evidence from relevant literature. A single global model was developed using backwards stepwise regression (AIC selection), including five covariates: age, gender, terrain, metabolic cart, and distance. Preliminary findings indicated a significant model ($p = .0007$, adjusted $R2 = 0.62$). All listed predictors reached statistical significance ($p < .05$). Positive predictors included emotional intelligence (beta = 0.57), inhibition control (beta = 0.49), tension (beta = 0.52), competitive motivation (beta = 0.37), VO2max (beta = 0.35), lactate threshold (beta = 0.33), pain perception (beta = 0.33), and sleep quantity (beta = 0.32). Negative predictors included anger (beta = -0.46) and goal-directed motivation (beta = -0.4). These results demonstrate that ultrarunning performance is highly predictable through an interdisciplinary lens. A completed dataset will refine this model, providing an optimised approach to endurance sports training and performance, with broader application to other fields involving physical and psychological exertion (e.g., military, pain management).

ID: 123 / Oral Presentations 19: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Any other topic
Keywords: Menstrual Cycle, Longitudinal Study, Cycle Tracking, Inhibitory Control

Does Mental Performance, Inhibitory Control & Emotion Interference, Change throughout the Menstrual Cycle?

Elissa Chattat[1], Hanna de Haan[1], Lisa Musculus[2]
[1]German Sport University of Cologne; [2]TU Dortmund

Research has described alterations in behavior, emotional experience, and – less consistently– in cognitive functions across cycle phases. In particular, the influence of the cycle on emotional and cognitive inhibition remains under-explored. The present study therefore investigates whether and how menstrual cycle phases affect inhibitory control and emotional interference. A priori power analysis for a multilevel model (power=83.4%, α = .05, d = 0.2, ~18 ms SSRT difference) yielded a total n = 120 participants. As part of a longitudinal study, healthy women with a natural, regular menstrual cycle were recruited. Over a 3-month data collection period, participants complete two online experiments corresponding to two points in their cycle (early follicular phase, mid-luteal phase). During each session, they perform the Stop Signal Task (inhibitory control) and the Emotional Stop Signal Task (emotional inhibitory control). In addition, participants receive daily reminders to document cycle-related changes and symptoms. Twenty-five female (n = 25) participants completed the study until this time. Multilevel modeling analyses, with repeated observations (level 1) nested within participants (level 2) including random intercepts, showed no significant phase-related differences in inhibitory control and emotional interference in inhibitory when controlling for symptom severity and self-reported sleep quality. The insignificance aligns with results of recent meta-analyses and further provides insight regarding the potential role of symptoms in emotional interference. Further studies are needed to investigate the effect of symptoms on inhibitory control and emotional interference with respect to their nature i.e. psychological or physiological.

ID: 648 / Oral Presentations 19: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Exercise psychology, Perception & attention, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: soccer, vision, gaze behavior, CAVE

Reading the Game: Virtual Reality (VR) Methods for Assessing Peripheral Vision and Decision-Making in Football

Božo Vukojević, Svitlana Pinchuk, Christian Vater
Institute of Sport Science, University of Bern, Switzerland

Peripheral vision (PV) plays a role in monitoring and anticipation in team sports (Vater et al., 2019), yet methodologies rarely integrate perception with full-body movement analysis under naturalistic conditions. Visual pivot, foveal spot and gaze anchor have been proposed as theoretical mechanisms for understanding how PV is used under constraints (Vater et al., 2020). A VR approach integrating CAVE technology with synchronized eye-tracking and body kinematics offers flexibility for examining cognition-action coupling. This laboratory study examined PV in counter-attack 3v3 scenarios similar to Vater et al. (2019), varying eccentricity and crowding of virtual players (c.f., Herzog & Sayim, 2022). Dependent variables included overrun-detection accuracy, response time, and peripheral detection. We predicted that larger eccentricities and higher crowding would impair overrun detection. Twenty-two sport science students (M = 20.81 years, SD = 1.81) with football experience were recruited as a convenience sample. Participants indicated a hand movement upon detecting a wing striker overrunning his defender. Eccentricity significantly affected overrun-detection accuracy, $H(2) = 29.21$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.257$, which was higher at 20° and 40° than at 60° (both $p < .001$). Response times, $H(2) = 29.23$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.446$, and peripheral detection, $H(2) = 23.20$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.372$, showed the same pattern, with greater peripheral reliance at wider eccentricities. Crowding did not affect performance, possibly due to sport-specific dynamic stimuli or no gaze behavior instructions. To improve peripheral monitoring efficiency, football training could mirror spatio-temporal demands and optimize pivot positions and saccade timing.

ID: 659 / Oral Presentations 19: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Emotion, Esports, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: affective processes, cognitive and motor processes, psychological skill training, review

The Psychology of Esports: Trends, challenges, and future directions

Ismael Pedraza-Ramirez[1,2], Benjamin T. Sharpe[3], Maciej Behnke[4,5], Adam J. Toth[6,7,8,9], Dylan R. Poulus[10,11]
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Esports have rapidly developed into a high-performance domain, presenting a suitable environment to empirically test and refine Sport and Exercise Psychology (SEP) theories and methods due to controlled settings, distinctive cognitive-motor demands, and opportunities to incorporate interdisciplinary approaches (Pedraza-Ramirez et al.,

2020; Cottrell et al., 2019; Campbell et al., 2018). This presentation examines a recent review aimed to highlight how SEP has engaged with esports, and how it provides a novel, controlled, data rich testing ground for advancing SEP theories and methodologies.

We implemented two systematic searches of the literature following guidelines for rapid reviews (Sabiston et al., 2022) and PRISMA guidelines (Page et al., 2021). We identified 13 syntheses of the esports literature and 125 peer-reviewed empirical studies, categorizing research into affective processes, cognitive-motor processes, psychological skill training and interventions, group processes and training structures, and health and well-being. Results show a clear increase in publication volume and broader acceptance of esports within SEP journals since the earliest systematic review that explicitly integrated esports into SEP (Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2020).

Findings indicate methodological concentration in cross-sectional self-report designs, with comparatively few longitudinal, intervention-based, or ecologically embedded studies. Also, theory integration is often implicit rather than explicitly anchored in established SEP frameworks.

Esports provides a data-rich, technologically advanced environment that can serve as a testbed to refine SEP theories, particularly regarding perception-action coupling, expertise development, and team coordination in digitally mediated contexts. To strengthen disciplinary impact, future research should prioritize theory-driven designs, longitudinal approaches, interdisciplinary collaboration, and in-context performance measures.

2:45pm - 4:15pm

Oral Presentations 21: Elite sports and expertise

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Recep Görgülü**

ID: 290 / Oral Presentations 21: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Decision making and judgement, Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: Video Technology, Officiating, Decision-Making, Expertise

Understanding Decision-Making Expertise in Football VAR: Insights from Elite Video Match Officials

James Clark[1], Samuel Wood[1], Liis Uiga[1], Matthew Weston[1,2], Robin C. Jackson[3], A. Mark Williams[3,4], Steve McNally[5], Greg Wood[1]

[1]Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom; [2]Institute for Sport, Physical Education and Health Sciences, University of Edinburgh; [3]School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University; [4]School of Physical Education and Sports Science, South China Normal University; [5]Professional Game Match Officials

The introduction of video assistant referees (VARs) has placed unprecedented demands on football officials to deliver accurate decisions under intense scrutiny while minimising disruption to play. Despite VAR's widespread implementation since 2018, little is known about what constitutes expertise in this technology-mediated officiating context. This study aimed to understand the task demands and cognitive and emotional experiences of elite VARs during in-game decision-making, informed by the expert performance framework (Ericsson, 2006). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 elite VARs operating at Premier League level (mean VAR experience = 7 years). Interviews explored the VAR process across preparation, in-game decision making, and post-match reflection. Data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Four interrelated themes were identified. Emotional regulation and resilience captured the psychological skills required to manage stress, accountability, and public scrutiny. Contextual and collaborative decision making reflected the integration of contextual cues, identification of clear and obvious errors, and effective communication within the officiating team. Reflexive practice and growth highlighted deliberate preparation, humility, and structured reflection as central to sustaining expert performance. Finally, technical and procedural proficiency described skilled engagement with video technology, including replay speed, camera angles, and decision protocols, to support accurate judgements. This study is unique as the first research to directly examine the decision-making experience of elite VAR officials. Findings extend expertise research into technology-assisted decision-making environments by informing an applied, evidence-based framework for VAR, with practical implications for psychologically informed training and development programmes for elite video officials.

ID: 693 / Oral Presentations 21: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: psychological momentum, tennis performance, critical points, performance under pressure

Psychological Momentum and Match Performance in Tennis

Erkut Konter, Yunus Şahinler
İstanbul Gelişim University, Turkey (Türkiye)

This study focuses on tennis matches played in elite competitive environments. A total of 50 professional matches were analysed using official match results obtained from the International Tennis Federation (ITF) database. Critical scoring situations, including break points, tie-breaks, and decisive game sequences, were specifically examined to investigate performance dynamics within high-level competition.Methods; Official ITF match results were analysed based on game-by-game score progression. Psychological momentum was operationalised through score-based performance indicators, including consecutive game-winning streaks, break-point consolidation, and rapid reversals in scoring sequences (momentum swings). Performance indicators included match outcome, serve performance, error rates, and performance in critical scoring situations. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, game-winning streak analysis, break-point consolidation rates, comparative tests between match winners and losers, and

logistic regression modelling to identify predictors of match success. Statistical analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26.0, IBM Corp., Armonk, NY, USA), and additional statistical modelling and graphical visualisations were conducted using R (Version 3.0.1; R Core Team, Vienna, Austria). Results; Findings indicate that game sequences and critical scoring situations are associated with short-term performance fluctuations. Psychological momentum was observed to influence performance stability, particularly during high-pressure phases of the match. Longer game-winning streaks and successful break-point consolidation were associated with higher probabilities of match success, whereas frequent momentum reversals were linked to performance instability. Conclusions; Psychological momentum plays a significant role in performance regulation under competitive pressure in tennis. Understanding momentum-related performance dynamics may contribute to improved psychological preparation and performance optimisation in elite tennis players.

ID: 576 / **Oral Presentations 21: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Social psychology, Youth
Keywords: Thriving Environments, Action Research, Thriving, Football

Developing A Thriving Environment in Academy Football. An Action Research Pilot Study

Samuel Thomas[1], Christopher Wagstaff[1], Alessandro Quartiroli[2], Daniel Brown[3], Matt Miller[4]
[1]University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom; [2]University of Wisconsin - Lacrosse, United States of America, University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom; [3]University of Bath, United Kingdom; [4]Norwich City Football Club, United Kingdom

Elite football academy environments are increasingly characterized by tensions between performance expectations and the well-being of those within them (Baldock et al., 2022; Vella et al., 2024). Thriving, defined as “a sustained high-level of performance and dimensions of well-being” (Brown et al., 2018, p. 129), offers a promising framework for addressing these challenges (Brown & Arnold, 2019), yet limited research has examined how thriving can be practically developed at an environmental level in elite youth sport (Brown et al., 2024; Passaportis et al., 2024). This pilot study explored the feasibility of fostering thriving within a Category 1 football academy using an action research approach. Grounded in action research applied in sporting contexts (Santos et al., 2026; Wagstaff et al., 2013), an embedded early career research-practitioner, collaborated with coaches and players to co-design weekly Reflective Practice Groups (RPGs). Over three months, groups of approximately eight players, aged 16–18, engaged in collective reflection, planning, and action generation. Data was generated through player feedback, practitioner reflexive accounts, and retrospective staff insights, and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. Three themes were identified: Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction; Creative Agency and Structural Constraint; and Discussion to Impact. Findings suggested that RPGs supported autonomy, relational connectedness, and wider environmental influence. However, the impact was perceived to be limited by contextual constraints such as time pressures, hierarchical power dynamics, and the studies own methodological limitations. Overall, this pilot study provides practical insight into the potential of implementing thriving oriented practice within elite youth football systems.

ID: 280 / **Oral Presentations 21: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches)
Keywords: Challenge, constraints, team sport, training design

Modification of Individual Challenge in Team-Based Training in Elite Australian Football

Sarah Green, David Broadbent, Aden Kittel, William McCalman, Lyndell Bruce
School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences, Centre for Sport Research within Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

This project explored how two constraints affect individual and team behaviour, perceived challenge, and coach perceptions of constraint effectiveness. Ten athletes (Agemean=23.8) from one elite men’s Australian Rules Football club completed a 5-versus-5 Small-Sided Game (SSG) across three training sessions. The first session was unmodified (baseline). In sessions two and three, coaches applied individual constraints to one of the ten athletes: a one-second disposal (time) constraint, then a forward-movement-only (direction) constraint. All athletes used the Rating of Perceived Challenge (RPC) (Hendricks et al., 2019) after each SSG (rating between 0-10). Notational analysis quantified behaviours of the constrained athlete and team averages (e.g., disposal efficiency, disposal duration). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the constrained athlete and coaches who designed the SSG, exploring perceptions of the constraints. Both constraints altered the constrained athlete’s behaviour (faster disposal speed and higher metres gained). Team behaviour and average perceived challenge were largely unchanged across conditions (RPCBaseline=5.2, RPCTime=5.7, RPCDirection=5.0). The constrained athlete’s perceived challenge increased under the time constraint and remained similar to baseline under the direction constraint (RPCBaseline=4, RPCTime=8, RPCDirection=5), consistent with their interview responses. Coaches suggested the constrained athlete’s perceptions were influenced by role demands and familiarity, noting the direction constraint was more role-specific and natural than the time constraint. Both constraints modified the constrained athlete’s perceived challenge and behaviour, without disrupting team behaviour. Coach insight and role-specific knowledge were critical to understanding athlete responses, highlighting the need to enhance coaches’ knowledge of the implementation of a Constraints-Led Approach (Davids et al., 2008).

ID: 674 / Oral Presentations 21: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: elite athlete, wartime sport, resilience

Sport as a Psychological Anchor During Wartime Among Elite Ukrainian Athletes

Mariya Yukhymenko-Lescroart[1], Olena Voiedilova[2]
[1]California State University, Fresno, United States of America; [2]T. H. Shevchenko National University "Chernihiv Collehium," Ukraine

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, elite Ukrainian athletes have faced unprecedented disruptions to training, competition, and personal life. Daily air raids, facility closures, relocation, travel barriers, and ongoing threats to safety have fundamentally altered the conditions under which these athletes pursue high-level sport. Guided by resilience and purpose frameworks, this study explored how elite and super-elite Ukrainian athletes navigated wartime disruptions while sustaining performance, athletic identity, and motivation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted via Zoom with five athletes - two men and three women - representing biathlon, kickboxing, and judo. Participants were national team members, champions, World Cup and World Championship medalists, or prospective 2028 Olympians. Interviews explored training conditions, emotional responses, coping strategies, sources of resilience, perceived losses and gains, and the role of sport during wartime. Data were transcribed in Ukrainian, verified, translated into English, and analyzed using reflective thematic analysis. Findings revealed that athletes experienced substantial disruptions, stress, anxiety, and grief, yet sustained strong athletic identities and adaptive resilience. Sport served as a critical psychological anchor, offering structure, emotional refuge, national representation, and a source of purpose. Participants reported motivation driven by international achievement aspirations, mentoring opportunities, and maintaining personal and athletic development despite ongoing instability. This study highlights sport's role in supporting psychological well-being, identity, and resilience under extreme adversity. Findings offer practical implications for both research and applied sport psychologists, organizations, and policymakers seeking to support athletes in crisis and high-adversity settings.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **The Influence of Breathing Techniques on Sport Performance**
Location: **A10**

ID: 518 / Workshop 15: 1
Workshop
Topics: Emotion, Neuropsychology, Psychophysiology
Keywords: slow-paced breathing, fast-paced breathing, hyperventilation, apnea

The Influence of Breathing Techniques on Sport Performance

Maša Iskra[1], Sylvain Laborde[1,2]
[1]German Sport University Cologne, Germany; [2]Normandie Université Caen

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Towards a Deeper Understanding of Effort-Related Process in Sport and Exercise**
Location: **A11**

ID: 237 / Symposium 12: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Motivation
Keywords: Effort, Motivation

Towards a Deeper Understanding of Effort-Related Process in Sport and Exercise

Ian Taylor[6], Hannah Pauly[1], Niklas Poss[1], Dennis Dreiskämper[1], Tina Baus[2], Maik Bieleke[2], Lisa Mundt[3], Fabienne Ennigkeit[3], Chris Englert[3], Roy David Samuel[4], Edson Filho[5]
[1]TU Dortmund University, Germany; [2]University of Konstanz, Germany; [3]Goethe-University Frankfurt, Germany; [4]Reichman University, Israel; [5]Boston University, USA; [6]Loughborough University, UK

The ability to mobilise and sustain effort is essential in sport and exercise. This symposium hopes to deepen understanding of the properties and functions of effort and related processes in these contexts. The symposium will begin with a presentation that examines motivational antecedents of cognitive effort. Specifically, the presentation will describe how underlying challenge and threat motivational states and performance expectations influence pupil dilation as a dynamic indicator of cognitive effort mobilisation. The research findings will be used to explain how effort frameworks can be enhanced. The second presentation demonstrates the complexities of effort by describing the interactive effects of prescribed and cognitive effort on physical force production on a hand grip dynamometer. This presentation also outlines the theoretical relevance of the findings, as well as practical implications for rehabilitation and performance. The third presentation examines mental fatigue, in many ways the antithesis of effort mobilisation. Specifically, it investigates how mental fatigue varies over the menstrual cycle in athletes and monitors the effects of two strategies aimed at recovering mental resources (i.e., mindfulness and progressive muscular relaxation). As such, this study offers significant implications for reducing mental fatigue and optimising cognitive resources. The final presentation describes the meta-model of adaptation in sport. Within a dual-process framework, the model describes the role of effortful type II mental processes for optimising adaptation during critical moments in competition. However, the mental fatigue associated with cognitive effort requires a switch to efficient type I processes for successful adaptation to occur in many circumstances.

2:45pm - 4:15pm

Oral Presentations 20: Best practices

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Miquel Torregrossa**

ID: 180 / Oral Presentations 20: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Consulting/ counseling, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Any other topic
Keywords: Challenge and threat states, perinatal period, maternity

The Maternity Journey as a Positive Challenge: Insights From Sport Psychology

Carla Meijen
Universiteit van Amsterdam, Netherlands, The

Giving birth can sometimes feel like a marathon, requiring endurance, pacing, and pain management. Whilst considering specific demands of the maternity journey, there is scope to draw on the mind-body connection unique to sport. Drawing on the theory of challenge and threat states in athletes (Jones et al., 2009; Meijen et al., 2020) and self-regulation theory (Zimmerman, 2000), the aim of this presentation is to offer insights into how lessons from sport, and the mental skills and techniques that can be learned from sport more broadly, can be applied during the maternity journey. Reflections from interviews with athletes and exercisers suggest that drawing explicitly on sport and exercise experiences can help women and their support networks recognise and mobilise psychological resources during pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period. Examples of techniques like developing self-talk plans, goal flexibility, and chunking will be shared, whilst setting out how these techniques can meet demands faced during the maternity journey. This is relevant, because practicing and implementing psychological strategies during the maternity journey can reduce the intention-behaviour gap women may experience. In conclusion, in addition to applying findings of research related to physical activity guidelines and return to sport trajectories, navigating a changing identity, and the psychological demands associated with the maternity journey in sport settings, this presentation aims to show that there is added value of a strength-based, challenge-focused sport psychology approach that spans the perinatal journey. This perspective can support shifting the demand-resource balance to a challenge stage.

ID: 319 / Oral Presentations 20: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: Periodization, Psychological Preparation, Learning-Modification-Application Approach, Simulative-Training-Exercise-Program

Periodization of Psychological Preparation Into the Training Process in Individual Sport.

Iris Orbach[1,2], Boris Blumenstein[1]
[1]College of Management, Academic Studies, Israel; [2]Wingate Institute, Israel

A typical training program for the elite athlete follows the periodization principle, consisting of preparation, competition, and transition phases. In each phase four specific types of preparation are included: physical, technical, tactical, and psychological. While each component contributes to athletic success, the interaction among the four types of preparation is most likely the determining factor in practice quality and performance outcomes. A major challenge in sport psychology is the ability to transfer learned psychological skills from the laboratory setting to actual competition events (Blumenstein & Orbach, 2014; Crews et al., 2001). This presentation describes the integration of psychological preparation within periodized training. The Learning-Modification-Application (LMA) approach provides a framework for periodizing psychological skills. In each stage, psychological techniques are practiced under a gradually increased stress level based on the periodization of the sport, the demands of the sport discipline and the athlete's needs (Blumenstein & Orbach, 2012a,b). In addition, the Simulation Training Exercise Program (STEP) is composed of special exercsies and simulated competition situations alleged to facilitate transfer of psychological skills from laboratory to field conditions (Blumenstein et al, 2007, Blumenstein & Orbach, 2015). The effectiveness of this integrated approach has been demonstrated through research and applied work with 38 medalists across 14 different sport disciplines in top-level events (some case studies are described in Blumenstein & Orbach, 2012b; Edmonds et al., 2026). Together, LMA and STEP offer athletes systematic frameworks for transferring psychological skills from laboratory to field and integrating them within comprehensive athletic preparation.

ID: 662 / Oral Presentations 20: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Clinical sport psychology, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Perfectionism, self-compassion, functional-contextualism, paradoxical performances

The Functional Contextual Narratives of Elite Athletes' Paradoxical Performance Experiences of Fine Motor Skills

Tanuj Kohli[1], Karl Steptoe[1], Jamie Barker[1], Denise Hill[2]
[1]Loughborough University, United Kingdom; [2]Swansea University

In paradoxical performance research, gaps pertaining to contextual factors and processes of change that can enhance the quality of applied practice have been identified (Lobinger, 2016). These gaps have been primarily attributed to the lack of a broad theory of motor learning that can facilitate integration and contextual application of

the various theories of paradoxical performances (Christensen et al., 2015). Functional Contextualism is a philosophical approach that observes behaviour through contextual processes rooted in learning history (Hayes et al., 2001). This approach has been suggested to bridge the research practice gap in the performance domain through holistic and trans-diagnostic understanding of performance dysfunction (Gutman et al., 2025). Our study qualitatively explored the context and processes of paradoxical performances among fine motor skills (golf putting, tennis serves, penalty kicks, shooting) sports athletes (n=10) with over five years of competitive experience. Descriptive and functional thematic analysis of interviews explored skill learning history and processes of change respectively (Sevilla-Liu, 2023). Descriptive themes reflected interplay between learning history, behaviour patterns, well-being and paradoxical performances. Functional themes explored lack of self-compassion, attachment, avoidance, lack of purpose and fusion as processes. Discussion focused on the holistic impact of paradoxical performances, integrated understanding of paradoxical performances and context as linked through behaviour patterns, and the contextual influence of identified processes on paradoxical performances and recovery. Specifically, a lack of self-compassion, acquired through learning contexts that included social hierarchies, skill mastery strategies, and achievement culture, was explored as a potential process linking perfectionism, paradoxical performances and well-being.

ID: 258 / Oral Presentations 20: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Elite sports and expertise, Mental skills training, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches)
Keywords: performance under pressure; pressure acclimatization; pressure training, stress exposure

Implementing Pressure on Athletes During Training: A Scoping Review

Elif Bouthiller, Franziska Lautenbach
Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany

The strategic use of pressure in sport training has gained increasing attention. This scoping review aimed to synthesise research on pressure implementation in sport by examining: (a) theoretical frameworks underpinning pressure-based practices, (b) strategies used to enhance pressure in training, (c) associated outcomes and measurement methods, and (d) key knowledge gaps. A total of 22 peer-reviewed studies were identified from PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, CINAHL Complete, and SPORTDiscus. From nine theoretical frameworks, two perspectives emerged: systematic exposure to pressure as a means to develop resilience, adaptive coping, and effective stress responses (66.7%); and the simulation of competition-like conditions to enhance skill acquisition and transfer (33.3%). Study populations included athletes (84.5%), coaches (13.4%), and sport psychologists (2.1%). Methodologically, 40.9% of studies employed qualitative, 31.8% quantitative, and 27.3% mixed-methods designs. Across studies, 92 distinct pressure-inducing strategies were identified. Interviews (77.8%) were the most common qualitative method, while interventions (57.1%) dominated quantitative designs. Overall, findings support the benefits of structured pressure training, though potential drawbacks, such as negative impacts on coach-athlete relationship, were noted. The review underscores the need for an integrative theoretical framework, multi-method research designs, longitudinal investigations, and the development of a validated instrument to assess the type and frequency of pressure-based strategies.

ID: 109 / Oral Presentations 20: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Esports, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: esport, sport psychology, clinical psychology, applied practice

Psychology Practice in Esports: Challenges and Opportunities for Practitioners

Oliver Leis[1], Lara Wunsch[1], Amy Whitehead[2], Laura Dawn Swettenham[2]
[1]Leipzig University, Germany; [2]Liverpool John Moores University, UK

Given esports players' need to manage stress in high-performance environments (Leis et al., 2024), targeted psychology support may benefit their health, performance, and development (e.g., Swettenham et al., 2024). Despite increasing numbers of practitioners, licensed psychologists may hesitate to enter esports due to its novelty, limited recognition within psychology, scarce evidence-based knowledge, and established roles in traditional contexts (e.g., Leis et al., 2021; Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2020). To inform future research and practice in this emerging field, this study explores the challenges and opportunities experienced by eight qualified practitioners (three women, four men, one undisclosed) delivering psychology support in professional esports through semi-structured interviews (e.g., Cotterill, 2018). Data were analysed using reflective thematic analysis to identify patterns across practitioners' experiences. Findings highlight several challenges, including reactive and short-term work structures, difficulties in gaining trust and buy-in from staff and players, sexism, gaps in applying psychology knowledge to esports, and work–life balance pressures. Practitioners also reported multiple opportunities, such as positively impacting teams and players, building meaningful relationships, exercising creative freedom, and fostering personal and professional growth. Practitioner experiences were shaped by gender, esports title, competitive context, and professional background. Clear role definition, structured integration in teams, and professional networking may enhance effectiveness, impact player and team development, and address stereotypes, sexism, and well-being. Future research could examine context-specific, gendered, and longitudinal practitioner experiences. Investigating professional philosophies and applied strategies may further inform applied practice, professional guidelines, and sustainable development in high-performance esports.

2:45pm - 4:15pm

Oral Presentations 18: Safeguarding, Safe sports

Location: **A13**
Session Chair: **Francesca Vitali**

ID: 643 / Oral Presentations 18: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Violence, Youth
Keywords: Safeguarding, elite, youth, football

Co-Adapting Safe Sport Allies: Tailoring an Evidence-Based Safeguarding Intervention to Elite Youth Football

Otis Brouwers[1], Jon Brain[2], Tine Vertommen[2], Leen Haerens[1]
[1]Ghent University, Belgium; [2]Thomas More University of Applied Sciences

Research and athlete testimonies indicate that interpersonal violence is pervasive in (elite) sport and associated with significant harms, including poorer mental health, reduced motivation, and diminished self-esteem (Mountjoy et al., 2016). In elite youth football, a win-at-all-costs mentality and culture of silence can further normalise harmful practices (Newman et al., 2024). Although safeguarding interventions exist, few are tailored to elite youth football. This qualitative study, employing a participatory approach (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995) to intervention adaptation, and situated within a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm (Poucher et al., 2020), examines the adaptation of Safe Sport Allies (SSA; Adriaens et al., 2024) – a workshop-based intervention promoting positive bystander behaviours – for elite youth football. Informed by the ADAPT (Adapting interventions to new contexts) guidance (Moore et al., 2021), the contextual fit of SSA was assessed in two elite Belgian football academies. Focus groups were conducted separately with players (n = 38, ages 14–18) and staff (n = 18; coaches, leadership, safeguarding officers) after engaging with the intervention. Data were analysed using inductive reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019, 2021). Validation structures (advisory board, steering group, critical friend, conference roundtable) iteratively sense-checked emerging insights. Findings revealed misalignment between SSA's core functions and elite football's operational realities, indicating the need for a multilayered intervention. Six themes emerged: season-long programming, role-specific roadmaps, menu-based flexibility, embedding in existing routines, ownership through academy leadership, and on-pitch player activities. Sustainable safeguarding requires context-sensitive, multilayered approaches. Findings provide practical guidance for sport psychologists advocating systemic safeguarding integration within elite academies.

ID: 306 / Oral Presentations 18: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Coaching, Youth
Keywords: Psychological Safety, Youth Sport, Positive Coaching, Safeguarding

Supporting the Developing Athlete: Psychological Safety and the Coaching of Adolescent Girls in Gymnastics

Deanna Casa, Gretchen Kerr
University of Toronto, Canada

Fostering psychological safety (PS), or the belief that one can take interpersonal risks – such as asking for help and expressing fears without worry of embarrassment or punishment (Edmondson, 1999), is essential for safeguarding and athlete well-being (Hurst et al., 2025; Walton et al., 2024). For adolescent girls in artistic gymnastics, PS is particularly important given the well documented relationship between pubertal changes, mental health, and gymnastics performance (Ackland et al., 2003; Sawyer et al., 2018), as well as the psychological challenge of fear inherent to the sport (Chase et al., 2005; Martin et al., 2008). Coaches play a critical role in shaping these environments, especially in youth sport settings where athletes have unique psychological developmental needs (Gosai et al., 2023). This study explored how club-level women's artistic gymnastics coaches foster psychological safety for adolescent girls (ages 9 –16). Using purposive sampling, 10 coaches (1 male, 9 females), with experience levels ranging from 4 - 43 years, were recruited from gymnastics clubs, and data were collected using semi structured interviews, supported by a vignette designed to simulate a realistic and emotionally complex coaching scenario (Bain, 2023). Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), guided by Cooke et al.'s (2024) sport-specific framework of PS, was then used to interpret the data. Findings highlighted a person-first, athlete-second coaching philosophy, and strategies such as intentional communication, and emotional support as central themes across coaches' accounts, while also revealing the complexities of simultaneously balancing authority while providing developmentally appropriate support.

ID: 597 / Oral Presentations 18: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Cultural sport psychology, Violence
Keywords: Safe sports, abuse in sport, policy, motivational climate

Co-Creatating Safe Sport Through Visual Design Thinking: Integrating Sport Psychology theory for visual Systemic Change

Yara Rietdijk
Flatland Agency, Netherlands, The

Unhealthy sport cultures marked by abuse, burnout, aggression, and excessive performance pressure call for innovative, collaborative approaches to change. This presentation explores how co-creation supported by visual design thinking can be combined with sport psychology theory to build safer and healthier sport environments. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1997), and Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 1991), the work draws on ten years of applied collaboration with six national sport federations and an Olympic committee in the Netherlands. Through participatory design sessions involving athletes, coaches, parents, administrators, policymakers, officials, and sport psychology professionals, complex cultural challenges were made visible and collectively addressed. Visual tools were used to foster shared understanding, engagement, and ownership of solutions (Wujec, 2010; Rivera et al., 2025). Projects ranged from safeguarding reform following abuse scandals to redesigning talent development pathways, strengthening autonomy-supportive coaching practices, improving parental involvement, reducing aggression, and supporting officials through rule changes. The co-creation processes led to stronger organizational alignment, improved motivational climates, and the implementation of new policies and educational programs. Participants reported greater trust, psychological safety, and commitment to cultural change. This presentation highlights how bridging psychological science with participatory design offers a practical, scalable approach for transforming sport systems to promote both well-being and performance.

ID: 408 / Oral Presentations 18: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Ethics in applied settings, Violence, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Abuse. in Sport, Safeguarding, Athlete Well-being, Safe Sport

Understanding disclosure and reporting of interpersonal violence in high-performance sport

Erin Willson, Taryn Nepon, Gretchen Kerr
University of Toronto, Canada

Interpersonal violence (IV) in sport is increasingly documented globally, and substantial efforts have been made to improve safeguarding. However, reporting rates remain low due to a lack of trust, perceived risk, or negative past experiences. This study examined the relationship between high-performance athletes' experiences of IV and disclosure and reporting behaviours and perceptions. An anonymous, mixed-method online survey was completed by Canadian high-performance athletes across 27 sports (M_age= 18.9; 64% girls/women, 34% boys/men). The survey assessed experiences of IV (physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and neglect), disclosure and reporting behaviours, and comfort with reporting options. Open-ended follow-up questions explored barriers to reporting and what athletes would need to feel safe telling someone. Overall, 72% of athletes reported experiencing at least one form of IV. While 42% of athletes disclosed, only 4.5% submitted a formal report. Athletes were most likely to tell parents, followed by teammates and coaches, whereas formal reports were made to sport administrators and high-performance directors. Although most athletes were aware of reporting processes (70%), they identified a need for simpler processes, greater awareness of options, and increased transparency regarding investigations and consequences. Many athletes described a lack of trust in organizational responses to IV. Findings highlight a persistent gap between athletes' experiences of IV, informal disclosure, and formal reporting. Results reflect ongoing concerns around trust and accountability within reporting mechanisms. Ensuring reporting options that athletes perceive as safe and effective is critical for supporting athletes and addressing IV.

2:45pm - 4:15pm An Integrated Matrix Workshop for Sport Injury Rehabilitation: SDT, BPS Model for Injury, and the Stress-is-Beneficial Mindset

Location: **048**

ID: 147 / Workshop 16: 1
Workshop
Topics: Coaching, Consulting/ counseling, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation, Psychophysiology
Keywords: biopsychosocial, SDT, injury, multimodel

An Integrated Matrix Workshop for Sport Injury Rehabilitation: SDT, BPS Model for Injury, and the Stress-is-Beneficial Mindset

Darrell L. Phillips
University of Kansas, United States of America

2:45pm - 4:15pm Connecting Sport-Specific Behavioral Patterns to Psychological States

Location: **130**

ID: 649 / Workshop 18: 1
Workshop
Topics: Best practice, Coaching, Mental skills training, Motor development
Keywords: performance, behavior, patterns

Connecting Sport-Specific Behavioral Patterns to Psychological States

Blaž Zagorc
Podpora vrhunskim dosežkom (Supporting top achievements), Slovenia

4:30pm - 5:00pm **Coffee break**
Location: **Convention Center**

5:00pm - 6:00pm **In search of performance (Keynote Speaker: Jean Fournier)**
Location: **Convention Center**
Session Chair: **Alexis Ruffault**

ID: 723 / 2nd Keynote Speaker: 1
Keynote talks

In search of performance

Jean Fournier
Université Paris Nanterre

6:10pm - 7:40pm **Round table athletes**
Location: **Convention Center**
Session Chair: **Alina-Isabela Gherghisan**

7:50pm - 9:00pm **Science Slam**
Location: **Convention Center**
Session Chair: **Franziska Lautenbach**
Session Chair: **Dennis Dreiskaemper**

ID: 712 / Science Slam.: 1
Science Slam
Topics: Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Mental skills training, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: Mental skills training, Mental imagery, Music Interventions, Cognitive strategies in sport

The Force Is With Us: The Role of Mental Imagery, Music, and Their Combination in Performance Improvement and Psychological States

Fernando Castellar[1], Rocco Cavaleri[3], Liila Taruffi[4], Uğur Kaya[1], Miriam Olsen[1], Steffen A. Herff[1,2]
[1]Sydney Conservatorium of Music, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia; [2]The MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development, Western Sydney University, Sydney, Australia; [3]Brain Stimulation and Rehabilitation Lab, School of Health Sciences, Western Sydney University, Sydney, Australia; [4]Academy of Music, School of Creative Arts, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

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ID: 713 / Science Slam.: 2
Science Slam
Topics: Exercise psychology
Keywords: Affect, motivation

It's a Feeling Problem

Ralf Brand
University of Potsdam, Germany

ID: 731 / Science Slam.: 3
Science Slam
Topics: Best practice, Cultural sport psychology, Leadership, Mental skills training
Keywords: Applied sport psychology soccer, (dilemma / mental coach vs sport psychologogist)

11 vs 0

Christoph Herr
DFB GmbH & Co KG, Germany

Conference Agenda Wednesday

18th European Congress of Sport & Exercise Psychology

Date: Wednesday, 15/July/2026

7:00am - 7:30am

Morning Grappling & Conditioning
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

Every morning before the run, we're doing something a little different. This is a 30-minute conditioning session built around movement drills from the world of BJJ and wrestling: animal locomotion, ground flow, tumbling, partner games. The kind of stuff that looks casual but gets your whole body working in ways you didn't expect.

If you've never trained a grappling sport, it is perfect. There's something genuinely fresh about moving close to the ground, figuring out how your body navigates space, and doing it all with another person. It trains coordination, spatial awareness, and functional strength (and it's fun).

No experience needed, no gear needed. Just show up with comfy clothes and some curiosity, and get properly fired up before the morning run.

7:30am - 8:00am

Morning Run
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

To start the conference day focused, energetic and powerful, we are inviting you to our morning running sessions. It doesn't matter if this is your first run or if you're already a seasoned veteran, we'll be running in separate groups at different paces.

We'll start with a warm-up, then run for 30 minutes, and finish with a group stretch. If you're just looking for a light run to start your day, this is the place for you. If you want to challenge yourself and have a more intense workout, this is the place for you, too.

Bring your running shoes and let's go!

The morning grappling workouts and runs will take place one after the other, not at the same time, so you can join just one or the other, or you can even do both (highly recommended)!

8:30am - 5:00pm

Participant registration
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

9:00am - 10:30am

Mental Health Challenges and Pathways Forward in High-Performance Sport: Voices, Pressures, and Practical Solutions
Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 141 / **Symposium 14: 1**
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Best practice, Coaching, Ethics in applied settings, Violence
Keywords: Mental health, maltreatment, psychological safety

Mental Health Challenges and Pathways Forward in High-Performance Sport: Voices, Pressures, and Practical Solutions

V. Vanessa Wergin[1], Julia T. Schwender[2], Hannah C. Peterken[1], Erin Willson[3]
[1]The University of Queensland, Australia; [2]Technical University of Munich, Germany; [3]University of Toronto, Canada

Mental health challenges in high-performance sport are increasingly recognised; however, understanding how sport-specific contexts, roles, and psychosocial environments contribute to risk and resilience remains limited. This symposium integrates four complementary presentations examining mental health challenges and their causes among elite athletes and coaches, and concludes with evidence-informed solution strategies. The symposium opens with Hannah Peterken, who presents qualitative findings on mental health concerns among high-level figure skaters. Her work highlights intense internal pressure arising from external factors such as subjective judging, body image expectations, coaching dynamics, a perceived lack of accountability within sport systems, and limited health-related knowledge. Next, Vanessa Wergin examines the mental health of Australian swim coaches using a mixed-methods approach. Results reveal alarmingly high levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout, alongside systemic stressors including workload, parent interactions, emotional labour, limited organisational support, and inadequate remuneration. Julia Schwender then explores potential psychosocial mechanisms underpinning mental health challenges in sport, focusing on the interplay between psychological safety, maltreatment, and mental health outcomes. Her findings suggest shared and distinct dimensions within athletes' perceived psychosocial environments, offering insight into how these constructs may be measured and understood. The symposium concludes with Erin Willson, who synthesises the findings by examining positive coaching as a system-level protective factor and offering practical solutions to reduce interpersonal violence and promote psychologically safe environments. Collectively, this symposium advances understanding of mental health challenges in elite sport while offering practical pathways toward prevention, protection, and systemic change.

9:00am - 10:30am

Building a Working Alliance in Elite Esports: Applied Lessons from Sport Psychology Practice
Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 678 / **Workshop 21: 1**
Workshop

Topics: Best practice, Elite sports and expertise, Esports, Mental skills training
Keywords: esports, athlete-practitioner relationship, applied practice, case study

Building a Working Alliance in Elite Esports: Applied Lessons from Sport Psychology Practice

Ismael Pedraza-Ramirez[1,2], Bernadette Ramaker[3]
[1]Department of Performance Psychology, Institute of Psychology, German Sport University Cologne, Germany; [2]G2 Performance Lab, Germany; [3]Independent Practice, Netherlands

Esports is a fast-rising performance domain in which affective, cognitive-motor, and psychophysiological processes play a crucial role in performance and development (Leis & Lautenbach, 2020; Leis et al., 2024; Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2025; Welsh et al., 2023). Despite its growth, applied sport psychology in esports remains in an early stage, creating both opportunities and challenges for practitioners working in complex and evolving performance environments (Cottrell et al., 2019; Horne et al., 2024; Watson et al., 2021). The effectiveness of applied sport psychology work is influenced not only by the athlete-practitioner relationship but also by engagement with the broader performance environment, including coaches, staff, and organizational culture (Henriksen et al., 2019). This interactive workshop presents two elite esports cases: one reflecting a successful implementation and one reflecting a less successful experience. Both cases will be structured using an adapted working model of talent development (Henriksen et al., 2010; Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2024), enabling participants to analyze environmental, relational, and organizational characteristics influencing practitioner impact. Participants will engage in guided peer-led reflections (Hutter et al., 2016), structured prompts (Hansen & Mendzheritskaya, 2024), and small-group discussions to identify factors contributing to success and challenges. Through comparative case analysis, participants will reflect on practitioner roles, relationship building, environmental engagement, and strategies to foster psychologically safe, development-focused environments (Ramaker & Pedraza-Ramirez, 2023). This workshop targets practitioners interested in esports and those working in performance environments more broadly. Participants will leave with practical takeaways, transferable insights, and applied considerations to inform professional philosophy and practice.

9:00am - 10:30am

Interpersonal Violence (IV) in Sport as a Systemic Issue: Evidence, Priorities, and Organisational Responses

Location: **A01**

ID: 340 / Symposium 15: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Organizational development and quality management, Violence, Any other topic
Keywords: Safeguarding, Sport systems

Interpersonal Violence (IV) in Sport as a Systemic Issue: Evidence, Priorities, and Organisational Responses

Laurie Schwab[1,2], Sylvie Parent[3,4], Carole Gomez[1], Tine Vertommen[5,6], Yago Ramis Laloux[7], Helena Verhelle[5]
[1]Swiss Federal Institute of Sport, Magglingen, Switzerland; [2]Institute of Sport Sciences of the University of Lausanne, University of Lausanne, Switzerland; [3]Research Chair in Security and Integrity in Sport, Université Laval, Québec, QC, Canada.; [4]Department of Physical Education, Faculty of Education, Université Laval, Québec, QC, Canada.; [5]Safeguarding Sport & Society, Care and Wellbeing Centre of Expertise, Thomas More University of Applied Sciences, Antwerp, Belgium; [6]Department of Movement and Sports Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium; [7]Department of Basic, Developmental and Educational Psychology, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain

IV in sport is increasingly recognized as a systemic issue shaped by contextual, organizational, and governance-related factors. This symposium brings together four complementary contributions examining how IV emerges, is prioritized, and is addressed across different levels of the sport system. The symposium opens with population-based evidence on the contextual characteristics of IV in organized sport in Québec. Drawing on data from a large sample of adolescents, the first contribution documents when, where, and by whom IV is most frequently experienced. Findings highlight early adolescence, team sport settings, training contexts, and close relationships with coaches and peers as key contextual factors informing prevention efforts. Building on this context, the second contribution focuses on identifying shared priorities for advancing safe sport. Using a Delphi study with diverse sport community actors, it identifies shared, consensus-based priorities emphasizing relational safety and system-level action, providing a foundation for coordinated safeguarding efforts. The third contribution examines organizational readiness to respond to IV at the national level. Mapping safeguarding structures across European National Olympic Committees, it documents the presence of safeguarding roles and reporting mechanisms, while highlighting limitations in capacity, case management processes, referral pathways, and perceived leadership commitment. The last contribution critically examines safeguarding discourses within international sport federations, suggesting that the widespread adoption of safeguarding language may facilitate organizational uptake while diluting the systemic and gendered nature of violence in sport. Together, these contributions underscore the importance of aligning contextual evidence, shared priorities, organizational capacity, and governance narratives to strengthen safeguarding responses across sport systems.

9:00am - 10:30am

Coaches' Mental Health in High-Performance Sport: From Individual Responsibility to Systemic Care

Location: **A02**

ID: 467 / Symposium 13: 1
Symposium 90 minutes

Topics: Coaching, Health
Keywords: Coaches' mental health, High-performance sport, Organisational culture, Systemic support

Coaches' Mental Health in High-Performance Sport: From Individual Responsibility to Systemic Care

Ella McLoughlin[1], Julie Johnston[1], Loranne Smans[2], Peter Olusoga[3], Stiliani Chroni[4,5], Göran Kenttä[6,7]
[1]Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom; [2]Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Belgium; [3]Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom; [4]University of Inland Norway, Elverum, Norway; [5]University of Thessaly, Trikala, Greece; [6]The Swedish School of Sport & Health Sciences, Stockholm, Sweden; [7]The Swedish Sports Confederation, Stockholm, Sweden

Coaching occupies a unique position within the sporting landscape and is widely recognised as an inherently stressful profession. Coaches are exposed to intense stressors such as job insecurity and working long hours, placing them at heightened risk of mental health difficulties. Despite growing attention, prevailing approaches continue to frame coaches' mental health as an individual responsibility, overlooking the organisational, cultural, and structural conditions in which coaching is embedded. Drawing on qualitative, organisational, and applied sport psychology research, the symposium brings together four complementary presentations. The first presentation uses innovative qualitative methods to foreground coaches' experiences, illuminating the emotional labour, blurred work-life boundaries and high-demand, low-reward conditions shaping mental health and well-being. The second presentation explores the gendered barriers and support experienced by female elite coaches in winter sports. Results highlight how masculine cultures, structural inequality, and work–life demands intersect to influence career sustainability and well-being. The third presentation explores professional coaches' attitudes toward mental health, revealing how stigma, mistrust, and the normalisation of work overload shape help-seeking and self-care in high-performance environments. The fourth presentation reframes coaches' mental health as a systemic workforce and governance issue by highlighting how psychological strain is primarily driven by organisational conditions. This presentation argues for embedded psychosocial support as essential infrastructure within sport systems. Collectively, the symposium demonstrates that coaches' mental health cannot be effectively addressed through individual-level interventions alone. Instead, it calls for integrated, system-level strategies encompassing governance reform, organisational responsibility, and embedded psychosocial support to promote safe and sustainable coaching environments.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 23: Mental health

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Franziska Lautenbach**

ID: 644 / Oral Presentations 23: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Motivation, Physical activity, Social psychology
Keywords: motivation, behavior change, exercise psychology, mental health

Mental Health as Motivational Context: Symptom Moderation of Within-Person Processes Underlying Exercise Enjoyment

Amanda Rebar[1], Benjamin Gardner[2], Grace Vincent[3]
[1]University of South Carolina, United States of America; [2]University of Surrey, United Kingdom; [3]Central Queensland University, Australia

Lower physical activity among individuals with depression and anxiety may reflect disruptions in how motivation translates into positive experiences. Dual-process models propose that intention and habit guide behavior, whereas enjoyment reinforces ongoing engagement. This study examined whether depressive and anxiety symptoms are associated with momentary relationships among fatigue, habit, intention, and enjoyment during exercise, and whether these patterns differ from other daily activities. Adults (N = 105, 75 female, M age = 34.68, SD = 14.83) from the UK and Australia completed baseline measures of depression and anxiety and a 7-day ecological momentary assessment with six daily prompts assessing current activity, affect, and motivation. Linear mixed-effects models estimated associations between fatigue, habit, and intention with momentary enjoyment and tested whether these associations varied by depressive and anxiety symptoms. Greater momentary fatigue was associated with lower enjoyment ($b = -0.06$, $p < .01$), whereas stronger habit was associated with greater enjoyment ($b = 0.07$, $p < .01$). Higher anxiety and depressive symptoms strengthened the negative fatigue–enjoyment association (bs = −0.01, ps < .05), and depressive symptoms attenuated the habit–enjoyment association ($b = -0.01$, $p = .03$). Higher symptoms were also associated with lower enjoyment when acting with strong intention (bs = −0.01, ps < .05). Patterns were similar across activities. Depression and anxiety altered how fatigue, habit, and intention related to momentary experience, suggesting benefits of reducing perceived effort and supporting low-effort routines.

ID: 405 / Oral Presentations 23: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Elite sports and expertise, Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Mental Health, Women's Sport, Elite

Understanding Mental Health in Elite Women's Cricket: A Longitudinal Investigation

Harry Williams[1], Eleri Jones[1], Ross Roberts[1], Tim Woodman[1], Nick Peirce[2]
[1]Bangor University, United Kingdom; [2]England & Wales Cricket Board, United Kingdom

Research has suggested that elite female athletes report elevated levels of mental ill-health compared to women in the general population (Williams et al., 2026). Despite this, relatively little research has attempted to investigate mental health in female athletes longitudinally (Perry et al., 2021). The current study monitored symptoms of depression, anxiety and disordered eating (DE) via validated psychometric questionnaires in a cohort of female cricketers. Data was collected at five discreet timepoints of the cricketing season across a two-year period. 140 total players from the top two tiers of Women's Cricket in England and Wales (Age range 16-33, Mean age = 22.56) completed the study at least once. The point prevalence of clinically significant symptoms (CSS) of anxiety, depression and DE peaked at 14.2, 17.7 and 11.1% respectively. Period prevalence of CSS of anxiety, depression and DE across the five timepoints was 14.3, 17.9 and 7.1% respectively. Meanwhile, period prevalence of CSS of any one of anxiety, depression or DE was 30.7%. In terms of seasonality, the findings did not suggest significant impact of season stage on mental ill-health. When compared with sex-matched data from worldwide general population research, prevalence rates of anxiety and depression appear to be higher in female cricketers than in women generally, while rates of disordered eating appear comparable. These findings offer insight into the levels of mental ill-health in an elite female athlete sample, whilst providing an essential evidence base for stakeholders in women's cricket to identify priority areas of support within the sport.

ID: 570 / **Oral Presentations 23: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Clinical sport psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Pattern Recognition, Depression, Anxiety, Well-being

Mental Health Profiling: A Pattern Recognition Approach

George Ely[1], Ross Roberts[1], Robin Owen[2], Tim Woodman[1], Lynne Evans[3], Nicholas Peirce[4]
[1]Bangor University, United Kingdom; [2]Edge Hill University, United Kingdom; [3]Cardiff Metropolitan University, United Kingdom; [4]England and Wales Cricket Board, United Kingdom

Although significant steps have been taken to reduce stigma and improve mental health support in sport, mental health provision is still predominantly reactive. The majority of resource is spent on supporting those who have clinical levels of mental ill-health and widely used screening tools, such as the Sport Mental Health Assessment Tool (Gouttebarge et al., 2021), are designed to identify existing mental health problems. The next step is to provide an evidenced based approach to mitigating mental ill-health. Recently, pattern recognition has been used in physical injury prevention research (Evans et al., 2024). We applied these same principles to mental health. We used an online survey to collect data from professional cricketers regarding their mental health and associated factors. Across three years, 502 players provided data for at least one time point. We collected data during the pre-season, mid-season, and off-season of the 2021, 2022, and 2023 domestic England and Wales cricket season. Analyses provided profiles for high and low depression, anxiety, and well-being, during the pre-season, mid-season, and off-season (9 analyses in total). Profiles clearly identify the personal traits in combination with environmental factors that are associated with poor mental health. Interestingly, these profiles are different for each aspect of mental health at each discrete time point within the 12-month cricketing cycle. The profiles provide the basis for proactive mental health screening in professional cricket. They emphasise the importance of understanding the individual person whilst also highlighting the environmental factors that impact mental health.

ID: 165 / **Oral Presentations 23: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Consulting/ counseling, Human factors, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: mental health, mental performance, varsity, student-athlete

The Development and Implementation of a Mental Performance and Mental Health Promotion Program for Varsity Athletes and Coaches

Elise Lacoste, Penny Werthner
University of Calgary, Canada

Performance expectations in academics and sport can lead to increased stress and negative mental health outcomes for student-athletes. Scholars suggest that the development of psychological skills and increased knowledge regarding mental health promotion, including sleep and well-being, can function as a buffer against mental health challenges for athletes. The present study developed and implemented a combined mental performance and mental health promotion program to better understand the relationship between the two concepts and the unique needs of student-athletes. Theoretically guided by the Dual Continuum Model of Mental Health and the Elite Athlete Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework, this program ran over the course of two years with participation of over 150 student-athletes, aged 17-26, and their coaches. Workshops were conducted weekly, biweekly, or monthly with several varsity sports including hockey, basketball, soccer, rugby, and track and field. Reflexive data was collected by the researchers throughout the creation and implementation phases of the research and semi-structured interviews were conducted at the conclusion of the program to understand the experiences of 60 randomly selected athletes and coaches. The results of the reflexive thematic analysis of interview transcripts show an overall positive reception of the program and reveal unique considerations for those who conduct work with student-athletes, such as the effectiveness of psychological skills training and gaps concerning the application of these skills, as well as a desire to better understand well-being, sleep, time-management, and nutrition. It is recommended that practionners take a holistic approach to programming when working with student-athletes.

ID: 122 / Oral Presentations 23: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Clinical sport psychology, Elite sports and expertise, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: mental health, female, elite sport, recommendations

An ecological systems approach towards world-class female athletes' perceptions of changes needed to support their mental health

Kate Walsh, Samuel Giles, Chris Harwood, Chris Saward
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

High-performance sporting environments can pose risks to athlete mental health. However, limited research has investigated the broader environmental factors that can protect against mental ill-health and promote mental health in elite athlete populations. Guided by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, this study explored elite female athletes' perceptions of how their sporting and non-sporting environments influence their mental health, and the changes they perceive as necessary to experience higher levels of perceived support. Twenty-eight British world-class and elite female athletes (M=25.4, SD=2.9; years in sport: M=14.3, SD=5.1) participated in semi-structured interviews totalling 1,048 minutes (M=40.3mins, SD=7.7mins). Interviews examined influences across ecological system layers, alongside recommendations for change. Template analysis resulted in the generation of four themes: (a) walking the double-edged blade of self-reliance; (b) institutional stability as a currency of care; (c) gendered belonging on borrowed terms; and (d) untangling and reimagining the structures that hold us. Findings highlight how relational climates, organisational practices, and gendered narratives shape female athlete mental health. Participants identified several key areas for change, including the need for more stable, transparent organisational structures, coach education around mental health and relational support, and the development of more gender-conscious sporting cultures. The findings demonstrate the importance of adopting a multi-level, ecological approach to athlete mental health, emphasising that effective support extends beyond individual-level interventions to encompass relational, organisational, and cultural change within elite sport systems. Recommendations emerging from this work provide direction for creating environments in which elite female athletes can thrive within patriarchal structures.

9:00am - 10:30am

An interactive workshop: Project - Road to Milano Cortina 26 – Fail or Golden Success? Insights, Learnings and Co-Creation

Location: **A10**

ID: 593 / Workshop 20: 1
Workshop
Topics: Best practice, Coaching, Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: Olympic Games, Applied Sport Psychology, Olympic Preparation

An interactive workshop: Project - Road to Milano Cortina 26 – Fail or Golden Success? Insights, Learnings and Co-Creation

Daniel Rähse
Olympiazentrum Vorarlberg GmbH, Austria

Preparing for the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 requires an evidence-based and adaptive framework. This applied, interactive workshop presents the "Road to MiCo 26" project and engages participants in co-creating insights into the complexities of Olympic preparation. The project established an empirical foundation through qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2021) of athlete and coach interviews. Key milestones—including kickoff events, masterclasses with Olympic champions, and post-Olympic workshops—are used as interactive case material. Quality management involved iterative evaluations by working groups consisting of Olympic training center staff and Olympic medalists. Follow-up interviews with Olympic athletes aim to identify unmet needs and systemic gaps for future cycles. Learning objectives are for participants to: (a) analyze systemic barriers inherent in short-term Olympic preparation cycles; (b) evaluate sport-psychological strategies used across the Olympic timeline; and (c) co-develop optimized sport-psychological frameworks for future major events (e.g., LA 2028, French Alps 2030). Experiential learning is fostered through guided small-group work, collaborative timeline analysis, and facilitated discussions. Participants will work with real project milestones, contrasting successful initiatives with systemic "failures" (i.e., planned measures not implemented due to practical barriers). Groups will identify key determinants and co-create a sport-psychological roadmap for future Olympic cycles, followed by plenary reflection and synthesis. Participants will receive workshop materials including the sport-psychological manual developed for Milano Cortina, a summary of a masterclass with an Olympic medalist, and the detailed project timeline to support transfer into applied practice.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 24: Coaching

Location: **A11**
Session Chair: **Svenja Wachsmuth**

ID: 125 / Oral Presentations 24: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Motivation, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: Coach trust, Grit, athletic career commitment, Career Motivation Theory

Coach Trust, Grit, and Athletic Career Commitment in Elite Soccer Players: A Career Motivation Theory Perspective

Jungwon Lee, Sungho Kwon
Seoul National University, Korea, Republic of Korea

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among coach trust, grit, and athletic career commitment in elite soccer players, and to investigate the mediating role of grit. Drawing on Career Motivation Theory, which emphasizes the interaction between environmental factors and personal resources in shaping career-related outcomes, this study conceptualized coach trust as an environmental factor and grit as a personal resource underlying athletes' career commitment. Despite growing interest in athlete career development, prior research has primarily focused on dropout-related factors, with limited attention to the psychological mechanisms that sustain athletic career commitment. A convenience sampling method was employed, and data were collected from 248 elite soccer players from high school and university teams registered with the Korea Football Association. After excluding 23 responses due to incomplete or low-quality responses, a total of 225 responses were analyzed using SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 21.0. Data were collected using self-report questionnaires, and descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) were conducted. The results indicated that coach trust did not have a significant direct effect on athletic career commitment. However, coach trust had a significant positive effect on grit, and grit had a significant positive effect on athletic career commitment. Furthermore, grit fully mediated the relationship between coach trust and athletic career commitment. These findings suggest that coach trust influences athletes' career commitment indirectly through the development of psychological resources such as grit.

ID: 187 / **Oral Presentations 24: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Motivation, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches)
Keywords: aesthetic sports, coaching for agency, motivation, well-being

Enhanced Expectancies by Positive Feedback Do Not Influence the Learning of a Form-Based Motor Skill in Gymnastics

Bianca Maria Laroëre[1], Jiří Mudrák[2], Roman Malíř[1], Takehiro Iwatsuki[3], Vít Třebický[1]
[1]Department of Gymnastics and Combat Sports, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic; [2]Institute of Psychology, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague, Czech Republic; [3]Department of Kinesiology and Exercise Sciences, University of Hawaii at Hilo, Hilo, Hawaii, USA

Coaches' feedback is crucial for athletes' motivation, performance, and learning; however, experimental research on enhancing one's expectancies in aesthetic sports remains limited. This study examined whether positive feedback, designed to enhance athletes' expectancies, influences motor performance, learning, perceived exertion, and intrinsic motivation in aerobic gymnastics. Thirty-six female gymnasts (Mage = 14.1 years, SD = 3.48) were assigned to either an enhanced expectancies (EE) group or a control (Con) group, through stratified randomisation. Participants performed a coordinative task across baseline (BT), practice (PT), and retention (RT) phases, comprising seven blocks—Block 1 in BT, Blocks 2–6 in PT, and Block 7 in RT—under group-specific feedback conditions. Movement execution was evaluated by two certified gymnastics judges. Perceived exertion was assessed before and after each phase using the 10-point Borg scale, and intrinsic motivation was measured after BT and PT, and before RT, using the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory, assessing interest/enjoyment, perceived competence, and pressure/tension dimensions. Linear mixed-effects modelling showed that both groups improved execution form, with the EE group decreasing the deduction from BT to RT phases by 70%, compared to 34% for the Con group, with this pattern consistent across block-level analyses. Despite these descriptive differences, no statistically discernible between-group differences were observed in execution quality, perceived exertion, or motivational variables. Although the findings do not provide supporting evidence for enhanced expectancies effects through positive, non-contingent feedback, this study contributes to the growing literature on enhanced expectancies and motor performance and learning and extends this line of research to aesthetic sports.

ID: 271 / **Oral Presentations 24: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Social psychology, Youth
Keywords: Triad, coping, stress, stakeholders

Facing Failure Together: Managing Underperformance in the parents-athlete-coach triad

Fabien Varenne[1], Julie Doron[1], Noémie Lienhart[2]
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Intensive training exposes adolescent athletes to numerous stressors, presenting both challenges to be overcome and opportunities for development. This study aims to explore how adolescent athletes, their parents, and their coaches effectively cope with challenging situations, as well as the factors underlying the coping processes within these triads. Ten triads were interviewed, each consisting of an athlete enrolled in an intensive badminton training centre (5 females; Mage = 15.5, SD = 0.95), their head coach (10 males; Mage = 30.0, SD = 6.48), and at least one parent (both parents in 5 triads; Mage = 47.2, SD = 3.62). A scenario-based method was used, focusing on a critical sport situation: underperformance. All data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews (Mduration

= 86 min) and were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The triads adopted various coping strategies in response to underperformance, primarily within the coach-athlete and parent-athlete sub-dyads, with the aim of supporting or protecting the athlete. These strategies included both individual and interpersonal coping. The interpersonal coping strategies seemed to be shaped by organizational (e.g., geographical distance), individual (e.g., sport experience), and relational (e.g., roles) factors. This study provides additional empirical insight into stakeholders' roles in coping among adolescent athletes and how coping is structured along a continuum between individual and interpersonal coping (Afifi et al., 2020) within the athletic triangle. These findings support the development of programs promoting sustainable sporting performance and offer recommendations on the most effective ways of coping in triad.

ID: 494 / **Oral Presentations 24: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching
Keywords: Neurodiversity, ADHD, Autism, Coaching

"You Can't Just Shout the Information Across the Pitch and Everyone Take It On": Football Coaches' Perceptions of Neuroinclusion

Oliver Runswick[1], Sissily Waite[1], Daya Chotai[1], Emily Lowery[1], Panagiotis Athanasopoulos[1], Sam Wood[2]
[1]MORPH Lab, Department of Psychology, King's College London, United Kingdom; [2]Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University Institute of Sport

A range of research has aimed to develop evidence-informed effective coaching practices in sport. However, much of this work has focused on optimising coaching for neurotypical athletes. While the need for individual consideration is acknowledged, there is little specific evidence to underpin coaches understanding of supporting neurodivergent athletes. Here we take a sociocultural lens to neurodiversity and aim to understand the current perceptions and practices of delivering neuroinclusive sport from qualified football coaches. We conducted semi-structured interviews with thirteen football coaches, qualified from FA Level 1 to UEFA B, who had experience coaching neurodivergent players. Reflexive thematic analysis revealed key themes related to knowledge, communication, and inclusive strategies. Although aware of the terminology, the participants had mixed perceptions on their knowledge and understanding of neuroinclusion and how to apply it in football, often leaning on lessons from other domains, like education. There was a strong desire for training to be implemented in coaching courses. In communication, participants expressed concerns about barriers created through the dynamics between neurodivergent and neurotypical players and implemented a range of communication types to support player understanding. Inclusive strategies included being flexible on supporting players' emotional regulation and understanding how to design sessions to avoid overwhelming sensory environments. This work advances our understanding of how football coaches understand neuroaffirmative practice and currently support neurodivergent athletes. Findings suggest more formalised routes for knowledge and skill development may be beneficial for coaches but also highlight positive practices already occurring through knowledge transferred from other domains and experiential learning.

ID: 375 / **Oral Presentations 24: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: Taxonomies of Practice, Practice Design, Transfer of Learning, Applied Research

A Comprehensive Taxonomy of Track and Field Sport Practices: A Resource for Coaches and Researchers

Royden Radowits, Bradley W. Young
University of Ottawa, Canada

Within sport expertise, attention has been dedicated towards categorizing types of practices to differentiate developmental outcomes as a consequence of athletes' training. Taxonomies have demarcated practice based on a coach's role (Ericsson, 2020), or skill acquisition objectives (Hodges & Lohse, 2022). Although taxonomies are often underpinned by theoretical principles, they potentially face challenges when used in dialogue with practitioners in applied contexts. This study explored whether Hodges and Lohse's (2022) practice taxonomy, which distinguishes between transfer, learn, and maintain, would effectively serve applied research in track and field. We interviewed nine national- and international-level Canadian track and field coaches (M = 20 years' experience; two each from throws, endurance, sprints, jumps, and one multi-event coach) about the fit of Hodges and Lohse's taxonomy within their coaching methods. Framework thematic analysis began with a deductive check of fit within each event group; practice categories were then inductively developed within groups and combined based on commonality across groups. As each coach drew on event- and Canadian-specific dominant knowledges, practice categories were refined accordingly. The coaches discussed key differences when designing practices to either engage learning processes, ensure the transfer of specific movement qualities, develop competition readiness, or provide emotionally-supportive environments. The resulting sport-specific taxonomy included: Practices for Skill Learning, Movement Transfer, Competition Rehearsal, and Supporting and Stabilizing. We discuss how this taxonomy may enable studies of emotional and metacognitive development across practice types in track and field. We discuss how our approach could guide future applied researchers in creating sport-specific practice taxonomies.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 25: Exercise psychology

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Yiannis Theodorakis**

ID: 354 / Oral Presentations 25: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Exercise psychology, Self
Keywords: self-efficacy, artistic gymnastics, sport performance, task specificity

Self-Efficacy on the Apparatus: A Systematic Review and the Development of an Artistic Gymnastics-Specific Assessment Tool

Federica Marzoli[1], Gianluca Di Pinto[1], Selenia Di Fronso[2], Davide Curzi[1]
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Artistic gymnastics involves high motor complexity, evaluative pressure, and substantial mental task demands, and self-efficacy (i.e., perceived capability to successfully meet task demands within a given context) may represent a relevant readiness construct. However, gymnastics research has largely relied on general self-efficacy or self-confidence measures, limiting specificity and apparatus-level interpretation. This study aimed to (1) review self-efficacy assessment tools in artistic gymnastics and (2) develop a more precise, apparatus-specific instrument. Studies assessing self-efficacy in competitive artistic gymnasts and reporting performance-related outcomes were systematically reviewed. Based on established self-efficacy assessment principles, a new self-efficacy questionnaire was developed targeting apparatus-specific self-efficacy. An exploratory pilot study was conducted and an apparatus-specific self-efficacy questionnaire was administered approximately 24 hours before and 24 hours after a structured pre-competition trial, defined as the final official competition-like test performed in training prior to competition, in 33 competitive artistic gymnasts (mean age ≈ 17.0 years). Nine studies were included in the systematic review. Self-efficacy was generally associated with performance outcomes, while no study reported apparatus-specific self-efficacy measures. The pilot showed the feasibility of repeated questionnaire administration, supported the distinction between general and apparatus-specific self-efficacy, and highlighted the relevance of assessment timing for interpretation. Internal consistency was acceptable for an exploratory tool (Cronbach's α ≈ 0.62). Gymnastics-specific self-efficacy measures remain an important development target. This tool represents a first task- and apparatus-specific approach that may support future validation and applied monitoring in relation to performance.

ID: 631 / Oral Presentations 25: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Motivation, Physical activity, Social psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: social media engagement, self-determination theory, healthy behaviors behaviors

The Relations Between Social Media Engagement, Psychological Needs, Motivation, and Healthy Behaviors in Adolescents

Behzad Behzadnia
University of Tabriz, Iran, Islamic Republic of

Grounded in Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017), the experience of basic psychological need satisfaction (i.e., autonomy, competence, relatedness) functions as an essential nutrient that foster autonomous motivation, and promote healthy behaviors. In contrast, the frustration of needs is associated to controlled motivation, increased amotivation, and lower participation in healthy behaviors. The aim of this study was to examine the relationships between social media engagement with need satisfaction, motivational regulations, and intention to participate at physical activity among students. A total of 176 high school students (male = 48.9%; age ranged from 13 to 19 years old) participated in this cross-sectional study. Participants filled out self-reported measures of social media engagement (behavioral, cognitive, and emotional), need satisfaction and need frustration, motivational regulations toward physical activity (autonomous and controlled motivation and amotivation), and intention to participate in physical activity. The results indicated that social media engagement was not related to autonomy and relatedness need satisfaction, but it was positively related to competence need satisfaction. However, social media engagement positively associated with the frustration of all three psychological needs. Additionally, social media engagement negatively related to autonomous motivation, and it was positively related to amotivation. Moreover, social media engagement was not related to controlled motivation and intention to participate in physical activity. These results show that social media engagement may results in greater need frustration, while also showing a positive association with competence need satisfaction in high school students. The results and their practical implications will be discussed.

ID: 554 / Oral Presentations 25: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Exercise psychology, Health, Neuroscience
Keywords: science mapping, cognitive preservation, exercise medicine, mind–body therapies

Taiwan Tai Chi Research: Global Trends and Hot Topics from a Bibliometric Analysis

Chi-Jui Lee[1], Wei-Li Hsieh[2,3], Chiao-Ling Hung[1,4,5], Yu-Kai Chang[2]
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This study aimed to systematically examine the developmental trajectory, scholarly impact, international collaboration patterns, and thematic evolution of Tai Chi research conducted in Taiwan using a bibliometric analysis. Publications authored by Taiwanese scholars between 1993 and 2025 were retrieved from the Scopus database. Keywords related to Tai Chi were searched within the Article Title, Abstract, and Keywords fields, and articles were included if the affiliation country was Taiwan. The Boolean search syntax was ("Tai chi" OR "Taichi" OR "Taiji") AND "Taiwan". Only original research and review articles were included. CiteSpace and VOSviewer were employed to analyze publication trends, collaboration networks at the author and country levels, highly cited references, and keyword co-occurrence and burst patterns. Analysis of the 202 included publications (168 original research and 34 review articles) revealed a growing field anchored in randomized controlled trials and clinical evidence. Collaboration networks at the author level highlighted a hospital-centric ecosystem, with 80% of the top 20 most productive scholars affiliated with medical institutions. Furthermore, country-level networks demonstrated strong strategic partnerships, particularly with the United States. Keyword burst analysis indicated a paradigm shift, transitioning from early cardiopulmonary explorations to recent frontiers in neuroplasticity and cognitive preservation. This study positions Taiwan as a contributor to global Tai Chi research, whose medicalized and evidence-oriented trajectory, institutional structure, and international collaborations collectively suggest its role as a translational bridge linking Eastern mind-body traditions with Western evidence-based medicine.

ID: 582 / Oral Presentations 25: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Motivation, Physical activity
Keywords: Smartwatch, Self-determination Theory, Physical activity

Reciprocal Associations Between Smartwatch Use, Self-Determined Motivation and Moderate-to-Vigorous Physical Activity

Richard Steel, Suvo Mitra
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

Smartwatches are designed to motivate users to improve their health via data monitoring. Although studies have examined smartwatch use, self-determination theory and physical activity, findings are inconsistent with increases in autonomous and controlled motivation evident. This study will examine the long-term associations between smartwatch use, self-determined motivation and physical activity. Employing a 12-month longitudinal design, sixty-six participants (50 female; 16 male; Mage = 21.0) were provided with a smartwatch. Motivation was measured using the BREQ-3 at baseline and every 3-months thereafter. Moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MPA/VPA) data was extracted from the smartwatches. Associations between motivation and MPA/VPA were analysed using mixed models. ±30-day BREQ-aligned windows revealed associations between external regulation and MPA (within- and between-person; ps <.05). VPA was associated with decreased intrinsic and increased introjected regulation (within-person; ps <.05). Cross-lagged panel effects using -30-day BREQ-3 windows revealed higher VPA predicted higher external and introjected regulation and higher MPA predicted lower integrated and intrinsic regulation (ps <.05). The association between smartwatch wear time and motivation was modelled prior to BREQ-3 administration. Between individuals, increased smartwatch wear time was associated with lower identified, integrated and intrinsic regulation (ps <.05). However, within person, sustained long-term wear was associated with higher identified and intrinsic regulation (ps <.05). The overall pattern suggests that short-term smartwatch use was associated with more controlled motivation. Nonetheless, when examining long-term within-person associations, more autonomous motives became evident. This suggests that although smartwatch users may experience short-term increases in controlled motivation, over the longer-term, motivation may become more self-determined.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 22: Well-being and quality of life

Location: **A13**
Session Chair: **Patricia Frytz**

ID: 275 / Oral Presentations 22: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Chronic pain, Psychological well-being, Endurance sport

The Relationship Between Chronic Pain and Psychological Well-being in Endurance Athletes: A Longitudinal Mixed Method Study

Lloyd Emeka[1], Carla Meijen[2], David Sheffield[3], Peary Brug[1], Emily Martin[4], Silvia Riva[1]
[1]St Mary's University; [2]University of Amsterdam; [3]University of Derby; [4]Somerset Cricket Club

Athlete participation in endurance sport requires high time investment and energy, and typically involves a considerable amount of physical stress and pain during training and competition (Atkinson, 2008; Falcous, 2017). Chronic pain can be considered as persistent or recurrent pain lasting longer than three months, a dynamic experience that changes over time and can have an impact on psychological well-being in endurance athletes (Mc Auliffe et al., 2017; Ryff, 1989; Treede et al., 2015). The aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between

chronic pain and psychological well-being in endurance athletes over an 18-month period. This longitudinal prospective mixed method study consists of 4 timepoints over an 18-month period. Endurance athletes (41 females, 16 males, 1 non-binary, Mage = 44,00, SD = 13.56) with chronic pain completed an online survey measuring pain acceptance, self-compassion, emotion regulation, athlete identity, social support, chronic pain, and psychological well-being at three time points. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a subset of participants for timepoint 4 of the study. The findings for time point 1 and 2 will be presented. Preliminary results for timepoint 1 show a positive correlation between chronic pain and psychological well-being ($r = 0.042$, $p < 0.05$). Future analyses will include latent growth curve modelling to study change over time, mediation, and moderation analyses. This study aims to address the literature gap on the relationship between chronic pain and psychological well-being in endurance athletes and will include recommendations for coaches and health care practitioners.

ID: 184 / **Oral Presentations 22: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: dance, well-being, self-compassion, self-criticism

Self-Criticism, Self-Compassion, and Other Related Variables as Factors of Well-Being in Pre-Professional and Professional Dancers

Josef Bartos
Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Czech Republic (Czechia)

Dancers often face body-focused criticism (Robson, 2002), which can compromise their well-being through self-critical tendencies (Nordin-Bates et al., 2023). Notably, self-compassion interventions reduce self-criticism and improve well-being (Wakelin et al., 2022). However, these interrelations may involve additional variables, but evidence in dancers is scarce. Therefore, this study examined self-criticism, self-compassion, social physique anxiety, fear of performance failure, fear of self-compassion, and well-being in dancers with a mixed-methods design. The quantitative part (dance students, n = 333, 59% of women, Mage = 15.57, age range: 11–22, SDage = 2.44) used self-report measures with a control group (general students, n = 237, 59% of women, general students, Mage = 14.33, age range: 10–18, SDage = 1.97). The qualitative part (professional dancers, n=17, Mage = 31.76, age range: 22–50, SDage = 7.43) used a three-phase design: introductory interview, journaling, and final interview. Dancers and older adolescents report a poorer psychological profile. Gender patterns were similar across samples, although male dancers reported lower well-being. Regression analyses indicated that well-being was predicted by self-compassion ($\beta = 0.25$, $t = 3.40$, $p < 0.01$), self-criticism ($\beta = -0.17$, $t = -2.31$, $p < 0.05$), and social physique anxiety ($\beta = -0.17$, $t = -2.61$, $p < 0.01$), explaining 25% of variance. Qualitative analysis is in progress. Preliminary findings revealed four overarching themes: 1) bodily identity, 2) relationship with the body, 3) body self-compassion strategies, and 4) contextual factors. The study examines how promoting self-compassion may support sustainable career development among dancers.

ID: 418 / **Oral Presentations 22: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Leadership, Professional development and mentoring, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: burnout, mental health, staff, stress

Determinants for Sport Coaches' Occupational Well-Being: a Scoping Review

Sascha Leisterer-Härtig[1], Virginie Nicaise[2], Maëlle Bracco[2], Anna Eckert[1], Guillaume Martinent[2], Emma Guillet-Descas[2]
[1]Leipzig University, Germany; [2]Claude Bernard Lyon 1 University, France

In the coaching profession, occupational well-being–encompassing affective, psychological, and social experiences (Keyes, 2005)–is essential for sustaining mental health. While occupational well-being is influenced by individual, interpersonal, and organizational dimensions, existing literature often examines these in isolation. This scoping review identifies and synthesizes multilevel determinants of coaches' occupational well-being in sport psychology literature. PRISMA guidelines for scoping reviews (Tricco et al., 2018) were applied. The literature was systematically searched in PubPsych, PubMed, and Scopus using "mental health", "coach", and "sport". Studies were included when (1) they focused on competitive sport coaches, (2) they used an empirical methodology, (3) they were written in English, French, or German, and (4) were published 2014–2025. Twenty-four eligible studies were synthesised. Coaches' well-being determinants occur at individual, interpersonal, and organisational levels. Individual-level factors include strong emotional competencies (Lee & Cho, 2023). Interpersonal factors comprise determinants for psychological and social well-being, such as high-quality coach-athlete relationships (Davis et al., 2023). Organisational improvements, such as avoiding an ego-oriented work climate, also benefit psychological well-being (Ong & Zhao, 2019). The literature synthesis also highlights potential interconnections among levels, which should be considered in future research. For example, this review suggests focusing on interventions that connect levels to enhance coach well-being, such as fostering positive coach-athlete relationships within mastery-oriented work climates. However, societal influences on coach well-being were not captured due to language restrictions. Also, single-level approaches appear insufficient, these findings clarify how individual, interpersonal, and organisational determinants can be integrated in intervention studies to improve coaches' occupational well-being.

ID: 444 / Oral Presentations 22: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Coach mental health, sport psychology intervention, well-being, burnout prevention.

Take Care of Your Coach 2.0: A Transnational Intervention to Enhance Coaches' Mental Health and Well-Being

Sidonio Serpa[1], Dubravka Martinović[2], Maja Smrdu[3], Patricija Udovč[4], Tina Jeromen[5]
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Sports coaches are exposed to elevated levels of occupational stress arising from multiple sources, including relationships with athletes, parents, fellow coaches, and organizational management, as well as financial pressures. These demands contribute to significant emotional strain and an increased risk of burnout. Despite this, structured mental health support specifically tailored to coaches remains limited. The Erasmus+ Sport project Take Care of Your Coach 2.0 (TCYC2.0) aims to enhance mental health literacy, coping skills, and overall well-being among sports coaches. The project adopts a mixed-methods, multiphase design. In the first phase, a needs assessment was conducted using semi-structured interviews and surveys to identify key mental health challenges. In the second phase, sport psychologists developed a practice-oriented intervention toolkit comprising evidence-informed techniques, including breathing exercises, mindfulness-based awareness, body scan, cognitive restructuring (ABC technique), and problem-solving strategies. These components were delivered through interactive workshops, peer-learning activities, and a freely accessible online course. The qualitative pilot sample included 10 coaches (four men and six women) from volleyball, swimming, and skiing across Austria, Croatia, and Slovenia. Preliminary findings from interviews and reflective feedback indicate perceived improvements in stress management, emotional regulation, self-care, and openness to discussing mental health. These results provide preliminary evidence for the feasibility and contextual relevance of a structured, coach-centered mental health intervention. By integrating psychoeducation, experiential learning, and digital delivery formats, the project supports sustainable improvements in coaches' well-being and highlights the importance of embedding coach mental health within European sport systems.

ID: 105 / Oral Presentations 22: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Physical literacy, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Grassroots football, Coaching practices, Coach education, Holistic development

Community Sports Coaches' Knowledge and Perspectives of Physical Literacy to Improve Child Wellbeing

Lara Vella[1,2], Joahnnes Carl[2], Matteo Crotti[3], Lisa Barnett[2], Michael Duncan[1]
[1]Coventry University, United Kingdom; [2]Deakin University, Australia; [3]Università degli studi di Bergamo, Italy

Physical literacy (PL) is increasingly presented as a foundation for supporting children's broad developmental needs within sport environments (Cairney et al., 2019; UNESCO, 2023). Yet, it remains uncertain how community coaches interpret PL and whether it meaningfully shapes coaching practice. This study investigated coaches' perspectives on PL, barriers in adopting PL-informed approaches, and perspectives of it's contribution to children's holistic development. Using a constructivist–interpretivist qualitative design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 grassroots football coaches in England. A hybrid deductive–inductive reflexive thematic analysis was applied following Braun and Clarke's (2019) six-stage model; four themes and associated subthemes were identified. Results showed that most participants held a limited or fragmented understanding of PL. Coaches commonly associated PL with physical proficiency, with less recognition of it's cognitive, emotional, and social components. Despite this narrow conceptualisation, many described everyday coaching strategies that incidentally reflected PL principles, such as supporting confidence, enjoyment, and positive peer interactions. However, the intentional use of PL frameworks was hindered by insufficient training, inconsistent guidance from sport organisations, and a lack of practical resources. The findings underscore the need for tailored coach education that translates PL theory into actionable practices suitable for community sport settings. Strengthened organisational support structures, including clearer messaging, policy alignment, and accessible tools, may help coaches adopt a more holistic approach. Further work is needed to examine how sporting bodies can embed PL across coach development pathways and to assess the longer-term influence of PL-informed coaching on young people's participation, wellbeing, and multidimensional development.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 26: Professional development and mentoring

Location: **048**
Session Chair: **Recep Görgülü**

ID: 221 / Oral Presentations 26: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Professional development and mentoring, Youth
Keywords: neophyte practitioners, youth sport, mental performance consulting

Perceptions of Applied Youth Sport Work in Neophyte MPC Trainees from the United States

Kayleigh Hart, Jedediah E. Blanton
University of Tennessee, United States of America

Working with young athletes is seen as an entry into professional sport psychology consultation for inexperienced practitioners (Henriksen et al., 2014), though it is unclear if this pattern influences perspectives on working with youth sport populations. The present study explored (1) how neophyte practitioners in sport psychology graduate programs in the US describe their ideal population for their careers and (2) their perceptions on working with youth athletes. Twelve consultants in training (Mage = 25.6), each with less than 100 hours of experience, participated in semi-structured interviews. Participants represented five different sport psychology graduate programs, and all were studying to become Certified Mental Performance Consultants. Interviews were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Most participants were open to working with youth as a "place to start," but their ideal populations were college or professional athletes. Participants were moderately accurate in their conceptualization of applied work with youth, though expressed unique and challenging aspects to working with youth such as adapting session content, managing attention spans, and navigating parents. Some felt ill-equipped to work with youth athletes, and many lacked explicit training and exposure to youth populations that would grant them tools to navigate challenges. Transformative interviewing and integration of youth-specific training into graduate program curriculum may promote more awareness in youth applied work. To close competency gaps, neophytes' supervisors can generate resources for creative, developmentally appropriate consulting. Training should also promote engagement with influential relevant stakeholders, like parents and coaches, in the youth sport system.

ID: 210 / Oral Presentations 26: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Professional development and mentoring, Social psychology, Youth
Keywords: Mentorship, Mentors, Young female coaches

Fostering Sustainable Novice and Young Female Coaches: The Role of Mentors' Motivation, Gender Sensitivity, and Communication

Suzanne Thierry, Virginie Nicaise
Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1, France

Mentoring plays an important role in addressing underrepresentation in sport coaching professions. Mentorship represents the sharing of everyday experiences, self-directed learning, personalized guidance, emotional and psychological support, and facilitation of career development. This study is based on a mentorship program developed by the French Soccer Federation for young novice women coaches. Based on mentorship and women coaches litterature, the aim of this study is to identify how mentors' motivation, gender awareness, and communication are related to mentees' satisfaction, ambition and self-efficacy as women coaches. This study adopted a quantitative approach to evaluate the role of mentors (N = 91; M = 36.7 years; SD = ±10.9) involved in the Next Gen Coaches mentorship program designed for young novice female soccer coaches (N = 250; M = 16.3 years; SD = ±1.09). Data were collected from both mentors and mentee coaches through online surveys administered before and after the program. Mentors were asked about personal experiences (players and coaches), motivation (EMS II), gender awarness, and communication with their mentees. Mentees were surveyed on their personal experiences, ambitions, coaching self-efficacy (CES II), and their sens of community (SSAQ). It is expected that mentors' frequent communication and autonomous motivation will be significantly related to mentees' satisfaction and self-efficacy as coaches. Mentors' gender awareness may also provide more effective and appropriate support for mentees. This study may be useful for planning future mentor recruitment strategies and formal mentor training to ensure mentorship programmes contribute more effectively to developing sustainable careers for women coaches globally.

ID: 106 / Oral Presentations 26: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Professional development and mentoring, Talent identification/development, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: performance profiling, projective assessment, autonomy-supportive sport psychology, rational emotional behavioural therapy

The Athlete Needs Assessment Plan: A 3-Component, 7-Session Framework for Supporting Athletes' Self-Understanding and Development

Mathias Alberton
Martial Attitude C.I.C., United Kingdom

Contemporary high-performance sport environments are increasingly shaped by early talent identification and pressure for rapid progression, often reinforcing externally driven development pathways that compromise athlete autonomy and psychological adaptability (Baker et al., 2018; Henriksen et al., 2019). Despite this, major professional bodies such as the BPS and APA have yet to offer clear, evidence-based guidance on how applied practitioners should systematically assess and individualize psychological support across developmental stages, leaving many to rely on fragmented, reactive methods (Thrower et al., 2023). In response, this conceptual paper introduces the Athlete Needs Analysis Plan (ANAP), a structured, multi-stage framework that combines validated psychometric assessments (i.e., grit, task/ego orientation, competitive anxiety), guided performance-profiling interview, and the projective element Athlete Apperception Technique (AAT; Gibbs et al., 2017) to progressively and centrally elevate athlete meaning-making and self-awareness. Rather than prescribing pre-packaged solutions, ANAP is designed to elicit personally relevant performance narratives and tailor subsequent interventions while providing autonomy-support. This presentation argues that ANAP offers a scalable, ethically grounded alternative to dominant top-down psychological support models in sport, with potential to strengthen both performance and long-term wellbeing. In

fact, ANAP is designed not only as a preventive tool for younger athletes but also as a reflective framework for athletes at later stages of their careers, helping them to re-examine needs, values, and identity in environments that may otherwise silence such considerations. Initial insights from seven academy-level swimmers will be discussed, providing an illustrative example of ANAP's implementation in a real-world sport context.

ID: 675 / **Oral Presentations 26: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Pedagogical psychology, Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.), Professional development and mentoring, Any other topic
Keywords: Generative AI, ChatGPT, movement analysis, gymnastics

From Prompt to Performance: Evaluating ChatGPT in Gymnastic Movement Analysis

Marie Frenkel, Cara Szawilla, Holger Ziekow
Hochschule Furtwangen University, Germany

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) is gaining increasing importance in both sport and healthcare. In particular, large-language-models such as ChatGPT are already being integrated into training and advisory processes. However, their potential for movement analysis in sports remains insufficiently explored. The aim of this study was therefore to investigate the performance of ChatGPT in analyzing gymnastic movements. A mixed-methods design was employed. Three gymnasts performed a handstand, which was photographically documented and analyzed by ChatGPT using a structured prompt. Subsequently, six coaches evaluated each of the three AI-generated analyses using a questionnaire comprising qualitative criteria (hallucinations, factual errors, overlooked aspects, spatial cognition) and quantitative ratings (linguistic quality, overall evaluation). In total, 18 questionnaires were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2014) and descriptive statistics. No hallucinations were identified in 56% of cases. Factual errors occurred in 50% of analyses, and overlooked aspects in 39%, particularly concerning upper extremities. Linguistic quality was rated as good. ChatGPT correctly identified movement direction in 83% of cases and accurately described body position in 56%. Moreover, 61.1% of coaches indicated that they would use AI-generated analyses in gymnastics training. The overall evaluation was predominantly positive. The findings suggest that ChatGPT can capture central movement characteristics and may provide supportive input at the interface between health promotion and performance enhancement. However, the analyses lack full contextual sensitivity and technical precision. These findings align with other research (O'Brien & Prentice, 2025), indicating that while AI-based feedback can complement the expertise of coaches, it cannot replace it.

ID: 211 / **Oral Presentations 26: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Talent identification/development
Keywords: Identification, Assessment, Organizational Psychology

Talent Selection Processes in Sports: A Qualitative Comparison With Personnel Selection in Business

Birte Brinkmöller[1], Dennis Dreiskämper[2], Valeria Eckardt[1], Oliver Höner[3], Bernd Strauss[1]
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Talent selection represents a key challenge for coaches. Selecting athletes requires the use of predictive constructs, valid assessment methods, and structured decision processes. These steps are rooted in selection psychology, originating from personnel selection research (Bergkamp et al., 2019), which draws on a long-standing tradition. Despite differences in context, both domains share the overarching goal of identifying high-potential individuals under uncertainty, making cross-domain learning theoretically promising yet empirically unexplored. The aim of the present study, hence, was to explore and compare selection processes in elite sports and business from both a scientific and applied perspective in order to identify similarities, differences, and opportunities for cross-domain knowledge transfer. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 participants, including coaches (n = 4), recruiters (n = 4), sport scientists (n = 2), and business psychologists (n = 2), and analyzed using a deductive-inductive qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2014), followed by a structured cross-group comparison. Results showed differences in the implementation of requirement analyses, the assessment of constructs, the level of standardization and structuring of evaluations, and the normative orientation of the scientific discourse. Shared categories included the importance of motivation and person–organization fit, as well as the need for stronger theory-practice integration. Coaches demonstrated reflective awareness of limitations but systematic observation protocols and explicit decision rules were largely absent. In contrast, recruiters showed higher procedural standardization, while work samples were rarely used despite strong predictive validity. Overall, the findings suggest substantial potential for cross-domain learning, provided that fundamental contextual differences are respected and principles are adapted accordingly.

9:00am - 10:30am

Psychodynamic Thinking in Applied Work with Athletes

Location: **130**

ID: 114 / **Workshop 19: 1**
Workshop
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Consulting/ counseling, Psychotherapeutic approaches (e.g. psychodinamic,

systemic)
Keywords: psychodynamic approach, clinical sport psychology, counseling

Psychodynamic Thinking in Applied Work with Athletes

Ohad Nahum
The Academic College of Tel Aviv–Yaffo, Israel

Psychodynamic thinking stands as a cornerstone of the therapeutic tradition and a well-supported evidence-based practice (Shedler, 2010). It encompasses a wealth of theories and methods, unified by several core principles that illuminate unconscious processes, relational patterns, and responses to stress. Despite its longstanding role in clinical and consultative settings, psychodynamic thinking is used only sparingly in sport psychology, as its concepts are often presented in abstract language and insufficiently translated into applied sport practice. Consistent with holistic perspectives on the individual athlete (Moore & Bonagura, 2017; Wylleman & Rosier, 2016), psychodynamic thinking may help practitioners better understand athletes' underlying dynamics and thereby support more attuned and effective work in the sport context. Drawing on established psychodynamic theory and psychotherapy literature (McWilliams, 2011; Shedler, 2022), this workshop presents nine core principles of psychodynamic thinking that can deepen understanding of athletes' underlying dynamics and demonstrates how they can be translated into applied work with athletes.

Learning objectives

- Gain familiarity with nine core principles of psychodynamic thinking and their expression in athletes
- Explore how psychodynamic thinking can inform case formulation and reflective applied work with athletes

Teaching methods

- Interactive presentation and discussion with guiding questions
- Case-based reflection using brief video material or case vignettes to prompt discussion of applied work with athletes

Materials

- Participants will receive a concise summary of the nine core principles and key ideas, along with a short case example to support translation into practice, and guidance for further reading.

10:30am - 11:30am

Poster Session 2

Location: **West University of Timisoara**

ID: 119 / Poster Session 2: 1
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Health, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: Sports injury, rehabilitation, self-talk

Exploring Self-Talk in Athletic Rehabilitation Following Sport Injury – Insights From a Qualitative Study

Sarah Terhorst, Felix Ehrlenspiel
TUM, Germany

Sport injuries cause sudden changes for athletes (Arvinen-Barrow & Olusoga, 2024). Beyond physical impairment, athletes often experience psychological strain (Reussner et al., 2024), that they have to cope with. For understanding such psychological processes during rehabilitation organic self-talk – non-instructed, naturally occurring verbalisation (Latinjak et al., 2019) – offers a valuable lens. The study draws on theoretical approaches to organic self-talk (Latinjak et al., 2019), distinguishing between goal-directed and spontaneous, and on models of injury rehabilitation (Wiese-Bjornstal et al., 1998). Although self-talk has been widely examined in performance contexts (e. g. Boudreault et al., 2018; Hardy et al., 2001), empirical knowledge on situations, content, and functions of spontaneous and goal-directed self-talk during rehabilitation remains limited (Latinjak et al., 2020). An initial case study was conducted with injured amateur athletes. Building on this, data is currently collected from injured competitive athletes using a thought-sampling procedure (Latinjak et al., 2020) combined with problem-centred interviews (Witzel & Reiter, 2021). Data analysis follows qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2022). Results on amateur athletes include rehabilitation-specific self-talk situations such as doctor-patient-consultations, thematic categories of spontaneous self-talk such as emotional expressions of fear regarding the loss of the team-position, and functions of goal-directed self-talk such as coping with pain. Emerging results from competitive athletes indicate additional spontaneous self-talk-content categories related to return-to-play readiness, re-injury anxiety, and goal-directed functions such as regulation of bodily feedback. Insights may advance understanding of psychological processes during rehabilitation and guide the development of broader psychological support.

ID: 129 / Poster Session 2: 2
Poster presentation
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Elite sports and expertise, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: Olympic Games, Change, Elite athletes, Adaptation

The Olympic Games Transition Model

Roy David Samuel[1], Itay Basevitch[2]
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Participation in the Olympic Games (OGs) represents the pinnacle of an elite athlete's career (Henriksen et al., 2020). Research has conceptualized the OGs as a longitudinal career transition comprising multiple meta-transitions, including qualification/selection, preparation, participation, and the post-Games period (Samuel et al., 2016). However, no review has addressed its full scope. This study addressed this gap by: (a) providing a narrative review of the OGs transition, and (b) introducing a new framework – the Olympic Games Transition (OGT) model – which captures change events, career pathways, and associated adaptation processes across the OGs transition. A narrative review was conducted to explore Olympic athletes' emotional experiences throughout the OGs transition. A literature search targeted peer-reviewed articles published in English between 2010 and 2025. The OGs transition constitutes a major career change event for elite athletes, encompassing a series of distinct phases. Within each OGs cycle, each transition phase presents unique demands, barriers, and resources, requiring athletes to engage in varied forms of adaptation. Central to this process is the pursuit of a distinct identity – "an Olympian." The review highlights the complex and dynamic emotional nature of the OGs experience and its implications for athletes' well-being. The scarcity of quantitative, comparative, predictive, and longitudinal research in this area is underscored. Athletes require support throughout the OGs transition, especially first-time Olympians who may be at greater risk for poor adaptation. The OGT model provides a comprehensive framework for understanding athletes' change events, career pathways, and adaptation processes.

ID: 134 / **Poster Session 2: 3**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Physical activity, Social psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Sport Participation, Student Well-being, Belongingness, Stress Mindset

Finding One's Tribe: Distinction of sport & extracurricular engagement on student flourishing and stress mindset in the UAE

Christopher Bryan[1], Ruba Ahmed[1], Tatiana Tairi[1], Sariah Daouk[1], Oliver Bones[2], Muna Amr[2]
[1]American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates; [2]University of Wollongong, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Not all forms of campus engagement support student wellbeing in the same way. Identifying which activities promote flourishing, which reduce psychological distress, and through which distinct mechanisms, is essential for universities serving increasingly diverse, internationally composed student populations. University sports teams and extracurricular clubs represent a distinct institutional subculture through which these connections may be forged; however, research examining the specific psychological outcomes of sport participation in culturally diverse, internationally composed university populations remains limited. The present study investigated whether sport participation offers unique psychological benefits beyond those attributable to general extracurricular engagement. Data from 794 students enrolled at two universities in the United Arab Emirates were analysed using Welch's independent samples t-tests, mediation modelling, and multiple linear regression to isolate the unique predictive contributions of sport versus extracurricular participation across measures of flourishing, belonging, and stress mindset. Both sport and extracurricular participants reported significantly higher flourishing and sense of belonging compared to non-participating peers, and belonging fully mediated the relationship between campus engagement and flourishing across both groups. When both engagement types were entered simultaneously into regression models, extracurricular participation was the primary unique predictor of flourishing and social belonging, whereas sport participation was the sole unique predictor of a positive stress mindset. These findings suggest that while all forms of campus engagement support students in finding their social tribe through belonging, organised sport provides a distinct psychological environment for developing adaptive cognitive responses to stress. Discussions highlight implications for how universities design campus engagement programmes to support flourishing.

ID: 148 / **Poster Session 2: 4**
Poster presentation
Topics: Violence
Keywords: Violence, Online, Sport, Athletes

Online Interpersonal Violence in Sport: Prevalence and Associated Factors in a Population-Based Sample of Quebec Adolescents

Sylvie Parent[1], Emma Kavanagh[2], Sophie Labossière[1]
[1]Université Laval, Canada; [2]Loughborough University

Interpersonal violence (IV) in sport is a recognized threat to athlete well-being and integrity (Mountjoy et al., 2016; Parent & Vaillancourt-Morel, 2022). While research has examined face-to-face IV, little is known about its online manifestations among adolescents. Online technologies are integral to youth sport, yet they may facilitate harmful behaviors (WHO, 2022). This study aimed to (a) document the prevalence of online IV in sport among adolescents and (b) identify associated sociodemographic and sport-related factors. Data were drawn from the ÉVAQ sub-study nested within the Québec Health Survey of High School Students (2022–2023). A population-based sample of 8,370 adolescents (14–17 years) engaged in organized sport completed the Violence Toward Athletes Questionnaire short form (Parent et al., 2019). Descriptive analyses were performed to assess prevalence and binary logistic regressions to examine predictors of online IV. Overall, 15% reported at least one instance of online IV in sport. Psychological violence was most frequent (10%), followed by sexual (3.1%) and instrumental (1.7%). Risk factors included female (sex assigned at birth), non-heterosexual orientation, team sport participation, early sport specialization, higher weekly training hours, relocation for training, and perceived socioeconomic disadvantage. Online IV in sport affects a significant proportion of adolescents, with specific associated factors amplifying vulnerability. Findings underscore the need for targeted safeguarding strategies addressing digital environments in youth sport.

ID: 150 / **Poster Session 2: 5**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: professional development, cultural context

Extending the SPPD Model Through Global Lenses: Complexity, Time, and Culture in Sport Psychology Professionals' Development

Janaina Lima Fogaça[1], Dan R. F. Martin[2], Alessandro Quartiroli[3,4]
[1]California State University, Long Beach, United States of America; [2]St Mary's University, United Kingdom; [3]University of Wisconsin - La Crosse, United States of America; [4]University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom

Fogaça et al. (2024) identified several features of sport psychology practitioners' (SPP) development that diverge from counseling frameworks and proposed the Sport Psychology Professional Development Model (SPPD). However, few studies have examined later phases of development, and existing samples have been predominantly White and based in anglophone countries. To address these gaps, this study explored the professional development of ethnically diverse and globally dispersed established SPPs who have navigated multiple phases of growth.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 SPPs residing in 11 countries across five continents who dedicated, on average, 56.7% of their time to applied work. Interviews began with broad open-ended questions (e.g., "Could you describe your education and training in sport psychology?") and later probed characteristics of development identified in the literature (i.e., elements of the SPPD model) and factors contributing to participants' professional growth. Engaging in reflexive thematic analysis, we generated four themes. Three reflected developmental stages that characterized a common progression: (a) Enlightening – From Naivety to Awareness; (b) Shaping a Complex Self; and (c) Sustaining and Shaping – Long-Term Practice and Contribution. The fourth theme, Meta-Constructs of Development, highlighted Complexity, Time, and Context and Culture as continuous forces shaping participants' developmental experiences.

These findings support many facets of the SPPD model while extending its applicability across diverse cultural contexts and professional trajectories. They also offer insights for educators, supervisors, and applied practitioners seeking to better understand and support long-term professional growth in sport psychology.

ID: 158 / **Poster Session 2: 6**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Elite sports and expertise, Mental skills training, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: Sport Self-efficacy, Questionnaire, Assessment

Development and Content Validation of a Cross-Sport Questionnaire for Perceived Self-Efficacy

Francesco Bigotto[1,2], Teresa Di Bella[1], Christian Carafa[1], Silvia Serino[1], Patrizia Steca[1]
[1]Department of Psychology, Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca, Milan, Italy.; [2]Older People Rehabilitation and Cerebrovascular Medicine Research Laboratory, IRCCS Istituto Auxologico Italiano, Milan, Italy.

Grounded in social cognitive theory, perceived self-efficacy is a key determinant of sport motivation and performance, influencing effort, persistence, and psychological responses. Most existing questionnaires assess sport-specific self-efficacy, while only a few are validated for use across different sports. This limits comparability across disciplines and constrains both research and applied practice in sport psychology, highlighting a critical gap in the literature. This study aims to address this gap through the development and content validation of a new instrument designed to assess perceived self-efficacy across sports. The instrument was developed through four stages: (1) review of existing sport self-efficacy scales and their theoretical foundations; (2) item generation and adaptation from existing measures, followed by reduction and categorization into relevant dimensions; (3) evaluation by five experts using a 5-point Likert scale assessing clarity, consistency with the assigned dimension, and transversality across sports; and (4) item refinement based on feedback. From an initial pool of 94 items, the process resulted in 62 items organized into 7 dimensions, with 13 additional items for team sports. Based on expert evaluation, 21 items were revised and 19 removed due to limited clarity, consistency, or transversality. Experts showed high agreement, supporting the content validity of the instrument. The final questionnaire offers a preliminary comprehensive and flexible tool for assessing perceived self-efficacy across diverse sports. Initial development ensured content relevance and conceptual clarity. Future research will test its psychometric properties in larger athlete samples.

ID: 174 / **Poster Session 2: 7**
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Health, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Social anxiety, body esteem, dance, university students

Social Anxiety and Body Esteem Among University Students: Prevalence, Associations, and the Role of Dance

Min Du, Jennie Hancox, Oliver Hooper, Rachel Sandford

Loughborough University, United Kingdom

Social anxiety (SA) and body esteem (BE) concerns are increasingly prevalent among university students. Students with higher SA may experience fear of negative evaluation when attention is focused on physical appearance, contributing to lower BE (Izgiç et al., 2004). These processes are central to cognitive-behavioral models of SA. Grounded in embodiment theory, dance may promote social connection, bodily awareness, and reduced anxiety through coordinated movement and mind–body integration. However, research on dance participation and body image have yielded mixed results, suggesting the extent of participation may be important (Swami & Harris, 2012). Therefore, this study aimed to: 1) investigate the prevalence of SA among university students and its relationship with BE, 2) examine differences based on prior dance experience and 3) explore students' perceptions of dance as an intervention. A total of 226 university students in England completed Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS; Mattick & Clarke, 1998) and Body Esteem Scale (Mendelson et al., 2001), along with items assessing interest in, and barriers to, engaging in dance. Approximately 37% scored at or above the SIAS cut-off, indicating clinically significant SA. Multiple regression indicated a significant negative association between SA and BE. Multivariate analysis showed no significant differences in SA or BE between students with and without prior dance experience. Participants expressed interest in dance but reported barriers such as fear of judgement and limited experience. These findings highlight the importance of addressing SA and BE simultaneously and the need for purposefully designed dance interventions addressing perceived barriers to participation.

ID: 186 / **Poster Session 2: 8**
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Human factors, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: React to challenge, Human Behaviour, Sport level, Mental Training

The Relationship Between Mental Toughness and Trait Emotional Intelligence: Mental Training in the Service of Performance

Davide Cresto Ferrino
FIPSIS, Italy

Psychological resources play a crucial role in athletes' ability to cope with competitive demands and sustain performance under pressure. Within sport psychology, Mental Toughness (MT) has been conceptualized as a dispositional construct reflecting how individuals respond to stress, adversity, and challenge in achievement contexts (Clough et al., 2002). Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI), defined as a constellation of self-perceived emotional dispositions, has similarly been associated with effective emotion regulation, attentional control, and interpersonal functioning in sport settings (Petrides et al., 2007). Although theoretical models suggest meaningful conceptual overlap between MT and TEI, empirical evidence examining their relationship remains limited, particularly across different levels of competition. Understanding how these constructs interact may provide valuable insights into the psychological mechanisms underlying resilient performance. The present study investigates the relationship between Mental Toughness and Trait Emotional Intelligence in a sample of medium- and high-level athletes. The aims are twofold: first, to examine potential differences between competitive levels across MT and TEI dimensions; second, to assess whether TEI significantly predicts Mental Toughness. Findings from this research are expected to contribute to the growing literature on psychological resilience in sport and to inform the development of targeted mental training interventions aimed at enhancing athletes' adaptive functioning in competitive environments.

ID: 213 / **Poster Session 2: 9**
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Health, Motivation, Physical activity
Keywords: appearance, enjoyment, fitness/health, machine learning

Motivational Determinants of Fitness Centre Users Among Foreigners and Native Germans: An Assessment With Machine Learning

Sally Sonia Simmons[1], Medina Srem-Sai[2], John Elvis Hagan[3], Thomas Schack[4]
[1]London School of Economics and Political Science, London; [2]University of Education, Winneba- Ghana; [3]University of Cape Coast, Ghana; [4]Bielefeld University, Germany

Drawn from the self-determination theory, understanding the factors associated with gym-based physical activity engagement is essential for developing effective health promotion strategies, such as exercise adherence. However, knowledge in this area is not well understood. Using the revised Motives for Physical Activities Measure, the study drew a cross-sectional sample of 604 foreigners and German citizens in Germany, irrespective of sex and age, to estimate the relative importance and clustering of motivational factors in predicting regular gym attendance using an Extreme Gradient Boosting (XGBoost) classifier and XGBoost Tree embeddings for clustering. The results demonstrate variations in the relative significance of the five main motivational factors for gym attendance. Within the general population, enjoyment or personal interest was the most important reason for gym attendance, while appearance was the least important. Among males, females, and foreign nationals, there were differences in motives. Across all strata, three main clusters, low intrinsic, highly and moderately motivated, were discovered. For instance, in the general population, low intrinsically motivated individuals were primarily extrinsically motivated by fitness/health, and appearance, whereas highly motivated individuals had strong intrinsic (enjoyment, competence) and extrinsic (fitness, appearance) motives. These results highlight the heterogeneity of motivational profiles underlying gym-based physical activity and demonstrate the utility of machine-learning approaches for uncovering dynamic motivational patterns. Health promotion interventions may benefit from tailoring strategies to specific

motivational profiles, with an emphasis on fostering intrinsic motivation to support sustained engagement in physical activity to boost overall health.

ID: 230 / **Poster Session 2: 10**
Poster presentation
Topics: Organizational development and quality management, Social psychology, Violence
Keywords: Wrongdoing, maltreatment, abuse, culture

UK Sporting Organisations' Responses to Wrongdoing in Elite Sport

James Newman, Harry Buttery, Georgie Gibbs
Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

In recent years, the topic of wrongdoing within elite sport in the United Kingdom (UK) has received increasing attention in sport psychology literature (see Newman & Rumbold, 2024). Such research has identified various issues of abuse, bullying, and maltreatment in elite sports, often highlighting how key individuals such as athletes and coaches can be perpetrators of these behaviours. However, it is important to note that other findings demonstrate institutions themselves can be perpetrators of abuse (Nite & Nauright, 2020). While such organisational failings have been highlighted across various sports in the UK (Whyte, 2022), research has not scientifically analysed how these institutions have responded to various allegations of wrongdoing. Therefore, this poster presentation research explores the nature and extent of institutional responses to wrongdoing in elite sport. For the present study, institutional response documents were sourced from sporting organisations in the UK and analysed via a reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021), using a mixture of inductive and deductive coding. Guided by Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, we developed themes around public acknowledgement and apologies, policies and procedures, transparency and accountability, and wider culture change and responsibility. As such, this poster will present implications around how institutions can better respond to wrongdoing, reform their policies to be more trustworthy and effective, and promote a healthier culture of welfare within their sport.

ID: 246 / **Poster Session 2: 11**
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Mental skills training, Personality
Keywords: psychological flexibility, MSPE training, basketball, judoka

An Exploratory Study Using MSPE Among Hungarian Elite Athletes

Luca Pump[1], Karrie Hamstra-Wright[2], Zoltan Kiss[1,3], John Coumbe-Lilley[2]
[1]Eötvös József College, Institute of Pedagogy, Hungary; [2]University of Illinois Chicago; [3]Institute of Education, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Kaposvár, Hungary

This pilot study explores the effects of a pilot mindfulness-based intervention on psychological flexibility and well-being among Hungarian elite athletes, addressing the limited empirical evidence in this area. Mindful Sport Performance Enhancement (MSPE), derived from mindfulness-based stress reduction, was investigated with psychological flexibility as a central process variable relevant to performance and coping (Kaufman et al., 2016). Previous studies (Minkler et al., 2025; Kelemen et al., 2025) found a strong connection between MSPE and improved mental health aspects. A longitudinal repeated measures design used the Psy-Flex (Gloster et al., 2021) assessment of 20 elite professional athletes (basketball: n=12, mean age=25.5; judo: n=8, mean age=15.9) from a single elite sports academy. All athletes completed a standardised 6-week, 1x per week, for a one hour, in person group MSPE program delivery by a certified MSPE trainer. The delivery facilitated experiential learning with discussion. Paired-samples t-tests compared baseline and final assessments, which revealed statistically significant improvements in both groups. In the judo group, the increase was significant, $t(5) = -4.00$, $p = .010$, while in the basketball group, a similarly robust effect was observed, $t(5) = -5.00$, $p = .004$. The results overall indicated that MSPE program was effective to increase psychological flexibility, mostly being open for experiences, steady self, and being engaged in actions. Overall, this exploratory study provides initial evidence supporting the feasibility and potential benefits of MSPE to enhance psychological capacities in elite Hungarian athletes.In the future, sample size and sport type could be added to the research.

ID: 281 / **Poster Session 2: 12**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Psychophysiology
Keywords: Event-Related Potentials, Reaction Time

Effects of Competitive Level on Brain Information Processing and Reaction Time in Open-Skill Sports: A Preliminary Study

Koki Watanabe[1], Taiga Arii[2], Takayuki Sugo[1,3], Hironobu Tsuchiya[1,3]
[1]Graduate School of Osaka University of Health and Sport Sciences, Japan; [2]Mukogawa Women's University, Japan; [3]Osaka University of Health and Sport Sciences, Japan

This preliminary study examined whether competitive level in open-skill sports is associated with inhibitory control and reaction time under matched exercise conditions. Open-skill sports require rapid decision-making in dynamic environments, placing high demands on inhibitory control; therefore, a Go/NoGo task was used. Fourteen physically

active university students were classified into high, middle, and novice-level groups based on competitive experience. Event-related potentials (ERPs: N2, P3, NoGo-N2, NoGo-P3) were recorded from front-central electrodes (Fz, FCz, Cz), reflecting inhibitory control processes. Three participants were excluded due to insufficient EEG quality, resulting in a final sample of 11 (high: 4, middle: 3, novice: 4). Reaction time and ERP indices were analyzed using linear mixed models. A significant main effect of group on reaction time was observed ($F(2, 311) = 52.02$, $p < .001$, Marginal $R^2 = .18$, Conditional $R^2 = .45$). Novices responded faster than middle-level (95% CI [-104.690, -23.710]) and high-level athletes (95% CI [-196.531, -121.164]), and middle-level athletes responded faster than high-level athletes (95% CI [-135.060, -54.235]). No significant group differences were found in ERP amplitude or latency (all ps > .05). These findings suggest that competitive levels may be associated with behavioral differences in inhibitory control tasks, even when exercise exposure is comparable.

ID: 284 / Poster Session 2: 13
Poster presentation
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Ethics in applied settings, Youth
Keywords: safeguarding, applied consultancy, professional protocol, focus group

Hungarian Sport Psychologists' Experiences With Child and Youth Safeguarding

Ágota Lénárt[1], Kaya Woytynowska[2], Judit Boda-Ujlaky[1]
[1]Széchenyi István University, Hungary; [2]freelancer practitioner

In Hungary, since 2017, all national sports associations must have a code of ethics and child protection regulations in place. The goal of our research is to collect the experiences of sport psychologists in the period since then. In a focus group of practicing sport psychologists (n=12), the following questions were explored: 1. The type of inquiry, the event, difficulties encountered, professional and personal protection, possible solutions. 2. Types of cases. 3. Characteristics of professional work. 4. Exploration of scripts. 5. Possible solutions. 6. Personal implications. 7. Future tasks. The focus group named many usual, and some complex, difficult cases and gave an account on the complicated, less transparent legal and regulatory background. Social views, prejudices, and norms often put pressure on professionals in the field. According to the thematic analysis, there is an urgent need to develop offical protocols related to abuse, improve organizational culture for spreading knowledge, reporting and accountability. It is particularly important to protect professional staff of psychologists and provide them with support from other areas (supervision, legal assistance, emotional support), as well as to manage media pressure. Results show that sports psychologists have adequate knowledge in this area, and research conducted with them contributes to the process of developing the regulatory environment and codes of ethics, as well as to the further development of sport psychological services. However, the use of a focus group and its ability to produce in-depth, critical data on a sensitive topic like this remains limited.

ID: 303 / Poster Session 2: 14
Poster presentation
Topics: Pedagogical psychology, Physical activity, Youth
Keywords: Environmental Education, Physical Activity, Environmental Awareness, Behavior Change

Active Bodies, Sustainable Minds: PE Teachers' and Students' Experiences from the ENLITE Program in Greek Primary Schools

Mary Hassandra, Aristea Karamitrou, Charalambos Krommydas, Aikaterini Violatzi, Maria Angeli, Eleni Dimitriou, Vasiliki Tziora, Christos Trikalis, Yannis Theodorakis, Nikos Comoutos
University of Thessaly, Greece

Integrating environmental education with physical activity may strengthen children's engagement and support sustainable behaviour. This study explored primary school students' and physical education (PE) teachers' experiences of the ENLITE (ENvironmental Learning through Interactive and Transformative Exercise) program and their perceived impacts on environmental knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. ENLITE was implemented in six public primary schools in Greece. Participants for this study were 26 students (10–12 years) and 5 PE teachers. Semi-structured interviews were conducted following program completion. Data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis to identify shared and distinct patterns across student and teacher accounts. Participants described ENLITE as enjoyable, motivating, and meaningful, emphasising that movement-based learning made environmental concepts more concrete and memorable. Students highlighted interactive tasks (e.g., environmental games and energy-related activities) as particularly engaging and reported increased awareness of renewable energy, recycling, waste management, and everyday conservation practices. Many students described personal behaviour changes at school and home (e.g., greater attention to littering and water use). Teachers reported improved class participation, inclusive engagement across ability levels, and strong curriculum coherence, noting that students often encouraged peers to behave more responsibly, suggesting effects beyond individual learning. ENLITE appears to be a feasible and engaging interdisciplinary approach that supports environmental learning through physically active pedagogy. Findings indicate potential value for curriculum development and teacher training. Future research should examine longer-term behavioural retention and evaluate outcomes using mixed-method and larger-scale designs.

ID: 307 / Poster Session 2: 15
Poster presentation

Topics: Emotion, Group dynamics, Youth
Keywords: team cohesion, interpersonal emotion regulation, team dynamics, latent profile

Beyond "Good Teammates": Identifying Team Dynamics Profiles Predicting Mental Health and Performance Satisfaction

Maria Wei Blanes, Elena Gervilla, Joan Pons
University of the Balearic Islands, Spain

The protective role of team sports on adolescent athletes' mental health depends on the environment in which they practice (Santos et al., 2024). While the influence of the coach and families is well established in previous literature (Bengtsson et al., 2024), the role of teammates has received less attention. This study aimed to identify different patterns of team dynamics by assessing team cohesion (GEQ; Carron et al., 1998) and interpersonal emotion regulation (EROS; Niven et al., 2011) and to compare these profiles in terms of mental health (GHQ-12; Goldberg, 1972) and satisfaction with performance (ASQ; Riemer & Chelledurai, 1998). The sample included 381 Spanish adolescent athletes (Mage=16.15, SD=1.58; 45.9% girls) from 55 sports teams. Using Latent Profile Analysis, we depicted four different classes (with membership rates between 15.74% and 40.94%), which showed significant differences ($p < .05$) in all subscales examined (ηp^2 ranging between .040 and .159). Belonging to highly cohesive teams with a low frequency of negative emotional exchanges reported the highest levels of mental health and satisfaction with performance, whereas belonging to moderately cohesive teams with notable negative regulation was associated with poorer outcomes. These findings provide further evidence of the influence of interpersonal processes on athletes' mental health and satisfaction with performance and extend previous evidence by focusing on the role played by peers in terms of union and emotional support. Team interventions aimed at reducing the frequency of negative emotional exchanges may be effective and cost-efficient in promoting a protective environment for sports participation during adolescence.

ID: 322 / Poster Session 2: 16
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Esports, Neuropsychology
Keywords: esports, situational awareness, motivation

Expertise and Competitive Context Regulate Performance-Related Arm EMG in Esports

Sorato Minami, Ken Watanabe, Naoki Saijo, Makio Kashino
NTT Communication Science Laboratories, Japan

Motor performance is influenced by visual information and motivational context, yet how these factors operate in naturalistic competitive settings remains insufficiently understood. In contrast to laboratory paradigms that use discrete cues and monetary incentives, real-world competition provides continuous battle-state feedback and is driven by an intrinsic motivation to win. Moreover, it is unclear how expertise supports adaptability when such information or motivation is degraded. Here, we asked whether naturalistic cues and competitive motivation modulate the muscle activity underlying motor execution, and whether this modulation depends on skill level. We used a fighting video game as a complex visuomotor task and manipulated context in two ways. First, we reduced access to dynamic state feedback by hiding the on-screen hit-point (HP) bar, thereby obscuring real-time advantage. Second, we attenuated competitive motivation by removing explicit win–loss outcomes in a non-competitive training mode. We recorded arm electromyography (EMG) from advanced and intermediate players (n = 15 each) during standard gameplay, gameplay with the HP bar hidden, and training mode, and tested how these manipulations altered performance-related EMG across skill levels using linear mixed-effects analysis. Under standard conditions, both groups exhibited significantly higher arm EMG during wins than during losses. When the HP bar was concealed, this win-related EMG enhancement persisted in advanced players but was abolished in intermediate players. In training mode, where competitive outcomes were removed, neither group showed EMG differentiation. Overall, task context modulates performance-related muscle activation, and expertise mitigates the effects of information loss, with implications for sports science and rehabilitation.

ID: 334 / Poster Session 2: 17
Poster presentation
Topics: Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.)
Keywords: doping, nutritional supplements, fair play, ASP

Emerging Approaches to Anti-Doping Education for Athlete Support Personnel

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Athlete Support Personnel (ASP) play a critical role in shaping athletes' attitudes, decisions, and behaviours related to doping and nutritional supplements use. This study presents findings from a cross-national qualitative investigation aimed at identifying knowledge gaps and educational needs among ASP about doping prevention and responsible supplement use. A total of 74 ASP members (27 coaches, 8 medical staff, 19 nutritionists, and 20 other ASP) participated in semi-structured interviews conducted across 12 European countries. The results of the thematic analysis revealed a widespread lack of structured, scientifically grounded, and accessible educational provision on

doping and supplements, despite the central influence of ASP on athletes' decision-making processes. While some participants, such as medical staff and nutritionists, reported high awareness of doping-related risks and a strong commitment to clean sport values, coaches and parents relied primarily on informal information sources and reported uncertainty when advising athletes. In addition, psychological and social factors, such as moral disengagement, motivational climate, and prevailing social norms, were found to be associated with attitudes toward supplement use and its perceived connection to doping behaviours in all groups of participants. Across all participating countries, ASP expressed a clear preference for short, flexible, and multimedia-based educational formats tailored to their professional realities, ideally offering certification and opportunities for regular content updates. These findings provide an empirical foundation guiding the development of targeted learning tools that can strengthen ASP's role as informed, responsible, and proactive agents in doping prevention, while safeguarding athlete health and promoting the integrity of sport.

ID: 336 / Poster Session 2: 18
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Emotion, Human factors, Psychophysiology
Keywords: cortisol, testosterone, formula car driver, performance

Formula Racing Study: Intra-Individual Associations Between Steroid Hormones and Competitive Performance Differ Across Drivers

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Steroid hormones, particularly testosterone and cortisol, are closely associated with mental states that directly influence athletic performance. This exploratory case-based study examined the relationships between testosterone, cortisol, and the testosterone-to-cortisol (T/CORT) ratio and competitive performance in two professional formula racing drivers competing in the Japanese Super Formula series. We conducted a multi-year longitudinal study of two drivers from the same team. Salivary testosterone and cortisol levels were measured at two time points: 30 min and 10 min before the qualifying session. The qualifying (Q) session consisted of two stages (Q1 and Q2), with the top 12 drivers in Q1 advancing to Q2 based on their best lap times. To account for variations in course conditions and race environments across events, each driver's speed in Q1 and Q2 was normalized using the course record and the average best lap times of the other drivers, enabling comparisons across races. Cortisol measurements were obtained at fixed time points relative to performance, and time since awakening was recorded to account for diurnal variation. For one driver, changes in speed from Q1 to Q2 were negatively correlated with cortisol levels and positively correlated with the T/CORT ratio. In contrast, the other driver showed positive correlations with cortisol levels and negative correlations with testosterone levels and the T/CORT ratio. These findings suggest that steroid hormones are associated with competitive performance within drivers. Notably, the hormonal mechanisms underlying performance enhancement may differ between individuals, demonstrating the value of a longitudinal, intra-individual approach for studying elite athletic performance.

ID: 337 / Poster Session 2: 19
Poster presentation
Topics: Mental skills training
Keywords: Individualized Pressure Training, Mental Skills Training, Psychological Skills

Combining Mental Skills Training and Individualized Pressure Training: A Preliminary Practical Intervention

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Pressure training aims to induce psychological pressure to facilitate coping skill acquisition. Previous approaches often relied on exposure to pressure without explicit instruction, which may limit the development of coping strategies. We tested whether exposure to pressure helps transfer explicitly learned psychological skills to practical pressure situations. Recent research suggests that pressure training may be more effective when individualized to athletes' psychological characteristics (Woodman et al., 2025). We examined the effects of a two-phase intervention combining mental skills training with individualized pressure training. Thirty-three university-level soft tennis players participated in a two-phase program. Phase 1 consisted of five workshop-based sessions covering fundamental psychological skills (e.g., relaxation, pre-performance routines, goal setting), supplemented by individual counseling. Psychological skills were assessed pre- and post-Phase 1 using the JISS Psychological Competitive Ability Test (Tachiya et al., 2020). Phase 2 (ongoing) involves developing individual psychological profiles based on questionnaire data (e.g., attentional vulnerability) and practitioner evaluations. Athletes' pressure orientations (e.g., sensitivity to evaluation, reward, or punishment) are identified, and individualized pressure conditions are manipulated during serve practice (e.g., audience, evaluative, reward or penalty-based conditions). Performance will be assessed using a pressurized serving test. Phase 1 results showed significant improvements in psychological skills, comprising subscales: self-control, concentration, imagery, and confidence. The results of Phase 2 will be reported at the presentation. Findings provide preliminary support for enhancing psychological skills through mental skills training. Further data from Phase 2 are required to evaluate whether individualized pressure training facilitates skill transfer under pressure.

ID: 401 / **Poster Session 2: 20**
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Emotion, Personality, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: return to sport, psychological adaptation, difficulty describing feelings, stress coping

Difficulty Describing Feelings, Stress Coping during Injury Rehabilitation, and Adaptation after Return to Sport

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Unresolved, undifferentiated stress responses during rehabilitation may hinder injured athletes' adaptation after returning to competition. Previous studies suggest that individuals with alexithymia tendencies tend to rely on avoidant coping in stressful situations, which may contribute to this problem. This study examined the relationships among post-return adaptation, difficulty describing feelings, one component of alexithymia, and stress coping tendencies used during rehabilitation. Participants were 128 Japanese collegiate elite athletes who had experienced orthopedic injuries, undergone rehabilitation, and returned to competition (mean age = 20.16 ± 1.05 years; mean inactivity = 7.74 ± 11.39 weeks; median = 3.00). They completed questionnaires assessing coping strategies and difficulty describing feelings during rehabilitation, and current adaptation after return, measured using a time perspective scale reflecting links among past, present, and future. Cluster analysis identified three temporal patterns: positive (n = 38), neutral (n = 85), and negative (n = 5). ANOVA revealed significant main effects for difficulty describing feelings ($F(2,125) = 4.45$, $p = .014$), problem-focused coping ($F(2,125) = 6.10$, $p = .003$), and emotion-focused coping ($F(2,125) = 4.71$, $p = .011$). Post hoc comparisons (HSD) showed that the negative group had higher scores for difficulty describing feelings and emotion-focused coping, and lower scores for problem-focused coping, compared with the positive group. These findings suggest that athletes who struggle to describe feelings and rely on emotion-focused coping during rehabilitation may show poorer adaptation after returning, indicating the need for psychological support at both stages.

ID: 411 / **Poster Session 2: 21**
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: mental health problems, depressive symptoms, stress, young soccer players

Mental Health and Well-Being in Youth Football Players – A Systematic Review

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Mental health (MH) and well-being (WB) are increasingly recognized as important considerations in youth sport. This systematic review synthesized evidence on MH and WB outcomes in youth football players and examined associated risk and protective factors. A systematic search on Web of Science, SPORTDiscus, and Scopus was conducted in January 2025, in accordance with PRISMA guidelines. Eligible studies included young football players aged 12–19, employed validated MH or WB measures, and were published in English. Twenty-five studies (n = 7,123; 15.8% female) met the inclusion criteria. Reported prevalence of elevated symptoms in included studies was 8-21% for anxiety, 6.5–40% for depression, up to 37% for distress, 17–30% for impaired WB, and 11-17% for disordered eating. Identified risk factors included female gender, older age, perfectionistic concerns, and disempowering coaching climates, whereas protective factors included empowering climates, transformational leadership, harmonious passion, and satisfaction of basic psychological needs. The findings indicate that MH problems and impaired WB are common in youth football, underscoring the need for regular MH screening, coach education, psychological skills training, and multidisciplinary support structures. Further longitudinal and intervention studies, particularly involving female players, are needed.

ID: 424 / **Poster Session 2: 22**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Elite sports and expertise, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Perception & attention
Keywords: Breakthrough prevention, Defensive skill, Expertise, Team strategy

Tactical Knowledge of Handball Players Excelling in Preventing One-on-One Breakthrough

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In handball, one-on-one breakthrough is a crucial offensive tactic that leads to numerical advantages or direct scoring opportunities; consequently, defensive tactics must effectively prevent such situations. Despite their importance, research on defensive tactics in preventing one-on-one breakthroughs remains limited. The purpose of this study was to qualitatively clarify the tactical knowledge of players who excel in preventing one-on-one breakthrough. A semi-structured interview was conducted with a male member of the Japanese national handball team, who was recognized for his proficiency in preventing one-on-one breakthrough. The player was evaluated by the head coach who had previously played for the national team and is currently coaching a university team. The interview focused on preventing one-on-one breakthroughs and broadly covered related defensive aspects. An inductive approach to qualitative content analysis was applied to responses (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Qualitative content analysis identified eight main categories: (1) perception and cognition; (2) selection and execution of actions to prevent breakthrough; (3) tactical behaviors; (4) establishment of personal criteria; (5) self-understanding; (6) understanding of team tactics; (7) team communication; (8) trust in the team. These results showed that such players achieve preventing one-on-one breakthrough not only through the selection and execution of actions grounded in perception and cognition, but also by aligning their behaviors with team tactics. These findings provide a framework for understanding preventing one-on-one breakthrough and emphasize the importance of incorporating team-tactical elements into training in addition to technical practice and perceptual–cognitive components.

ID: 428 / Poster Session 2: 23
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Consulting/ counseling, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Athlete Burnout, Training Load, Sport Devaluation, Reduced Accomplishment

Prevalence and Predictors of Clinically Significant Depressive Symptoms in Taiwanese Collegiate Athletes

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Despite the International Olympic Committee's call to prioritize athlete mental health (Reardon et al., 2019), epidemiological data on Asian collegiate populations remains scarce (Wolanin et al., 2016). This study addresses this critical gap by establishing the prevalence of clinically significant depressive symptoms among Taiwanese collegiate athletes and identifying specific psychosocial predictors of depression severity, distinguishing cognitive-affective factors from physiological stressors. A nationwide cross-sectional survey recruited 1,186 collegiate athletes (60.4% male, 39.6% female). Validated instruments included the Taiwanese Depression Questionnaire (TDQ; clinical cutoff ≥19 based on clinical research evidence), Athlete Burnout Questionnaire, and Training Load Questionnaire. Data were analyzed using Chi-square tests, binary logistic regression (for clinical status), and hierarchical linear regression (for symptom severity). The prevalence of clinically significant depressive symptoms was 15.9%, with females (20.4%) at significantly higher risk than males (12.8%) ($p < .001$). Binary logistic regression confirmed that high training load and burnout were the strongest predictors of clinical status. Crucially, hierarchical regression revealed that depression severity was significantly predicted by "reduced sense of accomplishment" and "sport devaluation," whereas "emotional/physical exhaustion" was not a significant predictor in the final model. This empirically distinguishes depression from simple fatigue. Approximately one in six athletes faces a mental health crisis. Since depression is driven by 'sport devaluation' and 'low accomplishment' rather than just fatigue, interventions must prioritize cognitive restructuring and value rebuilding over simple rest. Furthermore, routine screening—especially for females and injured athletes—is vital to distinguish clinical depression from temporary burnout.

ID: 430 / Poster Session 2: 24
Poster presentation
Topics: Physical activity, Self, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Physical activity level, positive youth development, physical self-concept, adolescents

Predicting Physical Activity in Adolescents: The Role of Positive Youth Development and Physical Self-Concept

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Grounded in positive youth development and self-concept frameworks, this study examined the extent to which adolescents' physical activity (PA) levels are predicted by subdimensions of positive youth development (PYD) and physical self-concept using hierarchical regression analysis. The sample consisted of 817 adolescents aged 14–18 years (males = 317, Mage = 15.66 ± 1.16; females = 500, Mage = 15.57 ± 1.13). Data were collected using the International Physical Activity Questionnaire, the Positive Youth Development Scale, and the Physical Self-Description Questionnaire. In the first model, demographic variables (gender, age, and school type) explained PA at a low level ($R^2 = .047$, $p < .001$). The inclusion of PYD subdimensions in the second model increased the explained variance ($R^2 = .107$, $p < .001$), with competence emerging as the only significant positive predictor ($\beta = .27$, $p < .001$). In the third model, adding physical self-concept subdimensions substantially improved the model ($R^2 = .251$, $p < .001$). Physical activity self-perception ($\beta = .240$, $p < .001$) and sport competence ($\beta = .249$, $p < .001$) were the strongest positive predictors of PA, whereas general physical competence negatively predicted PA ($\beta = -.103$, $p =$

.021). Overall, findings indicate that PA in adolescents is primarily explained by physical self-concept, particularly perceived activity and sport competence, and to a lesser extent by PYD competence, rather than demographic variables. These results highlight the importance of self-perception in shaping adolescents' physical activity behaviors.

ID: 472 / Poster Session 2: 25
Poster presentation
Topics: Best practice, Coaching, Leadership, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness)
Keywords: emotional intelligence, education, mindfulness, leadership

Focus Inward to Move Forward: Emotional Intelligence Training for Elite Coaches

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For elite coaches to function optimally and deliver effective coaching, the capacity to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions is crucial (Frost et al., 2024; Tamminen et al., 2022). Emotional intelligence (EI) has received substantial attention, yet in elite sport, and specifically regarding coaches, empirical work remains limited. This is notable given the emotion laden nature of elite sport and indications that EI education may benefit coaches (Cook et al., 2021). The overarching aim of this project is therefore to examine the effects of a coach education in EI on coaches' present moment awareness, emotional competence, mental health, performance, and coach efficacy, and to explore a potential transfer to athletes' mental health, performance, and the training environment. We conducted a pilot study with six elite coaches (2 females, 4 males; M age 45.67, M of years coaching 17.33) testing the education, which included 14 hours of theory, exercises, reflections and discussions. Data about acceptability, feasibility, and perceived impact of the education was gathered through two focus group interviews (with 2 and 4 participants, respectively). Transcripts were analysed using a general inductive approach (Thomas, 2006). Overall, the coaches evaluated the education positively. The results mapped into the following themes and sub-themes: set-up strength (e.g., good and relevant exercises), set-up challenges (e.g., more time needed), process strengths (e.g., open communication), process challenges (exposure to challenging exercises), and perceived outcome (e.g., new tools and behaviour change). The coaches´ insights provided valuable feedback for refining the education, which is now implemented in the main study.

ID: 475 / Poster Session 2: 26
Poster presentation
Topics: Esports, Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: esports, anxiety, depression, well-being

Mental Health Indicators Among Spanish-Speaking Esports Players

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The esports industry's expansion highlights players' unique mental health challenges, yet research remains limited. Drawing on models of competitive stress and athlete burnout (Smith et al., 2019), this study examines esports players' mental health and identifies key areas for psychological intervention. A total of 262 Spanish-speaking participants completed an online questionnaire including sociodemographic items, esports involvement, PHQ-9, GAD-7, and PSQI scales. Data were analyzed using JASP (v.0.95.4.0) via descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and multiple linear regression to examine predictors of mental ill-health. Results showed 31.3% reported moderate-to-severe depressive symptoms, and 59.2% experienced suicidal or self-harm thoughts during the past two weeks. Additionally, 43% reported moderate-to-severe anxiety. While 10.7% currently receive professional support, 27.1% had received it previously. Furthermore, 69.1% exceeded the clinical cutoff for sleep disturbance. Regression analysis revealed that age ($\beta = .266$, $p < .001$), competition hours ($\beta = .183$, $p < .001$), and well-being ($\beta = -.264$, $p = .002$) significantly predicted depressive symptoms. For anxiety, only age ($\beta = .200$, $p < .001$) and competition hours ($\beta = .175$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors. Higher-performing players reported greater well-being but also higher depressive and anxiety symptoms. These findings align with the Dual-Continuum Model (Iasiello et al., 2020), suggesting that well-being and mental ill-health represent distinct dimensions. These results emphasize the urgent need for specialized psychological support programs in esports that address both performance optimization and clinical symptom prevention, particularly targeting sleep hygiene and stress management for high-level competitors.

ID: 490 / Poster Session 2: 27
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Exercise psychology
Keywords: Physical exercise, sport, executive functions, working memory

Effect of Physical Exercise Practice on Executive Functions: A Scoping Review

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This study analyzes the available scientific evidence on the relationship between physical exercise and the performance of executive functions, understood as a set of high-level cognitive processes that include working memory, inhibitory control, cognitive flexibility, planning, and decision-making. These functions are essential for the self-regulation of behavior and academic, work, and social performance throughout the life span. A systematic review was conducted using the PRISMA method. The databases consulted were Web of Science, SCOPUS and PubMed. Empirical studies published were selected, following inclusion criteria related to the population, the type of physical exercise intervention, and the specific assessment of executive functions. The time period was limited between 2000 to 2025. A total of 845 articles were identified, of which 44 were included in the final analysis. The results consistently show a positive association between regular physical exercise and improvements in executive functions, with moderate to vigorous aerobic exercise showing the greatest benefits. In particular, significant improvements are observed in working memory, inhibitory control, and cognitive flexibility. Additionally, the frequency, duration, and intensity of exercise appear to play a modulatory role in the observed effects. In conclusion, the evidence suggests that physical exercise is an effective and accessible strategy to enhance executive functions. Regular exercise is therefore recommended for all the segments of population as a way to develop various executive functions.

ID: 491 / **Poster Session 2: 28**
Poster presentation
Topics: Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Neuroscience, Neuropsychology, Psychophysiology
Keywords: Attentional focus, Golf putting, EEG, Event-Related Desynchronization (ERD)

Neural Dynamics of Attentional Focus Switching During Golf Putting: An Event-Related Desynchronization Study

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The present study examined how different attentional focus strategies influence motor learning and neural dynamics in novice golfers during putting. While external focus (EF) is typically superior to internal focus (IF) for performance, little is known about the neural effects of switching attentional focus between IF and EF during the movement preparation and execution. Eighteen novices (15 included in final analysis; mean age = 26.3 ± 3.9 years) completed 120 putts in a within-subject design under four conditions: EF, IF, external-to-internal switching (ETI), and internal-to-external switching (ITE). Continuous 64-channel EEG was recorded, and event-related desynchronization (ERD) over the left sensorimotor cortex was analyzed in low/high alpha (8–12 Hz) and low/high beta (17–21 Hz) bands from −1000 ms to +800 ms relative to ball impact. Performance was assessed as radial error distance. Putting accuracy did not differ significantly between conditions ($p = .41$, $\eta^2 = .062$). However, high beta ERD showed a significant main effect of condition ($p = .023$, $\eta^2 = .252$). The ITE condition exhibited atypical ERD dynamics, including premature beta synchronization beginning ~200 ms before impact, possibly reflecting increased cognitive demands during mid-trial attentional switching. ETI showed a similar but weaker pattern. No significant effects emerged in the alpha band. Although behavioral differences were nonsignificant, performance trends aligned with literature suggesting advantages of adopting an external focus before execution. These findings indicate that switching attentional focus, particularly to EF late in the movement, alters sensorimotor cortical dynamics in novices. Switching attentional focus mid-trial may disrupt optimal sensorimotor preparation in novices.

ID: 497 / **Poster Session 2: 29**
Poster presentation
Topics: Human factors, Perception & attention
Keywords: Space, vision, SANS

The Effects of Simulated Vision Impairment on Spaceflight Relevant Perceptual-Motor Skill

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Spaceflight-Associated Neuro-Ocular Syndrome (SANS) affects approximately 70% of astronauts during long-duration spaceflight, causing impairments in visual acuity (VA) and contrast sensitivity (CS) that may compromise mission-critical operations. Despite growing concern surrounding Artemis and Moon-to-Mars missions, quantitative research on the relationship between SANS-related vision loss and task performance remains limited. This study investigated the impact of simulated visual impairment on perceptual-motor performance.17 participants (mean age = 28.06 ± 11.13 years) completed 3 trials of a virtual International Space Station docking task across seven experimental conditions that emulated progressive VA and CS degradation. Logarithm of Minimum Angle of Resolution (logMAR) and Mars Letter CS charts were used to assess VA (logMAR) and CS (logCS), respectively. Performance metrics included task success rate, total click count, task completion time, and accuracy-speed trade-off (ASTO). A repeated measures ANOVA analysis showed that simulated vision degradation significantly reduced success rate ($p<0.0001$), with significant impairments generated by both VA ($p=0.002$) and CS degradation ($p=0.001$). Simulated vision loss also significantly impaired completion time ($p=0.008$) and ASTO ($p<0.0001$). A decision tree analysis identified the threshold at which operational capability was compromised (VA> 0.77 logMAR).

Findings address gaps in risk management and offer insight on the perceptual-motor consequences of SANS to inform evidence-based operational safety protocols for future missions.

ID: 500 / Poster Session 2: 30
Poster presentation
Topics: Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19)
Keywords: dog sport, dog-owner relationship, parenting style, physical activity

Understanding the Psychological Profile of the Hungarian Dog Sport Participants

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Over the past 30 years, dog sports have expanded globally, yet research has focused primarily on canine physiology rather than human psychological factors. Participation may provide an enjoyable context for interaction, strengthening the dog–owner relationship and mutual understanding. Prior research links this relationship to emotional support, unconditional acceptance, and meaningful interaction (Julius et al., 2013). In parallel, Dog-Directed Parenting Styles distinguish authoritarian–correction oriented, authoritative–intrinsic value oriented, and authoritative–training oriented styles, with the latter associated with higher emotional closeness and satisfaction (van Herwijnen, 2020). This study examined how participation in dog sports relates to the dog–owner bond, dog-directed parenting styles, and owners' physical activity in a Hungarian sample. A total of 715 dog owners completed a questionnaire including demographic items and two Hungarian-validated measures (DORS, DD-PSDQ). The sample was predominantly female (90.4%); 41% (n = 294) participated in dog sports (M = 5.96 years, SD = 6.04). Dog sport participants scored lower on the DORS Pet–Owner Interaction scale than non-participants, but higher on the authoritative training-oriented parenting scale. Non-participants scored higher on the authoritative intrinsic value-oriented scale. No differences were found in human-only physical activity. These findings suggest that dog sport participation reflects a structured, training-focused relational style rather than weaker bonds. Within Dog-Directed Parenting Styles, this aligns with evidence linking training-oriented approaches to greater closeness (van Herwijnen, 2020). From a sport and exercise psychology perspective, dog sports may be understood as structured interaction contexts emphasizing goal-directed engagement and human–animal coordination.

ID: 502 / Poster Session 2: 31
Poster presentation
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Pedagogical psychology, Talent identification/development, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Student-athletes, Sport burnout, Lower secondary sport schools, Social influences

Trajectories of Sport Exhaustion, Cynicism and Inadequacy Among Adolescent Student-Athletes: A Three-Year Longitudinal Study

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Sport schools enhance adolescents' athletic development by offering extra training opportunities, but a rapid increase in the training load may elevate the risk of sport burnout. Thus, the aim of this study was twofold: (1) to explore the trajectories of three sport burnout dimensions (exhaustion, cynicism and inadequacy; Sorkkila et al., 2020) among Finnish student-athletes (n = 268; 44 % female, 56 % male) across three academic years in lower secondary sport schools (ages 13–15 years), and to (2) examine how these trajectories were associated with student-athletes' perceived social support from parents, peers and coaches, as well as their gender, sport type and competition level. Student-athletes completed questionnaires at three time points (Grades 7–9), including the Sport Burnout Inventory–Dual Career Form (SpBI-DC) to assess sport burnout and the Sport Engagement Instrument (SpEI) to measure social support. Linear latent growth models revealed that feelings of inadequacy and cynicism increased during lower secondary school across the sample. At baseline, female student-athletes reported higher levels of inadequacy and cynicism, whereas males showed higher levels of exhaustion. Social support from peers and coaches reduced the initial levels and progression of burnout over time, respectively. Although paternal support initially minimized inadequacy, continued support subsequently tended to increase inadequacy. The findings highlight the importance of examining the three dimensions as i nterconnected aspects of sport burnout, and to support student-athletes in addressing emerging feelings of inadequacy and cynicism before these symptoms intensify. Educating coaches and strengthening peer support would be particularly beneficial for enhancing adolescents wellbeing in sport schools.

ID: 529 / Poster Session 2: 32
Poster presentation
Topics: Human factors, Talent identification/development, Youth
Keywords: female football players, talent identification, sports development

Effect of Relative Age in Spanish Women's Youth Football

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The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of relative age on the identification, selection, and development of talent in Spanish women's youth football. A longitudinal observational study was conducted over 13 seasons. Using data obtained from secondary sources, a total of 3,588 cases of female players of different ages were analyzed. The data came from five top-level Spanish women's football clubs during the 2012/2013 and 2025/2026 seasons. Descriptively, a clear overrepresentation of players born in the first and second quarters of the year was observed (30.4% and 30.6%), demonstrating the presence of relative age in women's youth football. Subsequently, the players' athletic development was evaluated during the 2025/2026 season. A total of 45 players from the analyzed sample reached the professional level at the club where they developed (28.9% and 28.9%), and 13 of them went on to play internationally (23.1% and 38.5%). These findings confirm the existence of a bias in talent identification and selection processes, favoring players born in the first months of the year and influencing their future sporting careers. This data highlights the importance of developing plans tailored to each player's individual characteristics during their formative years to facilitate their full potential in adulthood.

ID: 545 / Poster Session 2: 33
Poster presentation
Topics: Motivation, Movement, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: social media sports content, adolescent health promotion, online social support, positive psychological capital

Social Media Sports Content and Adolescent Health Promotion: Chain Mediation of Online Social Support and Psychological Capital

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This study investigated the mechanisms through which social media sports content influences adolescent health promotion, focusing on the mediating and chain-mediating roles of online social support (OSS) and positive psychological capital (PPC). Adolescent health promotion is defined as a multi-dimensional construct encompassing physical education, cognition, affection, and behavior. Questionnaire data were obtained from 3,442 adolescents (M = 16.2, SD = 1.8) across seven major natural geographic regions of China and analyzed using structural equation modeling with SPSS 23.0 and AMOS 23.0. Results indicated that social media sports content ($\beta = 0.255$, $p < 0.001$), OSS ($\beta = 0.368$, $p < 0.001$), and PPC ($\beta = 0.422$, $p < 0.001$) were all significant positive predictors of adolescent health promotion. Social media sports content was also positively associated with OSS ($\beta = 0.628$, $p < 0.001$) and PPC ($\beta = 0.278$, $p < 0.001$), while OSS was positively related to PPC ($\beta = 0.379$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, OSS and PPC functioned as independent mediators in the association between social media sports content and adolescent health promotion and jointly constituted a significant serial mediation pathway. The serial mediation pathway accounted for the largest proportion of the total effect, comprising 63%, and indicates that OSS and PPC play a critical role in adolescent health promotion. These findings clarify the complex pathways through which social media sports content contributes to adolescent health promotion. The study provides theoretical and practical insights for utilizing digital media to enhance adolescent health behaviors and psychological well-being.

ID: 560 / Poster Session 2: 34
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Exercise psychology, Neuroscience
Keywords: Executive function, Exercise intervention, Cognitive performance, Event-related potentials

Neurocognitive Effects of Resistance Training on Cognitive Flexibility and P300 in Adults with ADHD

Chiao-Ling Hung[1,2,3], Wei Zhang[1], Chi-Jui Lee[2], Dong-Yang Fong[4]
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Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) often show persistent deficits in executive function, particularly cognitive flexibility. Although resistance training has been proposed as a strategy to enhance cognition through physiological adaptation, its neurocognitive effects in adults with ADHD remain unclear. This study examined whether a 12-week periodized resistance training program could improve cognitive flexibility, modulate P300 indices, and reduce clinical symptom severity using a multiple-baseline single-subject design. Five adults with ADHD completed staggered baseline phases of 2 to 6.5 weeks to control for practice effects, followed by a 12-week machine-based resistance training intervention and a retention phase. Cognitive flexibility was assessed with a task-switching paradigm combined with electroencephalography, with neuroelectrical activity indexed by the P300 component. Clinical symptoms were measured using the Adult ADHD Self Report Scale, State Trait Anxiety Inventory, and Depression Anxiety Stress Scales 21. Intervention effects were evaluated using weighted Tau U effect size analysis. Results showed significant strength gains across four exercises, confirming strong intervention fidelity. Response variability during switch trials was significantly reduced, indicating more stable executive control. In

parallel, P300 amplitude significantly decreased across all task conditions. Although reduced P300 amplitude can sometimes reflect diminished cognitive capacity, its co-occurrence with improved behavioral stability suggests enhanced neural efficiency, with lower neural resource recruitment supporting more stable performance. Clinical symptoms showed decreasing trends but did not reach statistical significance. These findings suggest that sustained, accessible resistance training may enhance executive stability and neural efficiency in adults with ADHD.

ID: 561 / **Poster Session 2: 35**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Elite sports and expertise, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Psychological safety, Sport Psychological Safety Inventory (SPSI), validation, coach–athlete relationship

Translation and Cross-Cultural Validation of the Sport Psychological Safety Inventory in German-Speaking Athletes

Sedat Ozturk[1], Anne-Marie Elbe[2], Nastja Rettich[2], Nadja Walter[2]
[1]ENS Rennes, France; [2]Leipzig University, Germany

The present study aimed to translate and validate the German version of the Sport Psychological Safety Inventory (SPSI) and to examine its associations with related psychological constructs. A total of 101 athletes (M = 24.30 years, SD = 6.13) from various sport disciplines completed the German-translated SPSI alongside measures of perceived stress (PSS-10), well-being (WHO-5), coach–athlete relationship (CART-Q), and general psychological safety (PS-C). The translation followed a forward–backward procedure to ensure conceptual equivalence. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to examine factorial validity and associations with these constructs. A confirmatory factor analysis supported the original three-factor structure. Structural equation modeling indicated that higher psychological safety was associated with greater well-being and lower perceived stress, and was strongly related to coach–athlete relationship quality and psychological safety climate. Correlation analyses complemented these findings, showing positive associations with well-being, overall psychological safety, and coach–athlete relationships, and a negative association with perceived stress. The German version of the SPSI demonstrates preliminary psychometric support and extends the assessment of psychological safety to German-speaking sport contexts. These findings contribute to cross-cultural validation research and provide a foundation for future investigations of psychological safety and athlete well-being in sport environments.

ID: 564 / **Poster Session 2: 36**
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: PSYCHO-ONCOLOGY, SPORT, QUALITY OF LIFE, TRIATHLON

Psycho-Oncology, Sport, Quality of Life: Triathlon Training to Enhance Quality of Life in Oncology Patients. Preliminary Data

Giulia Di Marco[1,2], Michela Bellucci[3,2], Tommaso Mariano[4], Benedetta Ceccarelli[4], Paolo Catanzaro[1], Livia Buratta[5], Verena De Angelis[6]
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A cancer diagnosis profoundly impacts psychological health and quality of life. International guidelines, such as those from the American Cancer Society (2020), emphasize that physical activity—specifically 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity weekly—protects against cancer onset, reduces recurrences, mitigates side effects, and alleviates anxiety and depression. Consistent with the biopsychosocial model (Engel, 1977), a multidisciplinary approach integrating physical activity and psychological support is considered the gold standard in oncology. This randomized case-control study evaluates the preliminary efficacy of an integrated intervention combining supervised triathlon training and group psychotherapy. The sample includes 35 patients with breast or colorectal cancer undergoing adjuvant therapy at the S. Maria della Misericordia Hospital in Perugia, divided into a clinical group (CL, n = 19) and a control group (CT, n = 16). Variables are assessed via validated self-report questionnaires focusing on physical activity (IPAQ), motivation (SIMS), psychological health (HADS), and quality of life (SF36). This analysis compares baseline (T0) and 6-month post-intervention (T1) data. At T0, participants exhibited an emotional vulnerability profile typical of oncology patients. While longitudinal T1 data collection is ongoing, preliminary results indicate an adherence rate of >70%, confirming the intervention's feasibility. Qualitative observations suggest reduced emotional distress and enhanced participation in daily activities, indicating a potentially significant improvement in overall quality of life.

ID: 640 / **Poster Session 2: 37**
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Exercise psychology, Physical activity, Special needs
Keywords: Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Fencing, Psychosis

A Fencing-Based Intervention for an Adolescent With Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Case Study

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Sports participation has been shown to yield significant progress on behavioural and social measures (Shahane et al., 2024). Specifically, numerous research studies have confirmed the mental health benefits of combat sports participation for children with disabilities (Lee et al., 2025). The aim of this study was to present the case of a male adolescent with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and to evaluate changes observed in ASD symptomatology during a six-month fencing training program. The participant was diagnosed with ASD and was receiving medication for psychosis. They took part in a six-month fencing training program, three times per week, combined with sensory integration therapy and sensory stimulation techniques (Wen & Wu, 2025). Fencing was selected based on personal preferences. Olympic combat sports have previously been applied to populations diagnosed with ASD and have been shown to positively affect stereotypic behaviour and social skills (Lee et al., 2025). A gradual reduction in the severity of psychotic and ASD-related symptoms was observed, including improvements in obsessive thoughts and persistent impairments related to inattention. A growing acceptance of unfamiliar environments and involvement was observed, along with enhanced social interaction and active engagement in group activities. Unwillingness to physical effort also diminished. Sports interventions can potentially have a positive effect on a variety of variables identified in individuals with ASD, including locomotor skills, social functioning, and behaviour. Therapeutic interventions designed for individuals with ASD that integrate physical activity, social skills and sensory-motor stimulation offer a promising approach for rehabilitation programs.

ID: 645 / Poster Session 2: 38
Poster presentation
Topics: Perception & attention, Youth
Keywords: cycling, hazard perception, accident prevention, experience

Hazard Perception in Cyclists: An Experimental Analysis of Age- and Experience-Related Factors

Julian Groß, Julia Limmeroth, Norbert Hagemann
Universität Kassel, Germany

The ability to identify hazardous situations while cycling is an important skill for safe road participation (Borowsky et al., 2010). However, in children and adolescents, this ability is not yet fully developed, as reflected by slower reaction times and fewer hazards detected compared to adults (Vansteenkiste et al., 2016; Zeuwts et al., 2017). It remains unclear whether these differences are primarily due to age-related maturation or experience- and behaviour-related aspects of traffic participation. To investigate this question, 69 participants (M = 27.19, SD = 16.32) provided demographic data, bicycle experience, cycling skills, and traffic behaviour. Based on cycling frequency and self-reported experience, an experience index was computed. Participants then completed a computer-based experiment presenting 30 randomly selected traffic clips. After each clip, hazard perception (HP), number of hazards (HCount), and anticipation were assessed. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses with age, gender, and cycling skills as control variables revealed that the baseline model for HP was significant ($R2 = .13$), with gender as the only significant predictor ($\beta = –.31$). Adding traffic behaviour and experience index increased explained variance ($\Delta R2 = .09$), with only experience index being significant ($\beta = .27$). For HCount, only the extended model was significant ($R2 = .21$), again with experience index as sole predictor ($\beta = .29$). No significant effects were observed for anticipation. Results suggest that hazard perception is predicted less by age than by traffic-related experience. A possible explanation is the development of traffic-related schemata with increasing experience, highlighting the importance of experience-based cycling safety programs.

ID: 651 / Poster Session 2: 39
Poster presentation
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Ethics in applied settings, Mental skills training, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Deliberate practice, Mental skills training, Performance psychology

AI-Supported Deliberate Practice of Mental Skills in Competitive Sport: An Ongoing Investigation

Maria Ogurtsova
Association of sports psychologists and psychologists-practitioners in team & game sports «Team», Russian Federation

The development of psychological skills in sport typically relies on practitioner-led interventions; however, opportunities for consistent and structured deliberate practice are often limited by time constraints, resource availability, and access to qualified specialists. This project examines the feasibility and applied implications of an AI-supported digital system designed to facilitate regular deliberate practice of core mental skills in competitive athletes. Grounded in deliberate practice principles and contemporary performance psychology frameworks, including self-efficacy theory and sport confidence models, the system provides structured, repeatable exercises targeting self-regulation, internal dialogue management, attentional control, and adaptive response protocols following performance errors. The AI component supports individualized progression, feedback, and scalable delivery, enabling athletes to engage in consistent psychological skill rehearsal between formal consultations. The

system is currently being implemented with approximately 40–60 competitive athletes from individual and team sports. Ongoing data collection includes validated measures of self-regulatory capacity, competitive anxiety (Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 [CSAI-2]), and perceived performance readiness, alongside behavioral indicators such as adherence, response patterns, and progression metrics. Quantitative data will be analyzed using pre–post comparisons and exploratory correlational analyses, while qualitative feedback from athletes and practitioners will be examined using thematic analysis to assess usability, perceived transfer to competition, and integration into training environments. The project also incorporates ethical reflection regarding algorithmic transparency, data protection, athlete autonomy, and the role of AI as a supportive mechanism within practitioner-guided psychological development.

ID: 658 / **Poster Session 2: 40**
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Organizational development and quality management, Professional development and mentoring, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: PrecariousWork, InstitutionalEquity, ProfessionalFootballCoaches, PsychosociologicalPerspective

The Symbolic Dimension of Precarious Work: Integrating Institutional Equity into the Perceived Precarious Life Model

Martina Palumbo, Edgardo Zanoli, Caterina Gozzoli, Alessia Ferraboli
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore di Milano, Italy

Research on precarious work remains fragmented, often focused on occupations traditionally considered precarious. At present, integrative frameworks connecting subjective and objective, individual and collective, organizational and societal dimensions are still lacking (McWha-Hermann et al.,2025). The Perceived Precarious Life(PPL) model (Llosa et al.,2024) offers a synthesis, conceptualizing precariousness along a psychosocial continuum integrating job precariousness, social support, and economic deprivation. However, the term of comparison of the 'Perceived' remains implicit. We hypothesize that precariousness is grounded in collectively shared expectations regarding what work should be within Western occupational contexts. Adopting a psychosociological perspective and building on preliminary qualitative research conducted in an atypical professional context (Blustein et al.,2024), this study tests an extension of the PPL model including institutional equity as an antecedent, understood as a collective representation of 'expected work'that precedes and orients perception of 'real work'. Using survey data from 300 professional football coaches in the Italian professional league system, SEM was conducted. Mental health was considered as an outcome, with dysfunctional coping strategies as a mediating variable. Results confirm the theoretical structure, showing a negative association between perceived precarious life and mental health(β=−0.452,p<.01). Institutional equity contributes to the multidimensional configuration. Dysfunctional coping strategies do not mediate this relationship(β=−0.06,p =.18), suggesting that individual strategies do not have beneficial effects on mental health. These findings extend the PPL model by integrating a fourth, symbolic-comparative dimension alongside individual, social, and organizational antecedents, challenging "psychologizing" approaches centered on individual empowerment and highlighting the need for systemic interventions acting synergistically across all dimensions.

ID: 665 / **Poster Session 2: 41**
Poster presentation
Topics: Decision making and judgement, Elite sports and expertise, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Perception & attention
Keywords: Anticipation, Virtual Reality, Expertise, Tennis

Anticipating an Opponent's Action in Sports: A Virtual Reality Investigation of Expertise in Tennis

Simona Perrone, Daniele Romano, Luisa Girelli
University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

Anticipating an opponent's action in sports is an embodied process based on perception–action coupling. This interaction implies that athletes depend on the ability to extract relevant environmental cues to guide motor behaviour (Craig, 2013). However, research has mainly employed computer-based occlusion paradigms to study sport anticipation (Williams & Jackson, 2018). In this context, virtual reality offers a high-fidelity environment for investigating anticipation in an ecological context that preserves realistic motor responses. The present study aimed to assess the application of VR technology for investigating the expertise advantage in anticipation within an ecological immersive environment. Forty tennis players (20 experts, 20 amateurs) were assessed using the Sense Arena tennis platform (delivered via Meta Quest 2). The study employed sport-specific drills that measured accuracy, reaction time, and motor responses to an opponent's serve, as well as general visuomotor drills. Results indicated an advantage for expert players selectively in domain-specific tasks. Experts exhibited faster reaction times [$t(26.7) = 2.13$, $p = .021$, $d = 0.68$] and a more efficient motor response during service returns [$\chi2(1) = 26.39$, $p < .001$], consistent with performance expectations in real-game contexts. In contrast, performance remains comparable between groups in general visuomotor drills, for either reaction times [$t(36.3) = -0.43$, $p = .665$, $d = -0.14$] or visuomotor ability [$t(36.3) = 0.35$, $p = .636$, $d = 0.11$]. These results highlight the use of virtual reality to advance research on anticipation in a more ecological environment.

ID: 670 / Poster Session 2: 42
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching
Keywords: psychological flexibility, mindset, motivational climate

Moderating Role of Psychological Flexibility in the Relationship Between Coach-Created Motivational Climate and Athlete Mindset

Ayse Yaren Kurden[1], Ibrahim Dogukan Eskiturk[2], Enes Ozdemir[3], Pakize Keskin[4], Ihsan Sarı[5]
[1]Marmara University, Department of Physical Education and Sport; [2]Fenerbahçe University, Graduate Education Institute; [3]Marmara University, Institute of Health Sciences; [4]Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, Institute of Graduate Studies; [5]Sakarya University of Applied Sciences, Faculty of Sport Sciences

This study examined whether psychological flexibility moderates the relationship between coach-created motivational climate (task-involving, autonomy-supportive, socially-supportive, ego-involving and controlling climates) and athletes' mindset (fixed and growth). A total of 170 athletes (92 boys,78 girls; Mage = 14.10±1.61) who competed in individual and team disciplines at the national level were included in the study after data screening procedures. The Mindset Theory Scale (Yılmaz, 2021), the Empowering and Disempowering Motivational Climate Questionnaire (Gözmen Elmas et al., 2018), and the Psychological Flexibility Sport Scale (PSFS-S) (Karagöz & Çotuk, 2023) were used. In the PSFS-S, lower scores indicate higher psychological flexibility. Analyses were conducted in R using the psych, lavaan and car packages. Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to examine direct and moderating effects. Scale scores were computed as mean scores for each subdimension. Confirmatory factor analyses and reliability analyses supported the factorial validity and internal consistency of the measures. Results showed that psychological flexibility positively predicted fixed mindset ($\beta = .17$, $p < .001$). Moreover, autonomy-supportive ($\beta = .25$, $p = .015$), task-involving ($\beta = .49$, $p < .001$), and socially-supportive ($\beta = .20$, $p < .05$) climates significantly predicted growth mindset. Ego-involving climate, controlling climate and psychological flexibility were not significant predictors. Task-involving, autonomy-supportive, and socially-supportive climates were positively associated with growth mindset, whereas ego-involving and controlling climates were not significant predictors. Psychological flexibility did not function as a statistically significant moderator in these relationships.

ID: 694 / Poster Session 2: 43
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Leadership, Personality
Keywords: Football, Coaches, Leadership Power Perception, Big-Five Personality Traits

Football Coaches' Leadership Power Perceptions in Relation to Big-Five Personality Traits

Erkut Konter
İstanbul Gelişim University, Turkey (Türkiye)

There is a limited knowledge about football coaches' Leadership Power Perceptions in relation to their Big-Five Personality Traits. Therefore, purpose of this study will be to research Sport Leadership Power Perceptions (Reward Power, Coercive Power, Legitimate Power, Expert Power, and Referent Power) of football coaches in relation to their Big-Five Personality Traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness). Data will be collected from professional and amateur soccer coaches with different licenses (UEFA Pro-Licence, UEFA A, B, C etc.). Participants will be administered Instructor Sport Leadership Power Perceptions Scale/ISLPPS (Konter, 2017; Konter & Aksoy, 2012) and the Turkish Adjective Based Personality Test measuring the Big-five Personality (Bacanlı, İlhan & Aslan, 2009) with the personal information form. Collected data will be analyzed by mix methods including qualitative and quantitative analyses including descriptive data. Results, discussions and related future suggestions will be given based on findings, literature.

ID: 702 / Poster Session 2: 44
Poster presentation
Topics: Decision making and judgement, Social cognition
Keywords: gender bias, combat sports, performance evaluation, gender role beliefs

The Same Punch, Different Judgment: Gender Bias in the Evaluation of Women in Combat Sports

Iuliana Costea, Ramona-Alice Bran
West University of Timisoara, Romania

Despite the growing visibility of women in combat sports, boxing remains culturally associated with masculinity. The present experimental study examined whether identical boxing performances are evaluated differently depending on the athlete's attributed gender. Grounded in gender role theory and expectancy-based models of performance perception, the study explored how gender labeling influences judgments of competence, aggression, and sport legitimacy. Forty university students (N = 40) were randomly assigned to one of two conditions. All participants viewed the same 40-second boxing training clip. The only manipulation concerned gender attribution: in one condition (n = 20), the performer was introduced as a female boxer, while in the other condition (n = 20), the identical clip was described as featuring a male boxer. Participants rated perceived technical competence, performance quality, aggression, and sport legitimacy. They also completed the Attitudes Toward Women's Sports (ATWS) Scale and the Gender Role Beliefs Scale (GRBS). Results revealed a pattern consistent with gender-based differences in

performance evaluation. Although the visual stimulus was identical, evaluations tended to vary as a function of attributed gender, with male-labeled performances showing a tendency to receive slightly higher competence and legitimacy ratings. Individual differences in gender role beliefs and attitudes toward women's sports were associated with variability in judgments. These findings suggest that subtle gender cues may influence combat sport evaluation and highlight the relevance of cognitive bias processes in sport psychology contexts.

ID: 716 / Poster Session 2: 45
Poster presentation
Topics: Mental skills training
Keywords: Self-talk, Gaze behavior, virtual reality, Eye tracking

The Effects of Instructional and Motivational Self-Talk on Gaze Behavior in a Virtual Reality Setting

Sahil Pawade
Vrije University, Germany

Self-talk (ST) is a widely used psychological strategy for enhancing athletic performance, commonly categorized into instructional and motivational. While both forms can improve performance, the mechanisms underlying these effects remain unclear. One proposed mechanism involves attentional processes, which may be reflected in athletes' gaze behavior during interceptive tasks. This pilot study investigated whether instructional and motivational ST influence gaze behavior—specifically predictive saccades—as a potential mechanism underlying performance in a virtual reality tennis task. Predictive saccades are anticipatory eye movements that allow athletes to gather information about ball trajectory and timing and have been linked to skilled performance in interceptive sports. A within-subject design was employed with three recreational tennis players who completed a six-day intervention. Each day, participants performed 135 forehand trials under three conditions: instructional ST, motivational ST, and a no-ST control, with conditions randomized across days. Forehand performance was assessed as the number of successful target hits. Eye and head movements were recorded using an HTC Vive headset with integrated eye tracking, and the number and timing of predictive saccades were analyzed. Instructional ST did not produce meaningful changes in gaze behavior. In contrast, motivational ST was associated with fewer predictive saccades and greater variability in their timing. Despite these differences, both ST conditions improved performance relative to control. These findings suggest that motivational ST may influence attentional processes by altering visual tracking strategies. However, given the small sample size, further research is required.

ID: 720 / Poster Session 2: 46
Poster presentation
Topics: Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Dance students, Social interaction anxiety, Help-seeking, Psychological support.

Social Anxiety, Help-Seeking, and Psychological Support Preferences among Dance Students in Higher Education

Ying Liu, Jennie Hancox, Rachel Sandford, Oliver Hooper
School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University, United Kingdom

Dance students in higher education often experience psychological pressures associated with training, performance, evaluation, and physical visibility. Yet, formal psychological support may remain underused. This cross-sectional mixed-methods survey examined levels of social interaction anxiety and help-seeking among dance students in higher education and explored perceived barriers, facilitators, and preferences for psychological support. Participants were 184 dance students enrolled in UK degree-level dance programmes. Mean social interaction anxiety scores (M= 29.5) were below the commonly used clinical threshold, although a substantial minority (32.6%) reported elevated scores. Social interaction anxiety was not significantly associated with help-seeking intentions ($r = -.135$, $p = .096$, $n = 153$). Weekly training hours showed a clearer association with help-seeking intentions, although the pattern was non-linear. Qualitative findings indicated that help-seeking was delayed, selective, and context-dependent. Support needs were triggered by dance-context pressures and broader psychological difficulties, but movement from intention to action was shaped by high thresholds for seeking help, self-reliance, structural barriers, communication difficulties, stigma, trust, and the perceived fit of support services. Students preferred support that was low-barrier, psychologically safe, personalised, movement-informed, and integrated into the rhythms of dance training. Findings suggest that improving psychological support for dance students requires attention not only to individual willingness to seek help but also to how support is organised, trusted, and made usable within higher education dance-training environments.

ID: 245 / Poster Session 2: 47
Poster presentation
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Mental skills training, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: trauma-informed practice, self-regulation, Multidisciplinary rehabilitation, resilience

Training Sport Psychologists to Work With Post-Traumatic Populations: An Applied Framework

Shoshi Shtemer, Orit Bar Artvinksy
The Israeli Association for Sport and Performance Psychology, Israel

Post-traumatic populations require interventions that go beyond symptom reduction to support long-term regulation, resilience, and functioning. Sport and performance psychology, emphasizing self-regulation and performance under pressure, offers a valuable foundation for these needs. However, a significant training gap limits sport psychologists' ability to apply these methods with post-traumatic populations. This poster addresses this gap by presenting an applied framework for preparing sport psychologists to work within multidisciplinary trauma care. The framework stems from group-based interventions in clinical rehabilitation, delivered alongside psychotherapy and psychiatric care, and conducted with non-athlete participants. There was no formal evaluation of intervention efficacy in terms of improvement of symptoms; however, personal psychologists of participants provided descriptive reports. Trauma-informed sport psychologists facilitated sessions emphasizing mental skills training, embodied regulation, and performance-oriented language. Recovery was conceptualized as an ongoing process focusing on emotional regulation, perceived control, cohesion, and adaptive functioning. Integrating principles of sport psychology—attentional control, self-efficacy, and performance under stress—with trauma-informed and somatic approaches (Porges, 2011; van der Kolk, 2014; Bandura, 1997), the model utilized group processes to enhance learning through attunement and shared experience (Yalom & Leszcz, 2020). Applied implications include novel pathways for integrating sport psychology into trauma rehabilitation, offering interdisciplinary teams a shared language of self-regulation and performance. This approach broadens sport psychologists' roles in clinical contexts and highlights the value of cross-disciplinary collaboration and training.

11:30am - 1:00pm

The Scientist Practitioner: A 'Nice to Be' or a 'Need to Be' in Sport Psychology?

Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 686 / Panel 4: 1
Panel discussion

The Scientist Practitioner: A 'Nice to Be' or a 'Need to Ne' in Sport Psychology?

Paul Wylleman[1], Chris Harwood[2], Hafrun Kristjánsdóttir[3], Urban Johnson[4], Tanja Kajtna[5], Anne Marte Pensgaard[6]
[1]Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium; [2]Nottingham Trent University; [3]Reykjavík University; [4]Halmstad University; [5]University of Ljubljana; [6]Norwegian School of Sport Sciences

The scientist–practitioner in sport psychology integrates scientific inquiry with applied practice in an explicitly critical, evidence-based manner, encompassing intervention, consultation, and education. This role requires continuous engagement with emerging research and systematic reflective practice, always tailored to the specific context of the athlete and sport. At the same time, substantial professional challenges may prompt sport psychologists to question whether the scientist–practitioner model is a "nice to be" or a "need to be", particularly in light of the perceived risk of not achieving high-level expertise in either science or practice, or in both. This panel discussion brings together experienced sport psychologists working in diverse academic and elite sport environments to reflect on their professional development, the challenges they have encountered, and the lessons learned. Guided by a moderator, the session will actively involve the audience to generate complementary yet differentiated perspectives on the scientist–practitioner role in contemporary sport psychology.

The panel will include:

- Tanja Kajtna (University of Ljubljana), sport psychologist for Slovenia at the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games and London 2012 Olympic Games, psychologist for the National Olympic Institute and Institute of Sport

- Hafrún Kristjánsdóttir (Reykjavik University), sport psychologist for Iceland at the London 2012, Rio 2016, Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 Olympic Games

- Anne Marte Pensgaard (Norwegian School of Sport Sciences), certified CMPC and attended (incl. Welfare officer) the Atlanta 1996, Sydney 2000, Torino 2006, Beijing 2008, Vancouver 2010, Tokyo 2020, Beijing 2022, Paris 2024, Milano Cortina 2026 Olympic Games

- Chris Harwood (Nottingham Trent University), registered psychologist working with youth athletes, families and elite athletes in professional sports

- Urban Johnson (Halmstad University), applied sport psychologist specializing in elite team sports, with extensive experience mentoring the next generation of applied sport psychologists

- Paul Wylleman (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) (moderator), team sport psychologist for TeamNL at the Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and expert Psychology and Welfare Officer for Team Belgium at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

11:30am - 1:00pm

The Power of "Us": Promoting Psychological Safety Through Social Identity Leadership in Sport Coaching

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 459 / Workshop 24: 1
Workshop
Topics: Coaching, Ethics in applied settings, Leadership, Violence
Keywords: Psychological safety, identity leadership, sport coaching

The Power of “Us”: Promoting Psychological Safety Through Social Identity Leadership in Sport Coaching

Julia T. Schwender[1], **V. Vanessa Wergin**[2]
[1]Technical University of Munich, Germany; [2]The University of Queensland, Australia

Psychological safety is increasingly recognised as a foundational condition for learning, well-being, and sustainable performance. Defined as a shared belief that interpersonal risk-taking is safe, psychological safety supports open communication, learning from mistakes, and adaptive responses to challenge (Edmondson, 1996; Edmondson & Lei, 2014). In sport, psychological safety is understood as a distinct, measurable construct associated with athlete well-being, team functioning, and sustained performance (e.g., Rice et al., 2022; Vella et al., 2024). Coaching styles and leadership behaviours are central to creating and maintaining psychological safety (Gosai & Jowett, 2023). The Social Identity Approach to Leadership (Haslam et al., 2020) emphasises leaders’ capacity to build a shared sense of “us”, foster belonging, and align group norms with care and performance goals (Rees et al., 2015). In team sports, identity leadership is positively associated with psychological safety, team functioning, and well-being (Fransen et al., 2020; Ojio et al., 2025). This applied, interactive workshop translates identity leadership principles into everyday coaching practice. Participants will (1) understand psychological safety and its relevance for performance and well-being, (2) identify coaching behaviours that foster or undermine psychological safety through self-experience, and (3) apply social identity leadership principles to promote inclusive and safe, high-performance environments. The workshop uses a social identity leadership card game, based on the self-experience of social identity principles, guided reflection, case examples, and small-group discussions to translate research into practice. Participants will receive a social identity coaching checklist and a resource summary following the session.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Oral Presentations 28: Dual career, Transitions in and out of sport

Location: **A01**
Session Chair: **Cristina De Subijana**

ID: 499 / Oral Presentations 28: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Organizational development and quality management, Talent identification/development
Keywords: Lower Secondary Sport Schools, Adolescent student-athletes, Dual Career Development Environments

Implementation of Ten Key Features of Dual Career Development Environments in Finnish Sport Schools: A Multiple-Case Study

Joni Kuokkanen[1], **Milla Saarinen**[2], **Alex Mäkiharju**[1], **Louise Kamuk Storm**[3], **Jan-Erik Romar**[1]
[1]Abo Akademi University, Vasa, Finland; [2]Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Oslo, Norway; [3]University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark

Using the framework of ten essential features of successful European dual career development environments (Storm et al., 2021), this study examined how these features were implemented within and across five newly established Finnish lower secondary sport schools (ages 13–15 years). Data from the five schools were collected via semi-structured interviews with student-athletes (n = 30) and school staff (n = 14), and non-participant observations of sport training and academic classes (n = 12). Adopting a philosophical positioning of interpretivism with constructivist epistemology, the data was analyzed through deductive thematic cross-case analysis and sentiment-oriented coding to assess the functionality of each feature. Findings were organized into two overarching categories: holistic structure and shared DC philosophy, each comprising five features. Regarding holistic structure features, stakeholders displayed a clear awareness of DC issues and demands in general, but four schools provided partially functional informal and fragmented support. A designated DC coordinator enabled functional school–sport communication and aligned teacher support in the fifth school. Role models and mentorship and access to expert support features were partially functional across schools. Within shared DC philosophy features, school staff facilitated a functional whole-person approach by acknowledging and supporting students’ multiple roles. Empowerment, flexible DC solutions, and mental health support were mainly partially functional, being dependent on teacher goodwill and ad hoc practices. Systematic environment evaluation and development were absent. Based on the results, sport schools could advance dysfunctional features by introducing systematic evaluation, formalizing support within schools and sport club agreements, proactive DC competence teaching, and monitoring adolescents’ mental health.

ID: 172 / Oral Presentations 28: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Professional development and mentoring, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: Employability, student-athletes, Delphi study, Dual Career Programs

What Is Employability for Student-Athletes? Preliminary Results From a Delphi Study

Alessia Ferraboli[1], **Chiara D'Angelo**[1], **Laura Capranica**[2], **Alessandro Quartiroli**[3,4]
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Employability is a multidimensional and context-sensitive construct (Holmes, 2013) yet a shared and target-specific conceptualization for student-athletes remains underdeveloped. Grounded in a critical realist epistemology, we present findings from a Delphi study aimed at developing a definition of student-athlete employability, identifying facilitators and barriers, and recommendations for university Dual Career Programs. A heterogeneous international panel of 226 experts was recruited through theoretical and snowball sampling based on experiential, theoretical,

and/or applied knowledge of dual career and factors shaping student-athletes' employability. Of those contacted, 12 declined to participate, whereas the remaining nonrespondents did not complete the survey. A total of 57 experts (18 student-athletes, 22 researchers, and 17 practitioners) from 15 countries across 4 continents completed Round 1. The panel included 29 women and 28 men (M_age=38.79 years; SD=16.11). Data were collected through iterative online surveys. Qualitative data were analyzed using Conventional Content Analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). An initial conceptual definition of student-athlete employability was generated, alongside structured lists of employability-related facilitators (n=8), barriers (n=12), professional profiles (n=7) and competences (n=12) to support employability development, and actionable recommendations (n=7). In Round 2, 57 panelists were asked to rate and provide feedback on these aggregated outputs, to refine them, enhance conceptual clarity, and build consensus. A 75% agreement threshold was adopted to determine consensus. This study contributes a consensual field-specific definition of student-athlete employability to address ongoing conceptual fragmentation and offers a transferable framework to inform the design, evaluation, and strengthening of employability development initiatives within international dual career settings.

ID: 668 / Oral Presentations 28: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Emotion, Well-being and quality of life, Any other topic
Keywords: Coping strategies, Dual career, UK student athletes

Balancing Demands: A Qualitative Exploration of Coping in UK Dual-Career Student-Athletes

James Beere, Stephanie Tibbert, Zoe Wimshurst, Stewart Cotterill
Health Sciences University, United Kingdom

Student-athletes experience unique psychological stressors associated with balancing dual academic and athletic careers, which can place strain on mental wellbeing (Ryan et al., 2018). Although coping is recognised as central to managing stress in sport contexts, current research has focused primarily on elite or North American populations, with limited understanding of coping within the UK dual-career context. Informed by sport-specific coping theory (Gaudreau & Blondin, 2002), this study qualitatively explored when, how, and why UK student-athletes use coping strategies. Fourteen scholarship-supported student-athletes (male n = 8, female n = 6; aged 16–26 years; regional to international level) participated in semi-structured interviews. Reflexive thematic analysis was employed (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The results positioned coping as a dynamic and contextually shaped process through which athletes navigated competing demands. Participants described using coping in response to workload conflicts, financial pressures, injury, and limited institutional support, and reported drawing on psychological skills, strategic planning, and social relationships to maintain perceived control and engagement. Athletes described relying on disengagement, emotional suppression, alcohol use, or excessive distraction, reflecting attempts to manage immediate pressures without resolving underlying stressors. Participants discussed how coping was shaped by psychological knowledge, coaching behaviours, and opportunities for observational learning, highlighting the relational and social nature of coping. Limited awareness in adaptive coping strategies was a consistent tension across narratives. These findings extend understanding of coping within UK dual-career environments by highlighting how coping develops through interaction between individual strategies and contextual demands, suggesting that psychologically-informed support may enhance student-athlete wellbeing.

ID: 183 / Oral Presentations 28: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: Academics, University, Challenges, Student-athletes

Understanding Academic Perspectives on Dual Career Pathways in Higher Education

Andrew Decelis, Adele Muscat
University of Malta, Malta

Numerous studies have highlighted the challenges dual-career (DC) athletes face in balancing sport and academia. Despite the development of the European Guidelines on the Dual Careers of Athletes (2012), FEPSAC's Position Statement (Stambulova et al., 2024), as well as extensive research (Fuchs et al., 2021; Stambulova & Wylleman, 2015, 2019) and Erasmus+ projects addressing this issue, many academics, particularly those outside the field of sport, still remain insufficiently informed about the challenges faced by DC athletes and how best to support them. This study aimed to explore academics' perceptions of the difficulties they encounter in supporting DC athletes in a small country, and potential avenues to enhance institutional support. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 academics in Malta, using purposive, convenience, and snowball sampling. The data were analysed through reflexive thematic analysis. Findings revealed two key themes: Navigating demands: the challenges of supporting DC athletes, and Cultivating a winning environment: Strategies for academic support. The first theme focuses on the challenges academics face in balancing their obligations with the need to address students' needs. The second theme centers on moving forward and developing strategies that academics believe could better support students in the future. The findings underscore that effective DC support requires a shift from discretionary, individualised academic practices to coordinated, institutionally embedded systems. The study reinforces the importance of culturally and structurally sensitive DC frameworks, where limited professional sport pathways and infrastructure amplify the need for educational institutions to play a central role in athlete development.

ID: 671 / Oral Presentations 28: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Self, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: athletic identity, academic and athletic Identity, student-athlete, dual career

Examining Student-Athlete Dual Identity Over Time in University Athletes: A Longitudinal Study of Academic and Athletic Identities

Mariya Yukhymenko-Lescroart
California State University, Fresno, United States of America

University athletes simultaneously hold academic and athletic identities, yet little is known about how these dual identities interrelate over time. This study examined the longitudinal relations of the student-athlete dual identity by modeling reciprocal relations among five identity constructs: academic identity, athletic identity, identity integration, identity conflict, and integrated student-athlete identity uncertainty. The goal was to inform potential interventions. A total of 130 university athletes in Ukraine (43.1% women; Mdn age = 19) completed surveys at Time-1 and Time-2 six weeks apart. Measures included the Academic and Athletic Identity Scale (AAIS, Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2014) and three 4-item scales assessing identity integration, identity conflict, and integrated student-athlete identity uncertainty (7-point Likert-type scales). Omega reliabilities were .75-.91. A cross-lagged autoregressive path model was estimated in Mplus using Bayesian estimation. Controlling for autoregressive stability, academic identity at Time-2 was negatively predicted by Time-1 identity uncertainty (β = −.33). Athletic identity at Time-2 was negatively predicted by identity uncertainty (β = −.20) and positively predicted by identity integration (β = .30). Identity uncertainty was negatively predicted by identity integration (β = −.33). Additionally, academic and athletic identities were predicted indirectly by identity integration via identity uncertainty (β = .08 and β = .14). Identity conflict did not predict other identity dimensions. The model explained 44.5% of academic identity, 43.7% of athletic identity, and 28.9% of identity uncertainty variance. Findings indicated that identity uncertainty undermines academic and athletic identities, whereas identity integration supports them. Interventions should prioritize strengthening an integrated student-athlete identity and reducing uncertainty, rather than focusing solely on conflict.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Who Benefits and How? Applied Perspectives on Bio- and Neurofeedback Trainings in Sport

Location: **A02**

ID: 328 / Symposium 16: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Neuroscience, Psychophysiology
Keywords: sport performance, EEG-feedback, self-regulation

Who Benefits and How? Applied Perspectives on Bio- and Neurofeedback Trainings in Sport

Réka Zsanett König[1], James Hodgetts[2], Tsung-Min Hung[3], Ming-Yang Cheng[4]
[1]Swiss Federal Institute of Sport Magglingen; [2]Institute for the Psychology of Elite Performance, School of Psychology and Sports Science, Bangor University; [3]National Taiwan Normal University; [4]Taiwan Institute of Sports Science
Discussant: **Réka Zsanett König** (Swiss Federal Institute of Sport Magglingen)

Although recent studies increasingly support the psychological and performance benefits of bio- and neurofeedback training in athletes (Tosti et al., 2024), applied outcomes are often difficult to interpret and remain mixed, which is likely due to methodological variability and heterogeneous protocols (Zhang et al., 2025). This symposium brings together four applied psychophysiological approaches to designing, delivering, and translating bio- and neurofeedback into sport-relevant outcomes. The first presentation examines individual differences in responsiveness to biofeedback, delineating the roles of factors such as personality traits and interoceptive ability. By outlining a profile of “responsive” individuals and strategies that enhance responsiveness, it offers practical guidance for tailoring interventions. Second, we present research on individualized EEG neurofeedback training (NFT) in golfers, showing how a rigorously designed protocol can improve neural efficiency and attentional regulation, both key to putting performance. The third presentation investigates whether function-specific instruction integrated into sensorimotor rhythm NFT can optimise neural regulation and archery performance. By comparing function-specific instruction with traditional instruction and sham control, it demonstrates how language-based guidance shapes psychomotor efficiency and precision performance. The final presentation explores pupil-based neurofeedback in adolescent volleyball players, testing whether improved arousal self-regulation ability transfers to on-court serve and reception performance. Marked gains in self-regulation but limited transfer prompt a critical examination of the underlying mechanisms, ecological constraints, and realistic expectations. Together, these presentations foreground applied outcomes, implementation challenges, and emerging best practices, and conclude with a joint discussion on future directions for bio- and neurofeedback across sports, age groups, and neurofeedback modalities.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Oral Presentations 27: Clinical sport psychology and Counseling

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Pia Zajonz**

ID: 415 / Oral Presentations 27: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Clinical sport psychology, Health, Self
Keywords: Gender, Disordered Eating, Recreational Sports, Autonomy-Connectedness

Beyond Performance: Type of Sport, Gender and Autonomy-Connectedness in Recreational Athletes' Disordered Eating Behaviors

Nicky Bosman[1,2], Joyce Maas[2,3], Marcel van Assen[3], Marrie Bekker[1]
[1]VU Amsterdam, Netherlands, The; [2]GGZ Oost-Brabant; [3]Tilburg University

Athletes are considered a high-risk group for disordered eating, especially in sports where performance is perceived to depend on weight or shape ("lean sports"). Adaptive traits for sport - responsiveness to feedback, striving to meet external expectations - may reflect autonomy-connectedness vulnerabilities, a construct associated with mental health problems. Autonomy-connectedness refers to the capacity for self-governance while staying connected to others. This study examined how gender, type of sport (lean and non-lean; e.g., aesthetic, endurance, weight-class and anti-gravitation sports vs. ball game, technical and power sports), and autonomy-connectedness deficits relate to both stereotypically masculine and feminine disordered eating symptoms in recreational athletes. Dutch recreational athletes (401 women, 293 men), completed self-report measures on autonomy-connectedness and eating-related symptomatology. Results showed that lower self-awareness and higher sensitivity to others (both autonomy-connectedness-components) were associated with higher disordered eating symptomatology. Women scored higher on stereotypically feminine disordered eating symptoms, whereas men scored higher on drive for muscularity. A structural equation model (SEM; AMOS) tested direct and indirect paths from gender and type of sport to disordered eating outcomes, with the three AC components as mediators. Autonomy-connectedness partly mediated gender differences in stereotypically feminine disordered eating symptoms, but not in drive for muscularity, and no mediation effects were found for type of sport. Athletes in lean sports displayed more orthorexic behaviors, with no additional sport-type differences. These findings highlight autonomy-connectedness as a relevant concept for understanding gender differences in disordered eating in sport, and a potential target for prevention and intervention in recreational sport contexts.

ID: 601 / **Oral Presentations 27: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity
Keywords: Implementation, Chronic pain, Virtual Reality

Implementing Virtual Reality in the Treatment of Chronic Pain: A Qualitative Analysis of Barriers and Facilitators

Alexander Elser[1,2], Marie Ottilie Frenkel[2], Christian Kopkow[3], Axel Schäfer[1,2]
[1]University of Applied Sciences and Arts Hildesheim/Holzminden/Göttingen, Faculty of Social Work and Health; [2]Furtwangen University, Faculty Health, Medical, & Life Sciences; [3]Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus - Senftenberg, Faculty 4 for Human Sciences, Department of Physiotherapy, Cottbus, Germany

Multimodal therapy that integrates cognitive and behavioral approaches is recommended for treating chronic pain (Malfliet et al., 2019). However, it is challenging to implement it in outpatient care due to the long wait times for psychotherapy. Virtual reality (VR) offers an accessible, psychological intervention solution. Since many people with chronic pain visit physical therapy practices, these settings are ideal for integrating VR. There is evidence that VR-based therapy has positive effects on pain reduction and physical functioning (Goudman et al., 2022). Nevertheless, integrating VR into outpatient physiotherapy requires a targeted strategy informed by a thorough analysis of barriers and facilitators. To identify these, this study used nine semi-structured interviews with physiotherapists. The interview guide was based on the Theoretical Domains Framework (Cane et al., 2012). Analysis was conducted via structured qualitative content analysis according to Kuckartz (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2022). The results revealed that the most frequent barriers were therapists' uncertainty about patient suitability and time constraints. Additionally, some therapists did not consider VR to be part of physiotherapy. Facilitators included the expectation that VR would improve visualization of pain education and enable patients to gain new insights into chronic pain. VR was also seen as a potential unique selling point. This study highlights key barriers and facilitators from the perspective of therapists, providing a foundation for developing an implementation strategy. These findings underscore the need for training and resources to address therapist concerns and integrate VR as a tool in outpatient care.

ID: 382 / **Oral Presentations 27: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Consulting/ counseling, Elite sports and expertise, Emotion
Keywords: Shame, Psychodynamic, Elite sport, Psychotherapy

Recognizing Shame in Elite Sport: A Psychodynamic-Informed Framework

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Shame is a central yet under-theorized self-conscious emotion in sport psychology, particularly in elite contexts where evaluation, public exposure, and career precarity may intensify self-conscious affect. This presentation introduces a psychodynamic-informed conceptual framework to clarify how shame is generated, experienced, defended against, and linked to performance and well-being. Despite increasing conceptual interest, shame remains comparatively underexplored within elite sport (Partridge & Elison, 2009; Ryall, 2020). Derived through a theoretical synthesis of psychodynamic theory and contemporary shame research (Tangney & Dearing, 2003; DeYoung, 2015), the framework adopts a relational and interpretive stance. It conceptualizes shame as emerging within interpersonal and sociocultural contexts and integrates four components: (1) origins of shame, (2) the athlete's subjective experience, (3) shame-related defensive responses and their observable manifestations, and (4) impacts on

performance and well-being. The model's central contribution is conceptualizing shame as a hidden process identifiable through athletes' defensive manifestations. Shame is conceptualized as a multidimensional relational experience arising from interacting sport-related and non-sport-related origins. It is described phenomenologically as a painful global self-evaluation marked by collapse of self-esteem, rupture in identity and self-continuity, and fear of exposure and social devaluation (Akhtar, 2016; Lewis, 2003). Shame may be concealed by withdrawal, avoidance, aggression, compulsive escape behaviours, and inflated confidence (DeYoung, 2015), and may undermine performance and well-being through maladaptive coping, and self-reinforcing cycles of distress. The presentation also outlines consultation strategies, including identifying shame through its indirect manifestations, restoring self-worth, supporting identity integration, and addressing fears of exposure within a safe therapeutic relationship.

ID: 657 / Oral Presentations 27: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Clinical sport psychology, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Talent identification/development
Keywords: ace, high-achieving athletes, mental health, sports career

"Sport Saved Me": Elite Athletes' Experiences of Adverse Childhood Experiences and the Role of Sport Participation

Stella Hjaltadóttir, Richard Tahtinen, Sigrún Sigurðardóttir
University of Akureyri, Iceland

Research indicates that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) contribute to pathological stress and are associated with poor psychosocial outcomes in children and adolescents. This study examined the role of sport in the lives of high-achieving athletes who reported difficult childhood experiences before the age 18. The aim was to increase understanding of the long-term consequences of such experiences and to explore the perceived value of sport participation for this population. A qualitative phenomenological design was employed, guided by the 12-step framework of the Vancouver School of phenomenology. Purposeful sampling was used to recruit seven high-achieving athletes (two men and five women) who had achieved national-level success or represented Iceland internationally. Athletes (minimum 20 years old) completed two semi-structured, in-depth interviews each lasting approximately 45-60 minutes, resulting in 14 interviews. Difficult childhood experiences had a substantial impact on both the personal lives and sport careers of the participants. Four themes were identified: (a) negative childhood experiences, (b) sport career and the influence of role models, (c) mental health in childhood and adulthood, and (d) lessons for life. Sport was described as an escape from adversity and a stabilizing force during youth. Early adversity fostered resilience, ambition, and a strong drive for achievement in sport. However, these qualities were also linked to hyper competitiveness, overtraining, injury, and burnout. The sport environment may simultaneously offer protective benefits and pose risks for youth exposed to ACEs. It is important to recognize that high athletic performance is not necessarily an indicator of psychological well-being.

ID: 229 / Oral Presentations 27: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Consulting/ counseling, Group dynamics, Violence
Keywords: Safeguarding, welfare, maltreatment, practice

Delivering Safeguarding Education in Professional Football: Reflections for Research and Practice

James Newman
Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom

Within English professional football, ongoing issues linked to various forms of maltreatment have been reported (BBC, 2021, 2022), resulting in research which explored key individuals' views and experiences of these concepts (see Newman et al., 2021; Newman & Rumbold, 2024). Such research reinforces that education and training programmes are often seen as ineffective (e.g., Newman et al., 2022), demonstrating that better safeguarding education programmes are needed for adults in professional football. Therefore, this presentation will discuss the co-production of a safeguarding education programme in professional football. Specifically, it will focus on designing the programme and its implementation within a professional football club. Drawing on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the first phase of this work involved working with 19 personnel across to co-produce the safeguarding education programme. The second phase has involved implementing this programme at a professional football club, drawing on the micro- and mesosystem themes highlighted in the first phase. The findings, taken from interview and questionnaire data, offer important practical insights into delivering safeguarding education in professional football. This presentation will outline the findings from a reflexive thematic analysis, in the second phase of this programme. Here, the participants highlighted that safeguarding programmes need to include all personnel within the club and that data collection methods used to evidence the work must not impact its practical delivery. Furthermore, the presentation will outline how the participants discussed how video and scenario-based learning are important features of safeguarding education. Overall, this presentation will reflect delivering safeguarding interventions in elite/professional sport.

11:30am - 1:00pm **The Architecture of Toughness: Strength Under Stress—Practical Applications of the 4C Model**
Location: **A10**

ID: 706 / Workshop 23: 1
Workshop
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Mental skills training
Keywords: mental toughness, 4C Model, pressure, resilience

The Architecture of Toughness: Strength Under Stress—Practical Applications of the 4C Model

Michael Gerson[1], Julie Hayden-Blackburn[1], Vicki Tomlinson[1], Eric Ballelos[2], Biro Eszter[1]
[1]National University, United States of America; [2]Eric Ballelos LLC and Red Rock Volleyball Club

Mental toughness is widely recognized as a foundational psychological resource for sustained performance success in sport and other high-demand environments (Bull et al., 2005). Since Loehr's (1991) early conceptualization of mental toughness as the ability to consistently perform near the upper limits of one's talent regardless of circumstance, researchers have continued to refine and operationalize the construct. Contemporary scholarship now recognizes mental toughness as a multidimensional capacity associated with emotional regulation, sustained attention, resilience, reduced performance anxiety, and flow readiness (Gucciardi et al., 2015; Cowden, 2016). Although originating within sport psychology (Crust, 2008), increasing evidence supports its relevance across diverse performance domains including education, business leadership, healthcare, and tactical professions. Among the most theoretically grounded approaches is the 4C Model—Control, Challenge, Commitment, and Confidence (Clough et al., 2002; Clough et al., 2015). Evolving from hardiness theory, the model provides practitioners with a functional and evidence-based framework for guiding performance development and psychological growth under pressure. This interactive workshop introduces a four-station rotating circuit designed to operationalize each component of the 4C Model through applied intervention strategies. Each station includes a brief didactic overview, experiential exercises, and facilitated small-group discussion. Participants will explore: (1) Control—managing emotional and attentional responses under pressure; (2) Challenge—reframing adversity as opportunity; (3) Commitment—sustaining goal-directed persistence amid difficulty; and (4) Confidence—maintaining self-belief through setbacks and performance fluctuations. Practical techniques, case examples, and implementation strategies will be shared. Attendees will leave with a structured framework for designing mental toughness programming.

11:30am - 1:00pm

The Dynamics of Affective Processes in Sport Contexts

Location: **A11**

ID: 346 / Symposium 17: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Emotion
Keywords: emotion, affect, non-verbal, self-regulation

The Dynamics of Affective Processes in Sport Contexts

Julian Fritsch[1], Maik Bieleke[2]
[1]Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany; [2]University of Konstanz, Germany

The dynamics of affective processes are central to sport contexts, exerting a substantial influence on individuals' experiences, behaviors, and performance-related outcomes. The pursuit of personally meaningful goals under conditions of uncertainty is known to elicit a diverse range of affective responses (Jekauc et al., 2021). Similarly, affective processes are increasingly acknowledged as fundamental to explaining individual variability in physical activity participation (Brand & Ekkekakis, 2018). Research examines the antecedents and mechanisms underlying these processes, their impact on physical performance, or the strategies individuals employ to regulate affective states. The purpose of this symposium is to provide a comprehensive overview of contemporary research themes concerning affective processes in sport psychology. In the first presentation, based on the integrative self-regulation model, Latinjak will present a theory-driven analysis on how individuals may benefit from flexibility in aligning aims and strategies in self-regulation. The second presentation by Dhruv and Filho will provide a systematic review on empirical studies that have implemented the Individual Affect-Related Performance Zones (IAPZ) model. In the third presentation, Rindelhardt et al. will focus on the intraindividual trajectories in motivational regulation, subjective effort intensity, affective valence of effort, and well-being during a 70-km ultratrail race. In the fourth presentation, Fritsch et al. will present a study on the typical affective responses towards goal-conducive and goal-inconducive situations during tennis matches.

11:30am - 1:00pm

YRA - Oral

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Jolan Kegelaers**

ID: 312 / YRA - Oral: 1
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Transitions in and out of sport/dual career, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Athletic retirement, Gender, LICUR analysis

Psychosocial Resource Clusters and Well-Being Across the Transition Out of Elite Sport: A Person-Oriented Approach

Lauren S. Amor, Michael J. Schmid
Universität Bern, Switzerland

Grounded in the Athletic Career Transition Model (Stambulova, 2003, 2016), this study operationalized athletes' resources by identifying psychosocial resource clusters comprising internal (resilience, self-esteem), external (perceived social support), and domain-specific (athletic identity) resources, and examined their relationship with well-being and gender. Overall, 151 Swiss elite athletes (47.7% women, 52.3% men; Mage = 29.3 years, SD = 6.39) were assessed prospectively during their careers and three months post-retirement, with all eligible athletes invited

to participate. A LICUR analysis (Bergman et al., 2003) was conducted using hierarchical cluster analyses with k-means optimization. Structural and individual stability were examined, along with cluster differences in well-being and gender. Athletic identity decreased ($p < .001$) and self-esteem increased ($p = .026$) after retirement, while resilience ($p = .718$) and social support remained stable ($p = .119$). Four psychosocial resource clusters emerged, showing both structural and individual stability. Across time points, higher-resource clusters reported greater well-being than resource-poor clusters ($p < .001$; $\eta^2 = .10$), with a trend-level association of pre-retirement cluster membership with post-retirement well-being after controlling for baseline well-being ($p = .089$, partial $\eta^2 = .07$). Men were overrepresented in resource-rich clusters (61.2% pre-retirement; 63.9% post-retirement), whereas women were more prevalent in resource-poor clusters (64.6%; 63.6%). These results capture the acute transition phase, with ongoing data assessing long-term stabilization at one year. Pre-retirement psychosocial resource patterns largely persist across the transition and are linked to well-being. The higher prevalence of women in resource-poor clusters highlights the need for early, resource-based, and gender-sensitive interventions during athletes' retirement transition.

ID: 377 / YRA - Oral: 2
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Emotion, Physical activity, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Youth
Keywords: physical activity, adolescent affect, daily diary, dynamic structural equation modeling

A Daily Diary Examination of Physical Activity and Affect in Adolescence

Sara King, Kelly Chandler, G. John Geldhof
Oregon State University, United States of America

Cross-sectional, longitudinal, and intensive repeated measures studies have demonstrated benefits of physical activity on adolescent affect (eg. Bourke et al., 2021; Li et al., 2022). However, evidence of the duration of these benefits remains mixed. We examined concurrent and lagged associations of self-reported physical activity time (minutes) and positive and negative affect using an eight-day diary study with 309 adolescents (Mage=13). Additionally, less is known about for whom these associations are the strongest. Using baseline measures of physical activity and demographic covariates, we tested whether daily associations varied by individual characteristics. Dynamic structural equation modeling (DSEM) was used to examine both within- and between-person associations.

Within-person results indicated that on days when adolescents were more physically active, they reported higher positive affect both that day and the following day (Model convergence, PSR = 1.09; DIC = 11489.46). Physical activity was also associated with same-day negative affect, though no lagged effects emerged, suggesting sport participation may elicit emotionally intense experiences without prolonged negative carryover (Model convergence, PSR = 1.08; DIC = 28003.20). These associations were not moderated by individual characteristics, indicating that affective responses to physical activity were broadly consistent across youth in this sample. Positive affect predicted next-day physical activity, with moderation by gender and baseline sport participation, suggesting possible anticipatory effects among boys and youth who were more regularly active. By using a DSEM modeling approach, this work advances understanding of adolescents' emotional associations with physical activity and provides a foundation for more targeted future investigations.

ID: 404 / YRA - Oral: 3
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Health, Mental skills training, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: Reinjury anxiety, Rehabilitation adherence, Psychological readiness, Psychophysiological responses

CBT and VR Exposure After ACL Reconstruction: Efficacy and Component Effects in a Five-Arm Trial

Hande Turkeri-Bozkurt[1], Britton W. Brewer[2], Ziya Koruc[1]
[1]Hacettepe University, Türkiye; [2]Springfield College, USA

This study evaluated the efficacy and disentangled component effects of a cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) protocol combined with virtual reality (VR)–based exposure (CBT+VR) in supporting psychological recovery during rehabilitation and return to sport after ACL reconstruction. Fifty-seven athletes undergoing ACL rehabilitation participated in a randomized five-arm trial and were assessed at four time points (pre, post, follow-up, return to sport). The five-arm design was used to disentangle the individual and combined effects of CBT and VR exposure, and sample size was determined through a priori power analysis. Reinjury anxiety related to rehabilitation (RIAR) and rehabilitation adherence (SIRAS) were assessed at pre, post, and follow-up. Psychological readiness to return to sport (ACL-RSI) and reinjury anxiety related to sport exposure (RIA-RE) were assessed at return to sport. Heart rate (HR) and galvanic skin response (GSR) were recorded during exposure sessions to index psychophysiological responses. Linear mixed model analyses showed a significant main effect of time for RIAR ($p = .038$), indicating a reduction across rehabilitation. A significant group × time interaction was observed for SIRAS ($p < .001$), reflecting differential adherence trajectories. One-way ANOVA revealed significant group differences in ACL-RSI at follow-up ($p < .001$), with the most favorable scores in the CBT+VR condition. Group differences in RIA-RE were also significant at return to sport ($p = .003$). Psychophysiological data indicated systematic modulation of HR and GSR during VR exposure sessions. The combined CBT+VR intervention was effective and outperformed single-component and control conditions, particularly in rehabilitation adherence and readiness to return to sport.

ID: 523 / YRA - Oral: 4
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Esports, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Anxiety, Depression, Network Analysis, Sleep

The Mental Meta: Mapping Mental Health Complexity in Esports

Lucas Van Ruysevelt, Olivier Mairesse, Jolan Kegelaers
Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

The rapid rise in popularity of esports has brought increased attention to the mental health challenges faced by esports players, yet research in this area remains in its infancy. Early studies have suggested a substantial mental health burden and explored associations between esports-specific stressors, mental health and sleep disturbances. However, they remain constrained by small samples and limited traditional methodology, failing to capture the complex nature of mental health. To address this gap, we developed a comprehensive survey including validated well-being and mental ill-health questionnaires, as well as a novel 17-item scale designed specifically for advanced directed acyclic graph (DAG) network analysis. 1105 esports players from over 60 countries completed the survey. Overall, 36.7% of participants reported low well-being, 44.7% experienced symptoms of depression, 33.4% experienced anxiety, and 69.3% experienced sleep disturbance. The DAG revealed distinct but interconnected psychopathological, somnological, and esports-specific subnetworks. Depressed mood emerged as the sole source node of the network, indicating a central upstream position and a potential key intervention target to prevent the cascade across the system. Mental fatigue acted as a structural bottleneck linking upstream affective symptoms to downstream sleep-related variables. Moreover, its counterintuitive upstream positioning towards sleep variables, identifies it as a potential leverage point to improve players' sleep and highlights the importance of managing performance volumes around mental fatigue thresholds. Finally, emotion regulation and perceived autonomy constituted a critical bottleneck between upstream psychopathological symptoms and downstream esports-specific factors, emphasising the importance of emotion regulation skills and autonomy-supportive environments.

ID: 525 / YRA - Oral: 5
Application for the "FEPSAC Award for Young Researchers in Sport Psychology"
Topics: Built environment, Youth
Keywords: Qualitative analysis, adolescents, Holistic Ecological Approach, Personal Assets Framework

Making the Invisible Visible: Exploring Youth Sport Environments using Photovoice as a Participatory Method

Line Maj Sternberg, Kristoffer Henriksen, Louise Kamuk Storm
University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

While research has identified features of talent development environments, less is known about youth sport environments that come before them. It is difficult to interview young athletes unfamiliar with reflecting on their sport environment. This study aimed to identify features of positive youth sport environments, using photovoice as a participatory research method (Hovden & Tjønndal, 2021). Thirty-five athletes (aged 12-15 years; 62.9% girls) participated. We sampled three sport environments (handball, gymnastics, badminton), based on expert opinion and participation statistics (high membership and balanced gender representation). Athletes used their smartphones to submit five media items (photographs and/or short video clips) demonstrating features they perceived as influential in their environment. Each participant discussed their own media items during a single interview. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis informed by the Holistic Ecological Approach (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2023) and the Personal Assets Framework (Côté et al., 2020). We identified two central features adolescents associate with a positive youth sport environment: (1) Organizational structures fostering cross-team social communities and sustained relationships beyond sport, enacted through everyday activities and social events; (2) A culture of enjoyable and playful practice, enacted through training environments enabling progression without compromising fun. The study has three original contributions. First, it used photovoice as a method to engage athletes aged 12-15 by allowing them to express themselves in a well-known format. Second, it allowed athlete voice in understanding youth sport environments. Third, it integrated two separate but related theoretical frameworks.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Contemporary Directions in Qualitative Inquiry for Sport and Exercise Psychology Research and Practice

Location: **A13**

ID: 368 / Symposium 18: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Best practice, Ethics in applied settings, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: Qualitative inquiry, methodological innovation, creative and participatory approaches, storytelling

Contemporary Directions in Qualitative Inquiry for Sport and Exercise Psychology Research and Practice

Faye F. Didymus[1], Allie Welsh[1], Sofie Kent[1], Brendan Cropley[2,3], Megan Murray[4], Rebecca Zakrajsek[4]
[1]Leeds Beckett University, England; [2]University of South Wales, Wales; [3]Football Association of Wales Centre for Football Research, Wales; [4]University of Tennessee, United States of America

This symposium brings together leading qualitative researchers in sport and exercise psychology to explore contemporary methodological developments shaping the field. As interest continues to grow in approaches that capture the depth, complexity, and lived experience of participants, there is a need to discuss how researchers can meaningfully and creatively engage with qualitative inquiry. The symposium addresses this need by showcasing methodological innovations, enhancing understanding of key practices, and stimulating dialogue about future directions. The purpose of the symposium is to offer an integrated exploration of four interconnected areas that are central to high quality qualitative research. The first presentation focuses on the role of Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) to highlight how collaborative partnerships can enhance research relevance, inclusivity, and impact. The second presentation explores methodological approaches for conducting ethically robust qualitative research in high-visibility and/or vulnerable sport and exercise contexts. In the third presentation, we advocate for a move beyond codebook analytical approaches toward qualitative inquiry that embraces creative, reflexive methods to capture richer lived experiences and produce more meaningful insights. The final presentation explores storytelling as both a methodological tool and a mode of disseminating research to illustrate how narrative forms can deepen understanding, foster connection, and communicate findings in accessible and compelling ways. Collectively, these presentations provide a cohesive and forward-looking exploration of qualitative inquiry. We aim to offer researchers and practitioners practical tools, critical perspectives, and creative inspiration to advance their work.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Oral Presentations 29: Motor control and learning

Location: **048**
Session Chair: **Lin Yu**

ID: 684 / Oral Presentations 29: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Decision making and judgement, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Perception & attention
Keywords: anticipation, eye movement, in-situ, visual search strategy

Gaze Behavior During the Preparatory Phase of Smash Defense in Badminton Doubles: An On-Court Comparison Across Skill Levels

Masahiro Kokubu, Masashi Suita
University of Tsukuba, Japan

In badminton, quick responses to an opponent's shots are essential, and visual information is considered to play a critical role (Alder et al., 2014; Loiseau-Taupin et al., 2021). The aim of this study was to compare gaze behavior across skill levels during the preparatory phase of smash defense in on-court badminton doubles. Twelve male university badminton players were classified into higher- and lower-level groups. Players from the same group wore eye-tracking devices and played 10 minutes of doubles rallies against an opponent pair on a standard badminton court. The analysis focused on responses to smash attacks delivered by the opponents during the rally. Gaze location and fixation duration were analyzed relative to the moment of racket–shuttle contact. The results showed that during the preparatory phase, participants shifted their gaze from the opponent's body to the impact point and fixated there just before the racket-shuttle contact. There were no between-group differences in gaze location immediately before impact, but the higher-level group demonstrated shorter fixation durations just before impact compared to the lower-level group. These findings suggest that skilled players maintain visual attention on their opponent's body until immediately before impact in order to gather anticipatory cues regarding the shot type and trajectory. This gaze behavior may reflect a "cue-based" visual pivot strategy, in which players delay fixation on the shuttle to extract kinematic information from the opponent's body in time-constrained defensive situations.

ID: 604 / Oral Presentations 29: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Elite sports and expertise, Emotion, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches)
Keywords: conscious motor processing, performance pressure

Effects of Movement-Specific Reinvestment on Action-Change Performance in Dynamic Performance Environments

Arne Nieuwenhuys[1], Robyn Sullivan[1], Juliette De Haan[2], Pablo Ortega Auriol[1], Liis Uiga[3], Greg Anson[1], Rich Masters[4]
[1]The University of Auckland, New Zealand; [2]Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands; [3]Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom; [4]The University of Waikato, New Zealand

The Theory of Reinvestment (Masters & Maxwell, 2008) proposes that reinvestment of rule-based information in the online control of action can negatively impact skill execution in experts. Building on recent empirical findings, which suggest that movement-specific reinvestment may facilitate action stopping, the present study examined effects of reinvestment on action-change performance in a dynamic soccer shooting task under pressure. 27 experienced soccer players were examined on their propensity for reinvestment using the Movement-Specific Reinvestment Scale (MSRS) and performed shots on goal against a video-projected goalkeeper and defending players. Depending on the experimental condition, goalkeeper and defenders either stood still (go-trial; 50% of trials), moved in the opposite direction of players' shot (ignore-trial; 10% of trials), or moved to intercept players' shot (change-trial; 40% of trials), in which case players were instructed to shoot to the opposite side of the goal or pass the ball to a teammate. Performance pressure was manipulated using prize money, video recording and error feedback. Measures of performance included trial accuracy, reaction- and shot completion times. Movement-specific reinvestment (MSRS score) was associated with significantly poorer performance on go-trials ($r = -.433$; $p = .022$) and ignore-trials ($r = -$

.377; p = .048), but not change-trials (r = .109; p = 0.580). Statistical comparison of correlation coefficients generally confirmed these differences (p = .009 and p = .055). No significant effects were observed for reaction- and shot completion times. Findings suggest that advantages of low movement-specific reinvestment may disappear in context of action-change performance and reinforce the importance of investigating reinvestment in 'dynamic' performance environments.

ID: 342 / **Oral Presentations 29: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Elite sports and expertise, Perception & attention
Keywords: Anticipation, Decision-Making, Sense-Making, Contextual Knowledge

Using a Think Aloud Protocol to Explore Cognitive Processes Underpinning Sense-Making of Skilled Cricket Players in Competition

Shahbaz Hasan[1], David P. Broadbent[2], Paul Dancy[1], Jamie S. North[1], Andre Roca[1], Colm P. Murphy[3]
[1]St Mary's University, Twickenham, United Kingdom; [2]Centre for Sport Research, Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition, Deakin University, Burwood, Australia; [3]Cardiff School of Sport and Health Sciences, Cardiff Metroplitan University, Cardiff, Wales, CF23 6XD

Contextual knowledge is important for anticipation and decision-making in interactive sports tasks like cricket batting and bowling (Williams & Jackson, 2018). Skilled performers adjust their sense of context by considering anomalies and plausibility (Klein et al., 2023), which further guides anticipation and decision-making. Although researchers have examined the role of performers' experiences in sense-making through interviews (Hasan et al., 2025), think-aloud protocols employed in natural competitive settings may more accurately capture real-time cognitive processes underpinning performance (Ericsson & Simon, 1993). However, these processes have yet to be addressed in interactive task contexts (Roca et al., 2016; Welsh et al., 2018). By recording think-aloud verbalisations of cricket players during competitive encounters, this study aimed to explore cognitive processes underpinning performance in a dynamic interactive task. Ten sub-elite female cricket players (five batters and five bowlers) were trained in the think-aloud process (Eccles & Arsal, 2017), fitted with an audio recording device, and instructed to verbalise their thoughts while competing in six matches. Player actions, ball outcomes, and score were recorded to examine how context may influence cognitions. Data were coded and thematically analysed using deductive and inductive approaches, with each verbalisation interpreted in relation to its situational context. Analysis was informed by a pragmatic qualitative paradigm. Preliminary findings suggest skilled cricket batters and bowlers engage in sense-making processes (cognitions, feelings and behaviours) shaped by context. Sense-making should therefore be examined and developed as a contextually grounded, applied process. Findings have implications for the feasibility of think-aloud protocols in dynamic, real-world tasks.

ID: 426 / **Oral Presentations 29: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement
Keywords: hand selection, motor planning, bimanual coordination, naturalistic behavior

Hierarchical Motor Planning and Dynamic Arbitration of Constraints in Naturalistic Hand Selection

Shiau-Chuen Chiou[1,2], Thomas Schack[1,2]
[1]Neurocognition and Action Research Group, Center for Cognitive Interaction Technology (CITEC), Bielefeld University, Germany; [2]Faculty of Psychology and Sports Science, Bielefeld University, Germany

Hand selection in everyday action reflects the interaction of multiple constraints, ranging from low-level biomechanical costs to higher-level functional and cognitive demands (e.g., Rosenbaum et al., 2001). As these influences are typically studied in isolation, their joint arbitration during naturalistic, sequential behavior remains unclear. This study examined how object properties (e.g., weight), task requirements (e.g., precision and bimanual coordination), and sequential dependencies interact with baseline biomechanical biases. Participants (N = 18) performed two naturalistic drink-preparation tasks involving ten real-world objects (e.g., coffee jar, spoon) distributed across the workspace. Primary analyses evaluated the effects of object location and functional category on hand selection, followed by targeted assessments of bimanual planning and sequence-dependent motor history. Results revealed that, for simple unimanual objects, hand selection followed a biomechanically efficient S-shaped curve centered near the midline. However, the stability and precision constraints of heavy objects and tools dynamically modulated the decision threshold, attenuating spatial efficiency and biasing dominant-hand use. During bimanual actions, participants demonstrated prospective planning by exploiting object affordances to satisfy upcoming coordination goals without sacrificing spatial efficiency. Finally, aligning with the cost-optimization hypothesis (Schütz & Schack, 2013), motor history biased hand selection (hysteresis) only when transport costs were low. Overall, these findings suggest that the motor system employs hierarchical goal representations, while resolving final execution through the dynamic arbitration of constraints that balances functional priorities, spatial costs, and cognitive economy. This framework has implications for modeling natural human action, developing cognitive architectures in robotics, and characterizing adaptive motor strategies in neurorehabilitation.

ID: 349 / Oral Presentations 29: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement, Perception & attention
Keywords: Verbalisation, Stairs, Conscious, Movement

The Effects of Movement-Related Verbalisation on Stair Walking Behaviour in Young Adults: Preliminary Results

Luke Hill[1], Rick Mills[1], Rich Masters[2], Nicola Middlebrook[3], Neil Reeves[4], Liis Uiga[1]
[1]Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK; [2]School of Sport and Human Movement, The University of Waikato, NZ; [3]Department of Health Professions, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK; [4]Medical School, Lancaster University, UK

Situations like slips or falls can increase conscious movement awareness, often disrupting otherwise automated motor performance. One way to experimentally induce this shift is verbal overshadowing, which involves explicitly verbalising movement processes and can interfere with proceduralised skills. However, its effects on complex locomotor tasks such as stair walking, where movement must be continuously regulated to environmental demands, remain unclear. This study examined the effect of movement-related verbalisation on stair walking behaviour in young adults. Participants (n=10, 5 males, mean age=24 years; target n=40) completed a single-session pre-post protocol and were assigned to a verbal overshadowing or control group. Participants completed five stair-ascent and descent trials on an instrumented staircase (force plates and 3D motion capture), followed by a four-minute writing task. The verbal overshadowing group described the movement processes they use to ensure safe stair walking, whereas the control group listed countries. Immediately after, participants repeated the stair trials. Spatiotemporal gait parameters (e.g., gait velocity, stance time), gait kinematics (e.g., centre-of-mass dynamics, foot placement) and ground reaction forces were compared between groups and timepoints. Preliminary analyses indicated that, following verbal overshadowing, participants demonstrated altered centre-of-mass dynamics during stair descent, characterised by increased posterior centre-of-mass velocity (44%) and reduced vertical velocity (12%) per step. No pre-post changes were observed in the control group. These findings suggest that movement-related verbalisation may induce more cautious stair ambulation, providing preliminary evidence that increasing conscious control influences the regulation of complex locomotor behaviour.

11:30am - 1:00pm **Recognizing the Signs: Early Detection of Eating Disorders in Athletes**
Location: **130**

ID: 544 / Workshop 22: 1
Workshop
Topics: Best practice, Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Decision making and judgement
Keywords: eating disorders, early detection

Recognizing the Signs: Early Detection of Eating Disorders in Athletes

Christine Selby
University of Massachusetts Amherst, United States of America

Eating disorders often co-occur with other psychiatric and medical concerns and have one of the highest mortality rates of any psychiatric illness (van Eeden et al., 2021) but can go undetected and untreated (Thornton et al., 2017). Among athletes, prevalence rates range from 0-19% among male identifying athletes and 6-45% among female identifying athletes (Bratland-Sanda & Sundgot-Borgen, 2013). Given the seriousness of eating disorders, and that they can appear with a high degree of frequency in sport, it is important for sport psychology professionals to identify signs and symptoms of eating disorders as soon as possible. Eating disorders in athletes can be difficult to accurately assess. What is expected in a committed athlete often reflects specific characteristics of eating disorders (Currie, 2010; Thompson & Sherman, 1999). Moreover, athletes in all sports can be malnourished and engage in weight control behaviors that are harmful to their physical and psychological well-being (Conviser et al., 2018). In this workshop, facilitated by a sport psychologist and certified eating disorder specialist, attendees will discuss the importance of early detection of eating disorders in athletes, will identify signs and symptoms of eating disorders in athletes, and will use brief screening tools and questions designed to detect an athlete at risk for an eating disorder. Case studies, screening tools, and small and whole group discussions will be used to deepen learning. Resources for further reading, information about screening tools, and a list of “detection questions” (Conviser et al., in revision) will be provided.

1:00pm - 2:30pm **Lunch break**

Midday Mindfulness
Location: **A10**

2:15pm - 2:35pm Back-to-back sessions, new people, new ideas, a brain that won’t slow down. This is a small pause in the middle of it all to replenish for the second half of the day. Every day after lunch, Gábor Barta and Gergő Gacs will guide you through 20 minutes of mindfulness: a gentle mix of breathing-based meditation, body scan, visualization, and a mindful walk. Nothing intense, nothing complicated. Just a chance to actually land in your body for a bit before the afternoon kicks off. We’ll help you connect with yourself and be fully present so you can experience the conference to the fullest! No previous experience with meditation needed, you just have to show up and be present!

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Psychology, Sport and Exercise (PSE): Ask the Editors**
Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 687 / Panel 5: 1
Panel discussion

Psychology, Sport and Exercise (PSE): Ask the Editors

Markus Raab[1], Amanda Rebar[2]
[1]German Sport University Cologne, Germany; [2]University of South Carolina

Since its beginnings, PSE became an official journal and an important flagship of FEPSAC. The first Issue of PSE appeared in 2000 (by the founding editor Stuart Biddle), and now after issuing the 25th Volume, about 200 papers per year have been published from about 1800 (in 2025) submitted. We set up this session to discuss with the Editors-in-Chief (n=2), the Associate Editors (n=15) and members of Editorial Board (about 100) how to improve publishing in our field, cope and act on emerging challenges and set the future. We find this timing well-chosen having launched special issues to the 50th FEPSAC anniversary (2019) and the current special issue for the 25th anniversary (2025). As we have outlined in our editorials and inspired by insights from the psychology of best performance in sport and exercise, we propose three foundational principles to guide the field forward. Principle I – Excellence is achieved through the efforts of an inclusive and diverse team. Principle II – Equity empowers every member to contribute their best. Principle III – Strength is forged through unwavering unity and steadfast integrity (PSE 2025, Rebar & Raab). "So what are we up to for the next 25 years? We hope that a discussion will offer a foundation for future research and theoretical advancement in sport and exercise psychology. We believe that the field will prosper and develop and thus the need for high-quality outputs of such research will continue to require a publication format such as PSE." (PSE 2025, Raab & Tamminen).

2:45pm - 4:15pm Broken and Reassembled: What Can We Learn From Each Other's Crises?

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 520 / Workshop 25: 1
Workshop
Topics: Decision making and judgement, Emotion, Organizational development and quality management, Personality
Keywords: emotional regulation, crisis, communication, resilience

Broken and Reassembled: What Can We Learn From Each Other's Crises?

Gábor Barta[1], Gergő Gacs[2]
[1]Károli Gáspár University, Hungary; [2]Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary

Crises are an inevitable part of sport. They tend to emerge when familiar coping strategies lose their effectiveness, emotions intensify, and uncertainty takes over (Caplan, 1964). Although often experienced as disruptive or threatening, crises are not inherently destructive. This workshop invites participants to explore crisis as a natural transitional state that emerges during periods of change. In line with the Satir Change Model, crisis is understood as a phase marked by instability and emotional fluctuation (Satir et al., 1991). From a sensemaking perspective, crises are moments in which meaning is questioned or temporarily lost (Weick, 1995). While sensemaking can occur individually, it often becomes easier and more effective through social interaction, making communication a key resource for navigating crisis. In sport contexts, crises may arise even during seemingly seamless transitions, such as progressing to a higher age group, when increasing demands outpace communication and support (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). Rather than teaching specific techniques or explaining crisis conceptually, our session invites participants into an experiential learning process. As the experience unfolds, recognizable patterns tend to emerge, including parallel problem solving, attempts at control, missed signals, and frustration. These dynamics illustrate how crises can be maintained when communication falters, while shifts toward listening, shared understanding, and flexibility highlight mechanisms associated with effective coping under pressure (Salas et al., 2005). A guided reflection supports participants in connecting their experience to sport-related crises, emphasizing communication and shared meaning-making as central resources for navigating challenging moments.

2:45pm - 4:15pm Oral Presentations 30: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives

Location: **A01**
Session Chair: **Carla Meijen**

ID: 653 / Oral Presentations 30: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Youth
Keywords: youth sport, holistic development, multi-sport, sports environments

Understanding the Youth Sport Specialization Paradox Using the Holistic Ecological Approach

Louise Kamuk Storm, Nicklas Balle Venzel, Kristoffer Henriksen
University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

Scientific evidence shows that early sport specialization is neither necessary nor beneficial for achieving elite performance (Güllich et al., 2022) and may harm athletes' long-term success, health, and well-being. Yet, accelerated youth sport practices remain widespread, creating what we term the Youth Sport Specialization Paradox. This presentation identify environmental factors shaping specialization to understand the paradox, which is key for sports organizations to promote healthy sports environments. Grounded in the Holistic Ecological Approach (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2023), the presentation draws on qualitative studies, including thematic analyses of interviews with athletes' (N=18) and coaches' (N=12), as well as insights from a Think Tank with researchers and leaders from Danish sports federations. The combined insights identified factors at micro and macro levels of athletic and non-athletic settings. Macro level structures - such as tournament calendars, poor cross-sport coordination, inter sport rivalry, and the absence of late entry pathways - create systemic pressures for early commitment to one sport. International competition, market forces, and prestige-driven success narratives further normalize the idea that

specializing early is necessary for future achievement. At the micro level, the beliefs and experiences of coaches play a decisive role in defining available pathways. Some encourage broad development, while others hold firmly to the logic that “to be great, you must start early.” Coaches note that parents often reinforce performance focused cultures, sometimes unintentionally. Increasing training demands make multisport participation difficult, even when young people wish to. These multilayered dynamics will be discussed, and applied perspectives will be provided.

ID: 400 / **Oral Presentations 30: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Talent identification/development, Youth
Keywords: Adolescent athletes, Psychological characteristics, Psychometric validation, Talent development.

An Adaptation Study of the Psychological Characteristics of Developing Excellence Questionnaire – Version 2 (PCDEQ-2) Into Turkish

Ece Tekay[1], Osman Urfa[2], Fatma Adalet Şahin-Kırık[3], Recep Görgülü[4]
[1]Bursa Uludağ University, Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Psychology of Elite Performance Laboratory (PePLaB), Türkiye; [2]Ministry of National Education, Türkiye; [3]Bursa Uludağ University, Department of Psychology, Psychology of Elite Performance Laboratory (PePLaB), Türkiye; [4]Bursa Uludağ University, Faculty of Sports Sciences, Psychology of Elite Performance Laboratory (PePLaB), Türkiye

Effective talent development systems require culturally valid tools to assess psychological characteristics supporting long-term athlete development. However, the availability of such instruments remains limited in many national sport systems. Therefore, this study aimed to adapt the Psychological Characteristics of Developing Excellence Questionnaire-2 (PCDEQ-2) into Turkish and to examine its psychometric properties among adolescent athletes. The PCDEQ-2 assesses adaptive, maladaptive, and dual-effect psychological characteristics considered central to successful talent development pathways in sport. The original 88-item PCDEQ-2 was translated and culturally adapted into Turkish following Beaton et al.’s five-stage cross-cultural adaptation protocol. The Turkish version was administered to 598 adolescent athletes aged 14–18 years from various sports. Construct validity was evaluated using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) with the Diagonally Weighted Least Squares (DWLS) method and robust fit indices. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha and McDonald’s omega coefficients. Initial CFA of the seven-factor structure revealed items with low/negative factor loadings and suboptimal model fit (CFI = .837, TLI = .832, RMSEA = .065). Items with negative loadings and loadings below .40 were removed. The revised 66-item model retained the original seven-factor structure and demonstrated acceptable fit (CFI = .937, TLI = .935, RMSEA = .047, SRMR = .065). Factor loadings ranged from .42 to .76, with satisfactory internal consistency (α = .69–.91; ω = .70–.91). The Turkish PCDEQ-2 is a valid and reliable instrument for assessing psychological characteristics relevant to youth talent development. At system and policy levels, it can inform evidence-based talent identification, monitoring, and development practices within federations and national sport programmes in Türkiye.

ID: 173 / **Oral Presentations 30: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Consulting/ counseling, Talent identification/development, Youth
Keywords: Parents, Coaches, Tennis, Psychosocial Development

Applying the 5Cs Framework to Elite Youth Tennis: Impact Factors in a Talent Development Environment

Chris Harwood[1], Kieran Porter[2]
[1]Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom; [2]Rounded Performance Ltd

With the growing demands and expectations associated with professionalized youth sport environments, there is an increasing need for psychosocial development initiatives to support young athletes and their healthy progression. The aim of this study was to extend and investigate the application of the 5Cs framework, a prominent psychoeducation-al approach in sport psychology, to a youth tennis Talent Development Environment (TDE). Using a collective case study design, five national standard athletes (11-13 years old), their parents and two coaches (n = 12) participated in a season-long multimodal 5Cs intervention program at a British Regional Player Development Centre (RPDC). The 30 week program was delivered by an embedded sport psychology practitioner (SPP) and incorporated a blocked educational curriculum supported by a range of athletes, coach and parent development strategies. Post-intervention semi-structured interviews were conducted with all participants with reflexive thematic analysis leading to three overarching themes. Findings highlighted the positive influence of the program with perceptions of the framework’s effectiveness associated with its specificity to tennis and individual athlete needs, the collaboration of all stakeholders across the TDE, and the use of developmentally accessible and innovative strategies enabling evidence of athlete improvements. The program was limited to targeting psychosocial improvements within tennis, whereas future research could investigate impacts on psychosocial behaviour in other life contexts (e.g., school). Researchers, practitioners and sport organizations are encouraged to consider these impact factors in terms of supporting the holistic development, performance and well-being of athletes and their families in competitive youth sport contexts

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ID: 218 / **Oral Presentations 30: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives
Keywords: self-regulation skills, self-assessment, athlete development, self-regulated learning

Developmental Experiences Promoting Self-regulation in Sport among Adolescent and Adult Basketball Players

Malgorzata Siekanska, Agnieszka Wojtowicz, Adam Popek
University Of Physical Culture In Krakow, Poland, Poland

The purpose of the study is twofold: (1) to describe basketball players' perception of experiences promoting self-regulation in the sport context across childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood; (2) to examine the developmental relationship between self-regulatory factors and self-regulated learning in sport practice (SRL-SP). Competitive basketball players (n = 212; Mage=20.67, SD = 8.46; nfemales = 114, nmales = 98; Msports experience = 11.55 years, SD = 6.67) representing two age groups, youth (n = 109; Mage = 13.65, SD = 1.12) and adults (n = 103; Mage = 28.18, SD = 6.11), completed a demographic survey, the self-regulated learning in sport practice (SRL-SP) survey, and the development of self-regulation in sport practice (DSR-SP) survey (Siekanska et al., 2023, 2025ab). SRL-SP consists of two subscales: metacognition and motivation. In the DSR-SP participants retrospectively judge their experiences on two (youth) or three (adults) subscales (childhood, adolescence, adulthood). For the SRL-SP survey, results revealed significant differences between age groups for either metacognition (Myouth = 57.00, Madults = 61.00, U = 3624.00, Z = -4.46, p < .001) or motivation (Myouth = 24.00, Madults = 26.00, U = 2984.50, Z = -5.89, p < .001. As DSR-SP score increased, SRL-SP subcales scores increased for metacognition rchild. = .29, p = .004; radolesc. = .30, p = .002; radult. = .41, p < .001) in adults group and for motivation (rchild. = .19, p = .049; radolesc. = .32, p = .001) in youth group. Our findings suggest that greater engagement in metacognitive and motivational SRL processes distinguishes adult from young basketball players and that the relationships between self-regulatory factors and self-regulated learning in sport practice are specific to particular developmental groups.

ID: 486 / **Oral Presentations 30: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Health, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Mental Health, youth, Sport participation, well-being

Psycho-Social Health and Sports Club Activity of Young People: Longitudinal Results of the Representative Move for Health Study

Dennis Dreiskaemper[1], Ulrike Burrmann[2], Annalena Veltmaat[1], Pina Li Suess[2], Lena Henning[3]
[1]TU Dortmund University, Germany; [2]HU Berlin University; [3]Münster University

Both sporting activity and sports club membership gradually decline over the span of adolescence, especially among girls (Burrmann et al., 2024). At the same time, the prevalence of mental and social health problems also increases over this age range (Dreiskämper et al., 2024). The aim of this study was to show how sports club biographies are related to factors of psychosocial health in adolescence. In the representative study for Germany Move For Health, conducted in 2023 and 2024 sports behavior of adolescents and factors of psycho-social health (KidScreen-10, general life satisfaction, psychological stress, general health) were measured twice in a 12-month longitudinal design of N =1,412 adolescents (age 13-17 years, Mean: 15.10, SD = 2.12). The descriptive results show a decline in club participation (41% to 35% of participants) and regular sporting activity (60.1% to 46.1%). At the same time, the values for mental health and life satisfaction decreased, while the prevalence of worry, fatigue and stress increased. Gender, the diagnosed need for support and the socio-demographic factors of poverty and employment status were identified as influencing factors on both, sport activity and health. rANOVAs show significant differences in the changes in the Kid-Screen, stress, loneliness and life satisfaction scales depending on club membership, joining, leaving and non-membership. The results show that young people, who have joined a club, improve their mental health over the course of the longitudinal study compared to inactive people. This points to a potential of sports activities in adolescence for mental health development.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **From Recovery to Excellence: Psychological Foundations of Sustainable Performance**
Location: **A02**

ID: 509 / **Symposium 20: 1**
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Elite sports and expertise, Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Athlete Development, Thriving

From Recovery to Excellence: Psychological Foundations of Sustainable Performance

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The relationship between mental health, well-being, and performance represents a central challenge in contemporary sport psychology. While health promotion and performance enhancement have often been treated as separate domains, evidence highlights their interdependence across developmental stages and performance contexts. Addressing this continuum "from supporting health to optimizing performance" is essential for sustainable human functioning in sport. The purpose of this symposium is to examine psychological mechanisms and interventions linking health and performance across diverse populations and performance levels. By integrating clinical, educational, developmental, and elite sport perspectives, the symposium illustrates how psychological science can

enhance both well-being and high-level performance within a coherent framework. The first presentation explores apnoe-based intervention supporting recovery and functional performance in individuals with long/post-COVID, highlighting individualized strategies to maintain resilience. The second contribution investigates a brief compliment-based intervention in elementary school physical education, showing that structured social interaction stabilizes positive affect and fosters a sense of belonging. The third presentation introduces a thriving-based framework integrating mental health, well-being, and performance within youth elite sport curricula, mapping key competencies and clarifying shared responsibilities among athletes, coaches, and federations. The last contribution reports on a two-year psychological assessment of youth national football players, identifying cognitive and mental health profiles to inform targeted interventions that optimize performance while supporting well-being. Together, these contributions conceptualize health and performance as interdependent dimensions of sustainable athlete development. The symposium aligns closely with the congress theme by showing how psychological science can bridge recovery, well-being, and elite performance in an integrated continuum.

2:45pm - 4:15pm

Oral Presentations 33: Mental skills training

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Christine Habeeb**

ID: 460 / Oral Presentations 33: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Esports, Mental skills training
Keywords: esports, skill development, cognitive training

Skill Development in Esports: Effects of Cognitive Training and Structured Gameplay Training in Novice Players

Fatma Adalet Sahin Kirik[1], Hayriye Gulec[1], Recep Gorgulu[2]
[1]Bursa Uludağ University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Psychology of Elite Performance Laboratory (PePLaB), Türkiye; [2]Bursa Uludağ University, Faculty of Sports Sciences, Psychology of Elite Performance Laboratory (PePLaB), Türkiye

Skill development in esports involves the progressive refinement of perceptual, cognitive, and motor abilities through structured practice and gameplay exposure. Contemporary skill acquisition models propose that performance improvements emerge from interactions between domain-general cognitive processes and domain-specific performance skills. Despite the cognitively demanding nature of esports, experimental research examining early skill development in individuals with no prior gaming experience remains limited. This study investigated the effects of cognitive training and structured gameplay training, incorporating elements of deliberate practice (e.g., performance feedback and targeted skill refinement), on cognitive and performance outcomes in novice League of Legends (LoL) players. Twenty-two male university students (Mage = 22.05, SD = 1.81) with no prior LoL or comparable esports experience participated in a pre-test–post-test–follow-up design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three four-week conditions: (a) cognitive training combined with structured LoL gameplay training, (b) cognitive training only, or (c) passive control. Cognitive performance was assessed using a standardized neurocognitive test battery, and in-game performance was evaluated under controlled AI-based gameplay conditions. Data were analysed using mixed-design ANOVA. Results showed a significant main effect of time for cognitive performance, indicating linear improvement across measurement points, and a significant time × intervention interaction, with improvements primarily driven by the cognitive training–only group. In-game performance demonstrated a general linear improvement over time, but no significant differences between intervention groups. These findings suggest that early esports skill development may involve a temporal separation between domain-general cognitive gains and domain-specific performance improvements, highlighting the staged and progressive nature of skill acquisition in esports learning environments.

This study was supported by the Scientific Research Projects Coordination Unit of Bursa Uludağ University

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ID: 324 / Oral Presentations 33: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Mental skills training, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches)
Keywords: Mental imagery, Music interventions, Mental skills training, Cognitive strategies in sport

How Does Mental Practice Training Influence Motor Accuracy Variability and Task Execution in a Precision Throwing Task?

Fernando Castellar[1,2], Rocco Cavaleri[3], Steffen A. Herff[1,2]
[1]Sydney Conservatorium of Music, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia; [2]The MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development, Western Sydney University, Sydney, Australia; [3]Brain Stimulation and Rehabilitation lab, School of Health Sciences, Western Sydney University, Sydney, Australia

Mental training strategies such as music listening and mental imagery are efficient for athletic performance enhancement. Combining both strategies (MIMUS) may enhance these effects, as music can support imagery processes. This study investigated the effects of music, mental imagery, and MIMUS on motor execution accuracy and psychological states during a ball-throwing task, and explored whether individual characteristics moderated these effects. Eighty novices were randomly assigned to either a music-only, imagery-only, MIMUS, or a control condition. Participants learned and performed a precision ball-throwing movement across four blocks, with 5-minute between-block interventions. Physical activity levels and imagery ability were assessed beforehand. Bayesian mixed-effects models analysed performance changes and psychological states (arousal, mood, anxiety, and self-confidence), including individual characteristics as moderators. All experimental conditions showed significantly

greater motor skill performance improvement than control (Evidence Ratio; ER > 29.00*). Mental imagery showed significant effects already after the first 5-minute intervention, and performance improved six times more than in the control group. Imagery and MIMUS induced greater positive changes in psychological states compared to music-only or control (ER > 19.00*). Participants with varying fitness and imagery abilities showed performance improvements, though higher kinaesthetic imagery ability was linked to greater responsiveness to imagery-based interventions than control (ER > 19.00*). Mental imagery, music, and their combination improve motor skill precision and psychological states during early skill acquisition, supporting their broad applicability in sport.

ID: 535 / Oral Presentations 33: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Mental skills training, Youth, Any other topic
Keywords: imagery, self-talk, intervention, youth tennis

Design and Implementation of Imagery and Self-Talk Intervention in Youth Tennis

Vendula Redlichova, Tomas Kocib, Kristyna Rusnakova, Jana Novotna, Jana Slamova, Ivana Harbichova, Martin Komarc

Charles University, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Czech Republic

Mental imagery and self-talk are commonly employed in racket sports, and there is increasing support for their combined use in enhancing performance (Robin et al., 2022). Based on the PETTLEP framework (Holmes & Collins, 2001) and goal-directed self-talk theory (Latinjak et al., 2014), this study aims to examine changes in performance at the start of rallies (serve and return) following an 8-week psychological intervention in youth tennis players. An ongoing mixed-methods, multi-wave, quasi-experimental study is being conducted across youth tennis clubs. Players aged 13–16 years are allocated to one of three conditions at club level: (a) imagery plus goal-directed self-talk, (b) imagery only, or (c) a control (psychological education without imagery and self-talk). The eight-week interventions are integrated into standard training. Serve and return performance, motivation and imagery ability is assessed before and after the intervention. Data are analysed using descriptive statistics and mixed-design ANOVA (time × group). Semi-structured interviews are conducted after the intervention to explore players' experiences and perceived feasibility. Data collection is ongoing across clubs. Preliminary analyses indicate variability across conditions, with descriptive trends suggesting potential improvements in serve and return performance in the experimental groups. Full quantitative and qualitative analyses are currently in progress. The study emphasises the ecological implementation of imagery and self-talk in youth tennis and explores their potential role in improving performance at the start of rallies.

Supported by GAUK n. 80424 and COOP at FTVS.

ID: 450 / Oral Presentations 33: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Mental skills training, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Psychophysiology
Keywords: PETTLEP imagery, equestrian performance, horse-riding, heart rate variability

Training the Mind and the Saddle: Effects of PETTLEP Imagery on Equestrian Performance and Psychophysiological Responses

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[1]Bursa Uludağ University, Faculty of Sports Sciences, Psychology of Elite Performance Laboratory (PePLaB), Türkiye; [2]Bursa Uludağ University, Mennan Pasinli Vocational School of Horse Breeding, Türkiye

Given the inherent constraints of traditional mounted training in simultaneously targeting the physical, cognitive, and psychophysiological demands of equestrian performance, this study aims to investigate the effects of PETTLEP imagery on equestrian performance and riders' heart rate variability (HRV) responses, as imagery theoretically facilitates emotion regulation that modulates the autonomic nervous system associated with HRV. A randomized controlled trial was conducted with 20 riders (Mage=22.9, SD=2.15) allocated to Control and PETTLEP groups. Over six weeks, the intervention group completed twice-per-week PETTLEP sessions, whereas the control group watched horse documentary. Performance was assessed via standardized evaluation form and HRV was recorded at pre- and post-test using Polar H10 sensor. Sleep quality and anxiety were monitored as potential confounders. Data were analyzed using a one-way MANOVA, with Group as the fixed factor and performance gain scores and HRV parameters as dependent variables. Multivariate analysis revealed a significant intervention effect on overall performance development (p=.002). The intervention significantly decreased fault scores (p=.035) and improved rideability (p=.006) and overall performance (p=.001). A positive correlation was observed between participants' fault and rideability scores (p=.009). Regarding psychophysiological measures, no significant group differences were found in HRV, while sleep quality and anxiety remained stable as hypothesized (p>.05). PETTLEP imagery improved equestrian performance, as shown by the results. The findings suggest that PETTLEP complements traditional training by targeting cognitive processes involved in performance. This study was supported by Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TUBITAK) under the Grant Number 125S572. The authors thank TUBITAK for their support.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **A Practical Phenomenology of Corporal Fighting: Experiential Reductions in Combat Sports and Martial Arts**
Location: **A10**

ID: 302 / Workshop 27: 1
Workshop
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Ethics in applied settings, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Violence
Keywords: Combat sports, Phenomenology, Lived experience, Violence

A Practical Phenomenology of Corporal Fighting: Experiential Reductions in Combat Sports and Martial Arts

Cristiano Roque Antunes Barreira[1], Thabata Castelo Branco Telles[2]
[1]University of São Paulo, Brazil; [2]N2i/ IPMAIA (Polytechnic Institute of Maia), University of Maia (UMaia/ISMAI), Portugal.

This workshop offers an applied, research-oriented introduction to the phenomenology of corporal fighting, focusing on how practitioners experience combat situations and their relation to violence. Grounded in recent phenomenological analyses of combat experience (Barreira, 2017; Telles et al., 2018; Barreira et al., 2025a, 2025b), the workshop aligns with core interests of sport psychology in lived experience, self-regulation, ethical awareness, and meaning-making. It departs from participants' backgrounds to develop a shared inquiry into lived combat situations from a first-person perspective. Through guided experiential exercises, small-group discussions, and collective analysis, participants will be introduced to phenomenological reductions of different forms of corporal fighting (e.g., brawl, play fighting, self-defense, duel). The notion of corporal fighting functions as a unifying experiential category, enabling participants to distinguish phenomenologically between combat forms and to identify moments in which the structure of combat is preserved or dissolves into violence, with implications for coaching, athlete development, and ethical practice. Learning objectives are: (a) to understand the phenomenological and psychological specificity of corporal fighting across practices; (b) to acquire practical skills in conducting phenomenological reductions from lived experience; and (c) to examine how violence emerges as a threat or distortion within combat practices. Teaching methods include brief conceptual inputs, guided experiential recall, paired and small-group reductions, plenary discussion, and instructor-led eidetic clarification. Materials include a concise worksheet for experiential analysis, a structured guide for phenomenological reduction, and selected excerpts from the referenced articles, shared on-site and digitally after the session.

2:45pm - 4:15pm Self-Talk in Sport: New trends and Directions

Location: **A11**

ID: 541 / Symposium 19: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Cognition, Mental skills training
Keywords: performance, self-regulation, interventions

Self-Talk in Sport: New trends and Directions.

Antonis Hatzigeorgiadis[1], Emmanouil Tzormpatzakis[1], Theodoros Proskinitopoulos[2], Alexander Latinjak[3], Konstantina Gianniki[1], Evangelos Galanis[1], Nikos Comoutos[1], Stefania Tsouri[1], Orestis Panoulas[1], Maurizio Bertollo[2], Charlotte Sanden[4]
[1]University of Thessaly, Greece; [2]Università degli Studi "G. d'Annunzio" Chieti – Pescara, Italy; [3]University College, Dublin, Ireland; [4]Sport University Cologne, Germany

The study of self-talk in sport has progressed significantly during the last decade. A new conceptualization differentiating between organic and strategic self-talk, the further distinction of organic self-talk into spontaneous and goal-directed, and the need to address interventions for self-regulation, in addition to those for performance enhancement, have enriched the width of the research questions that have been studied. Furthermore, the quest for a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying the functioning of self-talk, led to the introduction of multi- and inter-disciplinary methods encompassing physiological and neural approaches. The present symposium is a fair reflection of the diverse interests among self-talk researchers. First, a meta-analysis will refresh accumulated evidence for the effectiveness of strategic self-talk interventions; second, a psychophysiological approach to the effectiveness of self-talk based on the activation of the autonomic nervous system, will bring us closer to peace with the physiologists; third, a qualitative investigation will shed light on vocality as a potential attribute regulating self-talk effectiveness; and finally, the first attempt to explore experimentally the effect of an educational self-talk intervention on performance and organic self-talk will conclude the presentations, hoping for a fruitful discussion to follow.

The research is conducted in the operating framework of the University of Thessaly Innovation, Technology Transfer Unit and Entrepreneurship Center "One Planet Thessaly", under the "University of Thessaly Grants for Scientific Publication Support" action and is funded by the Special Account of Research Grants of the University of Thessaly.

2:45pm - 4:15pm Oral Presentations 31: Cognition

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Mauro Murgia**

ID: 361 / Oral Presentations 31: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Elite sports and expertise, Talent identification/development
Keywords: cognition, soccer, longitudinal research, machine learning

Can Cognitive Abilities Predict Future Soccer Success? Evidence From a Five-Year Longitudinal Study

Jonathan Ott[1,2], Jan Digutsch[3], Florian Heilmann[2], Lena Steindorf[1]

[1]TSG ResearchLab gGmbH; [2]Martin-Luther-Universität, Halle (Saale), Germany; [3]Universität St. Gallen, Switzerland

Identifying predictors of long-term success in elite youth soccer remains a key challenge. Cognitive abilities have been proposed as relevant determinants of soccer success, but no longitudinal study has systematically examined whether and to what extent they predict future success. The present longitudinal study examined the predictive value of cognitive abilities for future soccer success during the transition from elite youth to adult competition (U17–U23). A total of 1454 observations from 400 players (20.2% female) from a German Bundesliga club were analyzed. Cognitive abilities were assessed up to twice per season in up to five consecutive seasons (2019–2024) using three computerized tasks from the Vienna Test System (Determination Test, Go/NoGo-Test, Nonverbal N-Back Task). Soccer success was classified into five categories based on playing quota and competitive level, following structured interviews with coaches. To predict future soccer success, a non-linear machine learning model (Random Forest) including cognitive variables was compared with a baseline model without cognitive variables. The inclusion of cognitive variables resulted in a small and age-dependent increase in predictive performance compared to the baseline model. For the U19 and U23 age groups, the Random Forest model differentiated between players reaching high versus low levels of success but failed to distinguish intermediate levels. SHAP values indicated that processing speed and attentional regulation had the highest predictive importance. This pattern was consistent across gender and playing positions. Overall, cognitive abilities appear to contribute modestly to the prediction of future soccer success. Methodological limitations and practical implications for cognitive diagnostics are discussed.

ID: 225 / **Oral Presentations 31: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Emotion, Mental skills training, Self
Keywords: adolescent athlete, TOPS-2, competitive anxiety, flow

Latent Profiles of Adolescent Athletes' Sport Performance Strategies and their Associations with Competitive Anxiety and Flow

Doheung Lee[1], Jieun Won[1], Dojin Jang[2]
[1]Seoul National University, Korea, Republic of (South Korea); [2]Changwon National University, Korea, Republic of (South Korea)

Performance strategies are known to shape athletes' competitive anxiety and flow experiences, as suggested in competitive anxiety theory (Martens et al., 1990) and flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Given that adolescence is a critical developmental stage in which psychological skills and regulatory strategies rapidly form (Steinberg, 2005; Zimmerman, 2000), identifying meaningful patterns of performance strategies is essential for promoting adaptive competitive functioning. Grounded in these frameworks, this study identified latent profiles of adolescent athletes' sport performance strategies (TOPS-2) and examined profile-based differences in competitive state anxiety and flow using a person-centered approach. A total of 320 valid responses were collected from athletes registered with the Korea Sports Council. Latent profile analysis using the three-step BCH approach in Mplus 8.11 identified three distinct profiles: Limited Strategy, Developing Strategy, and Strategic Topline. Distal outcome comparisons revealed significant differences across profiles (all $p < .001$). Athletes in the Strategic Topline profile reported lower cognitive and somatic anxiety and higher state self-confidence than those in the Developing and Limited Strategy profiles. Flow also differed significantly across groups ($\chi^2 = 130.31$, $p < .001$), demonstrating a clear ordered pattern (Limited < Developing < Strategic Topline). These findings highlight the adaptive role of advanced psychological performance strategies in regulating competitive anxiety and facilitating flow experiences. The results underscore the importance of psychological skills training during adolescence and demonstrate the value of person-centered analytic approaches for identifying meaningful subgroups that inform tailored coaching and applied sport psychology interventions.

ID: 124 / **Oral Presentations 31: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Esports, Group dynamics, Social cognition
Keywords: esport, team cognition, verbal communication, performance

Team Cognition and Verbal Communication in Esports: A Multi-Study Examination of Expert and Non-expert Team Dynamics

Omer Eldadi, Gershon Tenenbaum
Reichman University, Israel

This presentation integrates theoretical and empirical perspectives on team cognition (TC) and verbal communication in competitive esports. Study 1 provides a comprehensive review synthesizing TC research across five interconnected dimensions: cognitive, emotional, neurological, social, and developmental, proposing a conceptual framework illustrating how TC develops through deliberate practice and structured communication. Studies 2 and 3 empirically examined verbal communication in Counter-Strike: Global Offensive video game, comparing expert and non-expert teams (four each; N = 40 players). Using content analysis of over 5,000 coded statements across eight matches, mixed ANOVAs and sequential analysis (Discussion Analysis Tool; Jeong, 2003) were applied to assess communication content, frequency, pace, and distribution during active gameplay (Study 2) and between-rounds intervals (Study 3). Results showed expert teams communicated significantly more frequently and at a faster pace in both contexts. Expert teams used predominantly factual and action-oriented statements with more balanced speaker distribution, while nonexpert teams relied more on nontask-related and emotional content. Sequential analyses revealed expert players strategically transitioned between uncertainty-to-acknowledgment and action-to-

action sequences, reflecting efficient information processing. Communication patterns remained stable across winning and losing rounds for expert teams, suggesting TC operates as a consistent team characteristic. Practical implications include developing structured communication protocols balancing tactical content with emotional support and promoting balanced participation among team members.

ID: 496 / **Oral Presentations 31: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Elite sports and expertise, Perception & attention, Talent identification/development
Keywords: Talent identification, perceptual-cognitive skill, expertise, cricket

Immersive Anticipation Testing to Predict Future Performance in International Pathway Cricket Batters

Oliver Runswick
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2D video temporal occlusion tests have frequently been employed to test anticipation skill. However, these stimuli cannot display all information that would be present in a performance setting. 360-degree video in head mounted displays (HMDs) offers a step forward. Here we aimed to assess the construct validity, predictive validity, and reliability of an immersive anticipation test in high level pathway players. A 360-degree temporal occlusion anticipation test was created at a first-class ground and incorporated scenarios recommended by coaches. 146 international pathway cricketers who were playing at Under 16, 18, or 19 level anticipated the landing point of 27 deliveries in nine different scenarios using 360-video in an HMD. To test construct validity, we compared performance of three position groups (batter, bowler, all-rounder) and selected and non-selected players. A subset (n=20) completed a second test to assess reliability. Statistics from batters who have turned professional (n=40) were used to test predictive validity. Results supported reliability and construct validity. Specialist batters were better able to anticipate length (bounce point) than bowlers and within the batter group (d=0.559, p=0.047), those selected for the international U19 team outperformed those you were not (d=0.474, p=0.008). In the sub-sample of batters who have played professionally the test was a predictor of batting average (F(1,33)=5.071, p=0.031). Sport-specific anticipation testing using 360-video displayed in HMDs offers a new valid method to capture anticipation performance with enough sensitivity to differentiate between expert groups.

ID: 339 / **Oral Presentations 31: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Elite sports and expertise, Perception & attention
Keywords: Expectations, Anticipation, Decision-Making, Psychological Momentum

Skilled Cricket Batters' Perceptions of the Role of Momentum in Shaping Anticipation and Decision-Making During Competition

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Momentum is defined as the perception and observable action of moving towards (positive momentum) or away from (negative momentum) a goal (Den Hartigh & Gernigon, 2018). Skilled athletes report greater confidence and risk-taking in favourable conditions, and more conservative decisions in unfavourable situations (Levi & Jackson, 2018). Yet, perceptions of how momentum shapes expectations during sustained one-on-one competition, such as cricket batting, remains underexplored. Therefore, semi-structured interviews examining experience, causes, and influence of momentum on anticipation and decision-making were conducted with eleven cricketers (9 male, 2 female), each with at least one year of experience at ECB Premier League level or equivalent. Adopting an interpretivist perspective, the study sought to understand how participants made sense of their experiences of momentum. Thematic analysis was conducted using both deductive and inductive approaches. Deductive themes included direction (positive, negative) and magnitude (small, large) of momentum shifts. Larger shifts typically followed clusters of runs or wickets in a short period and were perceived as clear changes in the state of play, prompting immediate changes in decision-making. Smaller shifts were expectation-dependent, with initial expectations shaping how events were perceived and subsequent decisions made. When expectations were met or exceeded, positive shifts manifested as increased confidence, greater risk tolerance, and reduced cognitive effort. When expectations were not met, negative shifts reflected a perceived loss of control, leading to forced risk-taking, uncertainty, and increased cognitive processing. These preliminary findings suggest that momentum operates through expectation-based perceptions that shape how batters interpret game events and anticipate opponents' intentions.

2:45pm - 4:15pm

Gimme 5

Location: **A13**
Session Chair: **Lloyd Emeka**

ID: 412 / **Gimme 5: 1**
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Neuropsychology, Psychophysiology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: psychophysiology, heart rate variability, electroencephalography, mental health

Antidepressant Effects of Exercise in University Students - A Study Protocol

Gantima Praisan[1,2], Alice Micale[3,4], Lilybeth Fontanesi[5], Maurizio Bertollo[1,2], Marika Berchicci[2,5]

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Although physical exercise interventions are effective in reducing depressive symptoms among students, there is limited evidence on psychophysiological indices reflecting underlying neurobehavioral processes. Grounded in the Research Domain Criteria (RDoC) framework (Cuthbert & Insel, 2010), this study adopts a multi-level approach to depressive symptoms, testing a motivation-centered hypothesis whereby physical exercise enhances effort-based decision-making processes (Hird et al., 2024). A randomized controlled trial is planned with a minimum of 46 university students, as determined by an a priori G*Power analysis. Participants will be eligible regardless of depressive symptom severity, but must not be taking antidepressant medication. The intervention group will undergo a supervised four-week outdoor circuit training at moderate intensity, delivered twice weekly for 60 minutes, with adherence monitored via attendance logs and session supervision, while the control group will maintain usual activities. Psychological outcomes will include measures of depression, anhedonia, anxiety, stress, resilience, affect, well-being, and sleepiness. Physiological measures will include HRV, EEG microstate dynamics, and event-related potentials (ERPs) collected during the Apple Gathering Task (AGT), an effort-based decision-making paradigm. Task performance will index motivation. It is hypothesized that the intervention group will show improvements in depressive symptoms and related self-report measures compared to the control group. Physiologically, increased parasympathetic activity (higher HRV), altered EEG microstates (e.g., increased microstate C duration), and enhanced reward-related ERP components (e.g., reward positivity) are expected. Behaviorally, a greater willingness to exert effort for rewards is anticipated. This protocol will provide RDoC-informed evidence linking exercise-induced symptom improvements to motivational and neurophysiological mechanisms.

ID: 133 / **Gimme 5: 2**
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Clinical sport psychology, Health
Keywords: depression, lifestyle intervention, physical activity coaching

Lifestyle Physical Activity Counselling in Inpatients With Depression (PACINPAT+): RCT Study Protocol

Lena Lauxtermann[1], Annette Brühl[2], Johannes Beck[3], Christian Imboden[4], Jan-Niklas Kreppke[1], Undine Lang[2], Anja Oswald[3], Maya Ringli[4], Anja Rogausch[3], Ann-Katrin Schreiner[3], Brendon Stubbs[5], Markus Gerber[1]

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Regular physical activity has antidepressant effects in patients with depression (Heissel et al., 2023). However, many patients struggle to maintain activity levels after discharge, and previous cognition-based interventions have demonstrated limited long-term effectiveness (Kreppke et al., 2024). Therefore, it seems promising to supplement cognitive approaches with affective ones to promote positive emotions and motivation toward physical activity (Rhodes & Kates, 2015). This study examines the short- and long-term effects of a novel physical activity counselling intervention on device-based physical activity, depressive symptoms, and health-related quality of life. Secondary objectives include exploring the psychological mechanisms of behavioral change and participants' experiences of the intervention. A three-arm randomized controlled trial is conducted in which one intervention group receives 12 weeks of interest- and experience-based coaching supported by a smart ring, a second intervention group receives the same coaching plus an additional six months of cognition-based coaching, and a control group receives written information and biweekly phone contact without behavioral guidance. Outcomes are assessed at baseline (T0), post-intervention (T1, 12 weeks), and follow-up (T2, 38 weeks). Linear mixed models will analyze group, time, and group-by-time interactions. By the time of the conference, approximately six months of data collection will have been completed, allowing insights into recruitment feasibility, participant engagement, and intervention acceptance to be presented, illustrating practical lessons for patient-centered implementation in inpatient settings.

ID: 214 / **Gimme 5: 3**
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Emotion, Exercise psychology, Health, Physical activity
Keywords: menstrual symptoms, moderate physical activity, affective valence

Acute Effects of Physical Activity on Menstrual Symptoms and Affective Well-Being: A Randomized Crossover Trial

Linda Rausch, Teresa Wolfsgruber, Martin Kopp, Martin Niedermeier
Department of Sports Science, University of Innsbruck, Austria

Objectives:

Physical activity is recommended as a non-pharmacological intervention to reduce menstrual distress, but little is known about its acute effects on affective responses and menstrual symptom severity (ACOG, 2023). Therefore, the objective of the study was to compare the immediate effects of a single, moderate-intensity bout of physical activity with a passive rest condition on affective well-being and symptom severity in women during menstruation.

Methods:

31 women (aged 23-35 years) completed two conditions across two consecutive menstrual cycles in randomized within-subject design: a moderate-intensity physical activity (40 min) and a passive rest condition. Symptom severity (Moos, 1986) and affective valence (Hardy & Rejeski, 1989) were assessed pre- and post-condition on days 1 and 2 of the menstrual cycles.

Results:

No significant time*condition interactions were found for menstrual symptom severity. A significant main effect of condition indicated lower symptom severity after physical activity versus rest on day 2 ($p=0.039$, $\eta2=0.13$). Significantly greater improvement in affective valence after physical activity compared to rest were observed on day 1 and 2 ($p<0.017$, $\eta2>0.17$).

Conclusion:

A single, moderate-intensity physical activity bout may produce stronger acute improvements in affective valence than rest during menstruation. Acute effects on menstrual symptom severity are less pronounced; however, a generally lower symptom severity on day 2 of the menstrual cycle may be attributable to the physical activity intervention. These findings suggest to further investigate moderate-intensity physical activity bouts as a strategy to acutely enhance well-being during menstruation and to potentially show delayed effects on menstrual symptom severity.

ID: 283 / **Gimme 5: 4**
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Exercise psychology, Motivation, Physical activity
Keywords: Behavior Change, Coaching, Depression, Physical Activity

Physical Activity Coaching in Outpatients With Major Depressive Disorder: Study Protocol for PACOUTPAT Randomized Controlled Trial

Céline Stark[1], Johannes Beck[2], Anja Oswald[2], Anja Rogausch[2], Ann-Katrin Schreiner[2], Robyn Cody[3], Vivien Hohberg[1], Florian Knappe[1], Jan-Niklas Kreppke[1], Sebastian Ludyga[1], Markus Gerber[1]
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Major depressive disorder (MDD) affects approximately 11.3% of individuals in Europe over the course of their lifetime and is associated with a substantial disease burden (Gutiérrez-Rojas et al., 2020). Standard treatments often fail to achieve adequate response, and adherence is low (Semahegn et al., 2020). Physical activity (PA) has demonstrated antidepressant effects similar to standard care (Noetel et al., 2024), however two-thirds of individuals with MDD do not meet recommended PA levels (Schuch et al., 2017). PA coaching has emerged as a promising approach to support engagement in PA (Fischer et al., 2019). Recent evidence highlights the importance of targeting affective responses to PA (Brand & Ekkekakis, 2018), and wearable technologies for sustained behavior change. This study evaluates a novel PA coaching program aimed at increasing PA levels in outpatients with MDD. A three-arm randomized controlled trial is conducted in a psychiatric day clinic in Switzerland. Adults aged 18 - 65 years with ICD-10 diagnosed MDD (F32/F33) are randomly assigned to (1) a 10-week interest- and experience-based PA coaching program, supported by a smart ring; (2) the same 10-week program followed by a 26-week cognition-based coaching; or (3) treatment as usual with written PA guidelines. Assessments occur at baseline, after the 10-week intervention (post), and at six-month follow-up. The primary outcome is change in device-based PA. This study introduces a PA coaching approach for outpatients with MDD that integrates affective and cognitive determinants of behavior change to promote sustainable PA behavior and improve mental and physical health.

ID: 131 / **Gimme 5: 5**
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: music performance anxiety, kenny music performance anxiety inventory

Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory - Hungarian Validation in the Central and Eastern Europe Context

Kaya Ariel Woytynowska
University of Pécs, Hungary

Music performance anxiety is a prevalent occupational health concern for musicians (Fernholz et al., 2019). To support research and applied work in Central and Eastern Europe, we validated the Hungarian Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (K-MPAI-R; Kenny, 2009) and examined its correspondence with regional adaptations (Faur et al., 2021; Ksondzyk, 2020). Hungarian musicians (N = 362; 73.5% women; M age = 39.3 years) completed an online survey (Sept-Nov 2025) which included the K-MPAI-R, the STAI-T (Sipos & Sipos, 1983), and the CSAI-2HR (Tóth et al., 2025). We conducted EFA (principal axis factoring, oblimin), estimated internal consistency (McDonald's ω), evaluated test-retest stability with ICC(3,1) in a matched subsample (n = 51), and tested convergent validity with Pearson correlations. Sampling adequacy was excellent (KMO = .93; Bartlett's $p < .001$). A

parsimonious correlated five-factor solution explained 48.5% of variance (RMSEA = .060; SRMR = .037), capturing Performance Anxiety/Evaluative Worry, Psychological Vulnerability, Parental Support, Memory Confidence, and Familial Worry. Reliability was excellent for the core performance factor (ω = .95) and good for psychological vulnerability and parental support (ω = .85-.80). Total scores demonstrated good temporal stability (ICC = .81). Convergent validity was strong: K-MPAI-R total correlated positively with trait anxiety (STAI-T r = .73) and state cognitive and somatic anxiety (CSAI-2HR r = .78 and .75), and negatively with state self-confidence (r = −.65; all p < .001). Overall, the Hungarian K-MPAI-R shows robust psychometric performance and a factor pattern consistent with regional validations, supporting use in assessment and research.

ID: 219 / **Gimme 5: 6**
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Best practice, Decision making and judgement, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: Skill transfer, awareness, Coping resources

From Sports to Life: A Case Study on Building Resilience

Alice Micale[1,2], Yannick Hill[1,2,3], John van der Kamp[1,2]

[1]Department of Human Movement Sciences, Faculty of Behavioral and Movement Sciences, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Amsterdam Movement Sciences, The Netherlands; [2]Institute of Brain and Behaviour Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; [3]c Lyda Hill Institute for Human Resilience, University of Colorado Colorado Springs, Colo-rado Springs, CO, USA

Sport and physical activity are widely recognised as meaningful contexts for personal development, offering structured physical, social, and psychological challenges through which individuals may develop coping resources. From a dynamical perspective, resilience is not a fixed individual trait but a temporal process that evolves through ongoing interaction with one's environment (Den Hartigh et al., 2024). Accordingly, resilience can fluctuate across contexts depending on exposure to stressors and the availability of personal and environmental resources (Hill & Den Hartigh, 2024). This case study examined the relationship between sport participation, resilience, and the transfer of coping skills from sport to work or study contexts. Using repeated measures of the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) alongside qualitative self-reports, the study explored both resilience levels and participants' awareness of sport-derived coping strategies. Resilience scores across sport and work contexts showed heterogeneous patterns, indicating no uniform transfer effect. Some cases displayed parallel resilience levels across domains, while others showed inverse or disconnected trends over time. Although sport participation, particularly frequent engagement, was often associated with perceived stress relief and personal benefits, this did not consistently translate into improved resilience in non-sporting contexts. While all participants reported developing general coping resources through sport, most struggled to consciously apply these skills when facing work or study related stressors. These findings highlight the importance of sport activities in fostering resilience and underlie the importance of reflective processes and awareness in facilitating the transfer of resilience across life domains.

ID: 277 / **Gimme 5: 7**
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Mental skills training
Keywords: high altitude mountaineering, female elite athletes, hypoxia, sport psychology

From Summit to Mind: Tracking Affective States and Mental Health in Female Elite K2 Climbers

Carina S. Bichler[1], Marzieh Abdoli[2], Hannes Gatterer[2], Marika Falla[2], Johannes Burtscher[1], Mirjam Limmer[3], Linda K. Rausch[4], Paul Klingler[5], Giovanni Vinetti[2], Giacomo Strapazzon[2], Katharina Hüfner[1]

[1]University Clinic for Psychiatry II, Department of Psychiatry, Psychotherapy, Psychosomatics and Medical Psychology, Medical University Innsbruck, Austria; [2]Institute of Mountain Emergency Medicine, Eurac Research, Bolzano, Italy; [3]Institute of Outdoor Sports and Environmental Science, German Sports University Cologne, Cologne, Germany.; [4]Institute of Sport Science, University Innsbruck, Austria; [5]Institute of Clinical Epidemiology, Public Health, Health Economics, Medical Statistics and Informatics, Medical University of Innsbruck, Austria

High-altitude mountaineering exposes climbers to hypoxia, cold, caloric deficits, isolation, and sleep disruption, all of which may affect mental health. K2 is considered one of the most dangerous and technically demanding peaks. Research on female elite mountaineers, particularly regarding psychological responses to hypoxia, remains limited. Eight elite female mountaineers completed psychological assessments at low altitude and under simulated hypoxia (5,000 m) prior to a five-month K2 expedition. Measures included recovery and stress (Short Recovery and Stress Scale in Sport), affect (Positive and Negative Affect Schedule, Feeling Scale, Felt Arousal Scale), anxiety and depression (Patient Health Questionnaire), psychotic-like experiences (High-Altitude Psychosis Questionnaire), and insomnia (Insomnia Severity Index). All participants received 30 minutes of sport psychology coaching. Three climbers repeated the assessments post-expedition and participated in qualitative interviews; quantitative data were analyzed descriptively. Before the expedition, mountaineers showed high recovery, low stress, and predominantly positive affect, with non-clinical scores across measures, stable across altitudes. None of the mountaineers summited K2; reasons included adverse weather, gastrointestinal issues, and an accident. Three remained until the end and completed post-measurements. Post-expedition results (n=3) showed reduced recovery, lower positive affect, increased anxiety and depression, and improved sleep; no psychotic-like symptoms occurred. Qualitative findings highlighted flexible regulation, altitude-related illness, social dynamics, motivation, and limited control in risk situations. Female mountaineers demonstrated strong pre-expedition resilience but accumulated strain afterward. Altitude-related illness and group challenges were linked to reduced psychological resilience. Limitations include possible self-selection bias and that simulated altitude only approximates real conditions.

ID: 580 / Gimme 5: 8
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Group dynamics, Leadership, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity)
Keywords: allyship, discrimination, supporting women

Insights from a Female Practitioner Working in Football

Céline Plée, Thierry Middleton, Amanda Pinckney, Chris Wagstaff
University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom

Football is still known to be a masculine dominated world. With the growth of women's football and inclusion within the sport, there has been a growing acceptance of women's representation working in elite English football (Norman et al., 2025). However, despite the growing opportunities for women to work in football, research around discrimination shows up to 89% of responders reporting gender-based bias (Women in Football, 2024). This 5-minute presentation provides insights from a confessional tale of the first author's lived experiences and reflections on the opportunities for progress and ongoing challenges faced by female psychology practitioners within football environments. Critical reflections shared cover experiences of discrimination, highlight the importance of allyship in standing up for women who face discrimination, as well as improving the awareness of the "old boys club" influences within the working environment. Insights on the impact of having access to a community of practice and networking opportunities to allow a reflective, supportive and learning space for women practitioners will also be discussed.

ID: 276 / Gimme 5: 9
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: Dual career, Dual Career Development Environment, Validity and reliability

Evaluation of Dual Career Development Environment: Validity and Reliability Study of Turkish Version

Duygu Karadağ[1], Aydan Gözmen Elmas[2], Nurgül Keskin Akın[3], Safter Elmas[2], Fevziye Hülya Aşçı[4]
[1]Haliç University, Turkey (Türkiye); [2]Marmara University, Turkey (Türkiye); [3]Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University, Turkey (Türkiye); [4]Fenerbahçe University, Turkey (Türkiye)

In Türkiye, where structural support mechanisms for balancing sport and education are still developing, assessing dual career environments is particularly important for identifying contextual needs and improving support systems for athletes. In this context, the aim of this study was to examine the psychometric properties of the Turkish version of the "Dual Career Development Environment Monitoring Tool", which was developed to assess the quality and characteristics of dual career development environments. The study included 672 athletes aged between 16 and 30 years old (Mage= 19.04 ± 4.11). Participants completed the 50-item, ten-factor questionnaire using a 7-point Likert-type. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess model fit and construct validity. The CFA results indicated an acceptable model–data fit after the removal of 10 reverse-coded items that did not meet acceptable factor loading criteria ($\chi^2/df = 3.07$, CFI =0.92, TLI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.04). Convergent and discriminant validity were evaluated using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), square root of AVE (√AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratios. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, CR, and McDonald's Omega coefficients. The results supported both validity and reliability, and the final 40-item Turkish form demonstrated adequate psychometric properties. The instrument, whose validity and reliability have been established, enables systematic assessment of environmental factors affecting athletes' dual careers, identification of key risk areas, and development of targeted, evidence-based interventions. It can also inform policy and enhance collaboration between sports clubs and educational institutions. This study was supported by Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (TÜBİTAK) under Grant Number 224K847

ID: 138 / Gimme 5: 10
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Emotion, Self, Social psychology
Keywords: Self-criticism, Social Comparison, Authentic pride, Hubristic pride

Pathways to Pride: When Self-Criticism Meets Social Comparison in Athletes

Chi-Lun Tsai[1], Kuo-Pin Wang[2], Sascha Leisterer-Härtig[1], Anne-Marie Elbe[1]
[1]Leipzig University, Germany; [2]National Taiwan University, Taiwan

Because self-criticism shapes how athletes evaluate competence and self-worth in achievement settings, it may relate differently to authentic and hubristic pride in sport, yet these associations remain unclear. Authentic pride is effort-based, whereas hubristic pride reflects superiority. In this cross-sectional study, we examined whether self-criticism was associated with these pride facets through two social comparison foci: ability comparison (ranking competence) and opinion comparison (evaluating views/standards). Participants were competitive athletes (N = 279; 83 women, 192 men; age M = 22.76, SD = 7.09; training years M = 8.34, SD = 5.52) who completed surveys online or in person, assessing self-criticism, authentic and hubristic pride, and social comparison orientation. Using SEM, we tested a path model with bootstrapped confidence intervals; model fit was acceptable (CFI = .914, TLI = .903,

SRMR = .075, RMSEA = .069). Self-criticism was positively associated with ability-based comparison (β = .724, p < .001) and opinion-based comparison (β = .304, p < .001). Ability-based comparison was positively associated with hubristic pride (β = .455, p < .001) and negatively, though not significantly, with authentic pride (β = -.205), whereas opinion-based comparison was positively associated with authentic pride (β = .460, p < .001) and negatively associated with hubristic pride (β = -.198, p < .01). Direct paths from self-criticism to authentic pride (β = .096) and hubristic pride (β = .144) were small. Overall, self-criticism appeared to relate to pride primarily through distinct social comparison foci.

ID: 154 / Gimme 5: 11
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Decision making and judgement, Emotion, Exercise psychology, Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.)
Keywords: Sport IU, Optimism, Goal Settings, Performance

Running into Uncertainty: The Role of Sport-Specific Intolerance of Uncertainty and Optimism in Athletic Performance

Ran Assa
Ariel University, Israel

Athletes regularly face uncertain, high-pressure conditions in training and competition, yet little is known about how they psychologically respond to such uncertainty. This study introduces the construct of sport-specific intolerance of uncertainty (Sport-IU) and examines its effects on objective race-day performance among recreational runners. We propose a dual-pathway model in which uncertainty may impair or enhance performance depending on athletes' emotional and motivational responses. Participants were 127 recreational runners (M= 41.68, SD = 10.61; 56.7% male) preparing for organized race events (10 km, half marathon, or marathon). Two weeks prior to competition, participants completed measures of Sport-IU, psychological distress, dispositional optimism, and self-set performance goals. Objective performance (min/km) was obtained following the race. Hypotheses were tested using structural equation modeling (AMOS) and regression-based moderated mediation analyses (PROCESS Model 8), controlling for age, gender, and experience. Results indicated that higher Sport-IU was associated with greater psychological distress; however, distress did not mediate performance. In contrast, a conditional indirect effect emerged via goal setting, such that Sport-IU was positively associated with goal setting only at higher levels of optimism, which in turn predicted better performance. Optimism also moderated the direct relationship between Sport-IU and performance, such that higher Sport-IU was associated with improved performance under high optimism but not low optimism. These findings suggest that uncertainty in sport is not inherently detrimental and may facilitate adaptive performance under certain psychological conditions. The study highlights the role of optimism in shaping responses to uncertainty and supports integrating intolerance of uncertainty within sport performance research.

ID: 654 / Gimme 5: 12
Gimme 5 Presentation
Topics: Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Physical activity, Sedentary behaviour, Mental health

Exploring Physical Activity Awareness and Sedentary Behaviour in Psychiatric Day-Care Settings.

Marta Duina[1,2], Giorgio Corretti[3], Attilio Carraro[1]
[1]Faculty of Education, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy; [2]Department of Neurosciences, Biomedicine and Movement Sciences, University of Verona, Italy; [3]Department of Mental Health, ASL Toscana Nord-Ovest, Italy

Physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour (SB) are highly prevalent among people with mental health conditions, despite a well-established consensus on the benefits of physical activity (PA) for mental health (Castro Monteiro et al., 2024). This exploratory study examined associations between awareness of PA benefits, self-reported PA and SB in adults attending a psychiatric day-care service. Twenty-seven adults answered the Simple Physical Activity Questionnaire (SIMPAQ; Carraro et al., 2008) and completed an adapted version of the Exercise and Mental Illness Questionnaire (Hirschbeck et al. 2024), assessing knowledge, perceived barriers, facilitators, and expectations towards PA using a 1-5 Likert scale. Descriptive statistics and non-parametric correlational analyses were conducted. Participants reported generally positive attitudes towards PA, with high levels of knowledge (M=4.04±0.91), facilitators (M=3.75±0.95), and expectations (M=3.66±0.55), alongside relatively low perceived barriers (M=2.35±0.65). However, SIMPAQ data indicated low levels of total PA (walking, incidental PA and structured exercise; M=234.18±62.15 min/day) and high levels of SB (M=460.56±122.98 min/day). Knowledge was strongly and positively correlated with facilitators (ρ=.53, p=.004) and expectations (ρ=.63, p<.001), suggesting a coherent awareness profile towards PA. Although no statistically significant associations were found, weak trends emerged in expected directions, with higher facilitators associated with greater PA (ρ=.29) and higher perceived barriers with lower activity (ρ=−.23) and greater SB (ρ=.38). Findings suggest a gap between awareness of PA benefits and actual behavioural engagement, highlighting the need for interventions in mental health care settings that specifically address SB in addition to promoting positive attitudes towards PA in this population.

2:45pm - 4:15pm

Oral Presentations 32: Special needs

Location: **048**
Session Chair: **Urban Johnson**

ID: 333 / Oral Presentations 32: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Motivation, Special needs, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: Inclusive sport, Badminton, Teacher training, Intellectual disability

Inclusive Badminton in Higher Education: Preparing Future Coaches for Intellectual Disability Inclusion

Laura Primo[1], Andrea Gutiérrez Suárez[2], Javier Pinilla[1], Carmen Ocete-Calvo[1]
[1]Comillas University, Spain; [2]Universidad de A Coruña

Understanding the psychosocial processes underlying inclusive coaching is key to promoting disability inclusion in sport. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory, the development of intellectual disability (ID)-specific training in higher education remains limited. Despite growing attention to inclusion, structured training focused specifically on intellectual disability is still underdeveloped in higher education contexts. As part of the BWF Sport Science Research Grant 2025/2026, this study examines how an inclusive badminton programme influences students' preparedness to include athletes with ID. A mixed-methods design involved 60 Sport Sciences and Physical Education students from several European universities. The intervention included ID-specific adapted badminton tasks, task modification strategies, and guided reflection in real and simulated contexts. Quantitative data were collected through validated questionnaires assessing motivation, satisfaction of autonomy, competence, relatedness, and knowledge of ID inclusion. Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured group discussions and analysed using thematic analysis. Preliminary analyses showed improvements in students' knowledge of inclusive practice, along with increases in motivation, perceived competence, and autonomy, while relatedness remained stable. Qualitative findings highlighted enhanced awareness of inclusion strategies, greater confidence in task adaptation, and a deeper understanding of ID-specific pedagogical demands. No significant differences were observed between participating institutions, suggesting consistency in the implementation of the programme. The findings suggest that structured structured, practice-based modules with a focus on ID can strengthen future coaches' motivational and pedagogical competencies. The study provides evidence to inform higher education curricula by emphasising experiential learning and adapted sport content, although generalisability is limited and should be interpreted with caution.

ID: 259 / Oral Presentations 32: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Health, Special needs, Youth
Keywords: Autism, Football, Attention, psychosocial skills

The Role of Football in Enhancing Psychosocial Skills in Youth With Autism Spectrum Disorder

Alberto Cei[1], Daniela Sepio[2], Ruscello Bruno[1]
[1]University San Raffaele, Italy; [2]Tor Vergata University, Italy

This study examines the effects of a structured year-long football training on young with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The goal was to improve communication, social interaction, task engagement, transition management and motor skills in a team sport context. 90 young with ASD (7–18 years), with diagnoses certified by the National Health Service. Annual program ran from October to June including two 1-hour training sessions/week, followed by a three-week summer camp consisting of 5 training days per week, 5 hours per day. The intervention was delivered by a team including football coaches, sport psychologists, speech therapist and a family–school coordinator. Motor skills were assessed by coaches using: slalom dribbling test, shot power differentiation test, and shooting accuracy test. Psychosocial functioning was evaluated using the Adaptive Social Skills Measure, focusing on verbal communication, social interaction, transition management, and task attention. Parents completed the questionnaires before and after the intervention period. Motor assessments with non-parametric Wilcoxon test was used, showing significant improvements in ball control, faster slalom performance, improved modulation of shot power, increased shooting accuracy. Parent assessment revealed strong correlations among verbal communication, social interaction, transition management, and task attention. To determine these significant differences a paired samples t-test was employed. Effect size values, represented as Cohen's d, are provided along with a 95% Confidence Interval. The values found adhere to the following reference thresholds in absolute value from small (0.20 to 0.50) to medium (0.50 to 0.80) and large (greater than 0.80).

ID: 627 / Oral Presentations 32: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Special needs, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Any other topic
Keywords: Female athletes with disabilities, intersectionality, legitimacy, belonging

Against all odds: Conditional inclusion, gendered legitimacy, and the experiences of female athletes with disabilities

Rebecca Todd, Stephanie Tibbert, Yasmin Williams
Health Sciences University, United Kingdom

Sporting environments continue to be shaped by gendered and ableist expectations that influence how female athletes with disabilities experience participation, belonging, and recognition. Despite growing commitment to inclusion, limited research has examined how athletes experience legitimacy once access has been achieved. To address this gap, the study adopted an intersectional qualitative approach, informed by an interpretivist perspective, to explore the experiences of eleven high-performing female athletes with disabilities competing in male-dominated sports. Athletes represented diverse physical impairments, including congenital and acquired conditions, and were recruited through sport, gender, and disability networks. Semi-structured interviews were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis, with themes developed iteratively through reflexive engagement with the data, reflexive journaling, and critical peer discussion. Three composite creative non-fiction vignettes represented the findings, which demonstrated that inclusion was experienced as conditional rather than assured. One vignette captured how internalised ableism and tensions between femininity and athletic strength shaped identity negotiations. A second reflected how humour and informal hierarchies within male-dominated teams reinforced gendered marginalisation despite formal inclusion. A third highlighted collective visibility, self-funding, and legacy-building as athletes sought to create space within systems offering limited structural support. Across the stories, exclusionary humour, devaluation of competence, inaccessible facilities, uneven resourcing, and expectations of self-advocacy shaped belonging and opportunity. These findings suggest that belonging is shaped through everyday interactions, expectations surrounding athletes' bodies, and unequal structures within sport. The study contributes to intersectional sport psychology by demonstrating how gender and disability interact to shape belonging, identity, visibility, and opportunity.

ID: 316 / **Oral Presentations 32: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Special needs, Violence, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: parasport, safesport, violence

"Why Should I Have to Fight to Say that I Exist?": Perceptions of Quebec Parasport Athletes on Safe Sport

Camille Rheault, Stephanie Radziszewski, Sylvie Parent
Université Laval - Chaire de Recherche Sécurité et Intégrité en milieu sportif (SIMS), Canada

Recent research on violence in sport identifies groups of athletes, such as parasport athletes, as being at greater risk of experiencing violence. While sport federations are implementing new measures to promote safe sport, it remains important to assess whether these measures adequately meet the needs of all athletes. This oral presentation presents the findings of a qualitative study based on 18 individual interviews conducted with parasport athletes in Québec, Canada. Specifically, the objective was to gather participants' views, experiences, and needs related to safe sport, as well as their recommendations regarding current and future measures. The presentation also aims to identify the specific needs of parasport athletes regarding safe sport. The research process was supported by weekly meetings with the research supervisor, ensuring methodological rigor. The results of the thematic analysis are presented through a social representations lens, highlighting how participants' perspectives on safe sport are shaped by broader societal biases related to disability. As coherent with the safe sport framework proposed by Gurgis and colleagues (2023), participants reported experiences of violence in sport, particularly in the form of ableism, as well as experiences related to injuries and various dimensions of accessibility. Finally, media coverage was identified as an integral component of parasport development.Participants also proposed several recommendations to enhance safe sport measures, including improving access to resources, increasing awareness of parasport contexts, providing a designated resource person, and strengthening knowledge of procedures. These recommendations represent practical implications for sport federations seeking to develop more inclusive safe sport measures.

ID: 399 / **Oral Presentations 32: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Health, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Special needs, Social psychology
Keywords: Mild intellectual disability, able-bodied children, integration, swimming

Swimming as a Means of Integrating Children With Intellectual Disabilities Into Able-Bodied Children

Benyoucef Hafsaoui[1], Asma Djaafri[2]
[1]Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef, Algeria; [2]Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef, Algeria

The objective of this study is to determine the impact of sport (swimming) as a means of integrating children with intellectual disabilities with able-bodied children. For the experimental group, ten (10) children were selected, including five (5) with intellectual disabilities and five (5) able-bodied children. The program lasted three months, consisting of two (2) sessions per week (45 minutes per session). A control group of five children with mild intellectual disabilities (IQ 50-70) was also included.The age of these patients ranged from 9 to 12 years, with an average age of (11.23 ± 1.41). With the cooperation of a psychologist and a swimming instructor specializing in adapted sports, we conducted the following:

- The Alfred Binet Intelligence Test (IQ) was used to measure the intelligence level of both able-bodied and intellectually disabled children.

- A program designed to teach basic swimming skills, validated by swimming specialists (a swimming coach for able-bodied athletes and a swimming coach specializing in adapted sports), was implemented. The results of this study showed that the proposed program had positive effects on the learning of basic swimming skills for children with mild intellectual disabilities, and the integration of children with mild intellectual disabilities with able-bodied children has a positive effect on learning and improving basic swimming skills in children with mild intellectual disabilities.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Combined Cognitive and Exercise Priming and Training: Using the SOMA-NPT App**
Location: **130**

ID: 548 / Workshop 26: 1
Workshop
Topics: Cognition, Exercise psychology, Neuropsychology
Keywords: app, priming, technology, training

Combined Cognitive and Exercise Priming and Training: Using the SOMA-NPT App

Christopher Ring
University of Birmingham, United Kingdom

Smart devices offer exciting new opportunities for researchers and practitioners in sport and exercise to measure and manipulate the thoughts, feelings and actions of athletes in many contexts. The SOMA-NPT app for iPhone/iPad provides researchers with an extensive battery of classic cognitive tests involving executive function (e.g., response inhibition, memory updating, task switching), attention (e.g., vigilance), and processing speed (e.g., reaction time). The app can also connect a wearable (Polar H10 sensor) to the smart device to measure beat-to-beat cardiac activity during a task or rest. Self-report data (e.g., ratings of effort, exertion, fatigue) can also be collected. Finally, the SOMA-Analytics software allows researchers and practitioners to program plans (study protocols), monitor athletes, and assess progress. The potential research applications include: combined cognitive and exercise priming, brain endurance training, multi-site or multi-country replications, and sport-related concussion battery. By the end of the workshop, attendees should understand: the types of cognitive tests in the SOMA battery, how to parameterize SOMA cognitive tests, SOMA test modes, and how to link a Polar H10 sensor to SOMA to measure cardiac activity. Interested attendees can obtain a license to use the SOMA-NPT app, access to the SOMA Analytics software, exemplar plans (e.g., Brain Endurance Training), and tips for running combined priming and training studies. Can interested workshop attendees please email Prof Ring (c.m.ring@bham.ac.uk) beforehand if you would like to get a SOMA-NPT licence to try out the app on your device.

4:30pm - 5:00pm **Coffee break**
Location: **Convention Center**

5:00pm - 6:00pm **Before Sport: Movement Experiences, Motor Competence, and the Roots of Children's Engagement (Keynote Speaker: Rita Cordovil)**
Location: **Convention Center**
Session Chair: **Rita De Oliveira**

ID: 726 / 3rd Keynote Speaker: 1
Keynote talks

Before Sport: Movement Experiences, Motor Competence, and the Roots of Children's Engagement

Rita Cordovil
University of Lisbon, Portugal

Sport psychologists are increasingly called upon to address dropout, low motivation, and poor well-being in young athletes. Yet many of these problems begin long before organized sport, in the movement environments of everyday childhood. In this keynote, I will argue that motor competence is not simply a product of instruction or deliberate practice, but emerges from rich, self-directed experiences in which children can perceive, act, explore, and calibrate their behavior in relation to the world. Drawing on research across perception-action coupling, risk affordances, independent mobility, and motor competence, I will present evidence showing how children develop movement skill, confidence, and adaptive decision-making through manageable, meaningful challenges rather than through constraint and overprotection. Children who develop strong motor competence tend to engage more in physical activity, creating positive developmental spirals: competence builds confidence, confidence invites participation, and participation reinforces skill. The reverse is equally true. Children with low motor competence often disengage early, perceiving physical contexts as threatening rather than rewarding. When they arrive in organized sport, they are not simply less skilled; they are already less motivated, less resilient, and more vulnerable to dropout. Many of the problems sport psychologists encounter in young athletes are not created by sport itself, but imported from a developmental history of restricted movement and limited opportunity to build competence on their own terms. Sport psychologists are uniquely positioned to bridge these worlds: by advocating for autonomy-supportive environments, challenging early specialization cultures, and recognizing that protecting children's right to explore and take risks is sport psychology's business too.

6:00pm - 7:30pm **FEPSAC General Assembly and FEPSAC Elections**
Location: **Convention Center**

Conference Agenda Thursday

18th European Congress of Sport & Exercise Psychology

Date: Thursday, 16/July/2026

7:00am - 7:30am

Morning Grappling & Conditioning
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

Every morning before the run, we're doing something a little different. This is a 30-minute conditioning session built around movement drills from the world of BJJ and wrestling: animal locomotion, ground flow, tumbling, partner games. The kind of stuff that looks casual but gets your whole body working in ways you didn't expect.

If you've never trained a grappling sport, it is perfect. There's something genuinely fresh about moving close to the ground, figuring out how your body navigates space, and doing it all with another person. It trains coordination, spatial awareness, and functional strength (and it's fun).

No experience needed, no gear needed. Just show up with comfy clothes and some curiosity, and get properly fired up before the morning run.

7:30am - 8:00am

Morning Run
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

To start the conference day focused, energetic and powerful, we are inviting you to our morning running sessions. It doesn't matter if this is your first run or if you're already a seasoned veteran, we'll be running in separate groups at different paces.

We'll start with a warm-up, then run for 30 minutes, and finish with a group stretch. If you're just looking for a light run to start your day, this is the place for you. If you want to challenge yourself and have a more intense workout, this is the place for you, too.

Bring your running shoes and let's go!

The morning grappling workouts and runs will take place one after the other, not at the same time, so you can join just one or the other, or you can even do both (highly recommended)!

9:00am - 10:00am

Keynote Speaker Andrea Petroczi
Location: **Aula Magna**
Session Chair: **Anastasiya Khomutova**

ID: 732 / **4th Keynote Speaker: 1**
Keynote talks

The Harm Behind the Promise of Clean Sport: What Anti-Doping Means for Athletes

Andrea Petróczi[1,2,3]
[1]Kingston University London, United Kingdom; [2]ELTE Eötvös Loránd University Budapest, Hungary; [3]Széchenyi István University Győr, Hungary

Anti-doping is designed to protect athletes and preserve the integrity of sport, yet little attention has been paid to the human impact of the system itself. Drawing on findings from the TALE and What About Us? projects (www.athletes-tale.eu), this talk examines how both doping and anti-doping can expose athletes to psychological, procedural, reputational, relational, and career-related harms. Bringing together athlete narratives, legal perspectives, and community-informed systems mapping, the findings challenge the dominant view of athlete vulnerability as merely susceptibility to doping or rule violation. Instead, it argues that vulnerability should also be understood as susceptibility to harm arising from the structures, processes, and power relations of the anti-doping system itself. From a restorative justice perspective, the key question is not simply who broke a rule, but who has been harmed, how those harms were produced, and what responsibilities exist to repair and prevent them. Clean athletes, athletes investigated but not sanctioned, sanctioned athletes, returning athletes, and those affected by others' doping may all experience significant and lasting harms. By moving beyond the traditional binary of clean athlete versus offender, this talk offers a more human-centred understanding of clean sport and invites critical reflection on how athlete protection is defined, measured, and achieved. Ultimately, it argues that while anti-doping has been developed and refined to detect and deter cheating, it must also become capable of recognising, preventing, and responding to the harms it may unintentionally cause to the very athletes it seeks to protect.

10:00am - 11:00am

Poster Session 3
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

ID: 101 / **Poster Session 3: 1**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology
Keywords: global self-esteem, culture, gender identity, stereotypes

Perceptions of Gender Conflict and Influences on an Athletes' Global Self-Esteem in Athletics: A Cross-Cultural Study

Vedika Jogani
Ithaca College

High self-esteem in athletics is positively linked to performance and participation. Research by Feltz (2007) shows that self-esteem plays a vital role in shaping athletes' motivation and overall performance. However, an athlete's self-perception is shaped by cultural and stereotypical norms, particularly within the socially constructed binary division of sports into masculine and feminine domains. The purpose of this study was to investigate whether there were differences in global self-esteem among athletes from collectivistic and individualistic cultures depending on the alignment between their gender identity and the sport they play. Ninety-three Indian athletes and 325 American athletes participated in this study. A 2 × 2 ANOVA revealed no significant main effect of culture, $F(1, 277) = 0.445$, $p = .505$, partial $\eta^2 = .002$. However, there was a significant main effect of sport-gender identity alignment, $F(1, 277) = 6.731$, $p = .010$, partial $\eta^2 = .024$, with participants whose sport did not match their gender identity reporting higher global self-esteem than those whose sport matched their gender identity. Additionally, there was a significant interaction effect between culture and sport-gender identity alignment, $F(1, 277) = 6.533$, $p = .011$, partial $\eta^2 = .023$. In the female group, no differences were observed in individualistic cultures, whereas in collectivistic cultures, higher global self-esteem was found when participants' gender identity did not match their sport. In the male group, no significant differences in global self-esteem were observed across culture or sport-gender identity alignment.

ID: 112 / **Poster Session 3: 2**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Elite sports and expertise, Group dynamics, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Psychological Safety, Coaching Behaviours, Aesthetic Sports, Elite Sport

Psychological Safety Under Threat: Negative Coaching Behaviours and Elite Athlete Wellbeing in Aesthetic Sports

Nia Palmer[1], Nicholas de Cruz[2]
[1]Loughborough University, United Kingdom; [2]University of Surrey, UK

Abuse in elite sport remains a systemic concern despite increased safeguarding efforts. Yet, psychological safety (PS), the perception of being protected from psychological harm, enabling athletes to raise concerns, take risks, and communicate freely without fear of repercussion, has received limited scholarly attention, particularly within aesthetic sports. This research examined how PS and negative coaching behaviours influence the wellbeing of elite athletes in aesthetic sports. Upon university ethics committee approval, a qualitative design was employed, with semi-structured interviews conducted with 20 elite athletes from figure skating, artistic gymnastics, and dance. Data were analysed using inductive thematic analysis through a socio-ecological framework. Findings indicate that aesthetic sport athletes experience intersecting risk factors across multiple ecological levels, including inappropriate coaching behaviours, absent institutional support systems, performance-driven funding structures, and cultural normalisation of harmful practices. This resulted in heightened vulnerability relative to other sporting contexts with consequences extending beyond athletic careers. Adopting an arts-based qualitative approach, creative non-fiction was utilised to preserve participant voice and convey the lived complexity of these experiences. This research makes theoretical contributions by positioning PS as a developmental necessity and extending understanding of how risk factors compound athlete vulnerability. Practically, findings illuminate a critical gap between harmful coaching behaviours and legal thresholds for misconduct. Implications are discussed for athletes, coaches, parents, sport organisations, and researchers, with recommendations for coach education, athlete-centred support systems, and accessible reporting mechanisms.

ID: 139 / **Poster Session 3: 3**
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise and COVID-19 Pandemics, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19)
Keywords: COVID-19, elite athletes, bubble events, vaccination and booster doses

From COVID-19 to Bubble Events to Booster Vaccination: Psychological Effects on Elite Athletes' Mental Well-Being and Performance

Zsofia Boglarka Zrubecz[1,2], Eva Baramacheva[1], Mary Hassandra[1], Nikos Comoutos[1], Anne-Marie Elbe[2]
[1]University of Thessaly; [2]Leipzig University

This study explored elite athletes' lived experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, with particular attention to bubble sport events, decisions surrounding COVID-19 vaccination and booster doses, and the psychological factors shaping those decisions. Using a transcendental phenomenological design, nine elite athletes from fencing, kickboxing, swimming, taekwondo, and water polo and one doctor completed an investigator-designed questionnaire to provide descriptive information. The athletes ($M = 23.44$, $SD = 3.13$) then participated in online semi-structured interviews about their feelings, experiences, and thoughts regarding vaccination and participation in bubble events. Interview transcripts were analysed using phenomenological procedures to identify essential themes. Participants consistently described bubble events as uncomfortable and restrictive; however, most also viewed it as the safest and most feasible way to continue training and competition during the pandemic. Many expressed gratitude for being able to maintain their athletic careers despite these constraints. Regarding vaccinations most participants reported receiving them primarily to preserve eligibility for competition rather than due personal health benefit. Several athletes noted that booster doses were not always mandatory at the time of competitions which contributed to ambivalence.

Some athletes explained they would likely not have taken the booster if it had not been required for competition. The findings highlight the interplay of appreciation, discomfort, and external pressure in athletes' pandemic experiences and provide a basis for future research on booster uptake and athlete decision-making process.

ID: 140 / **Poster Session 3: 4**
Poster presentation
Topics: Motivation, Professional development and mentoring, Self, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: Career Continuation of Athletes, Soccer Players, Phenomenological Study

A Phenomenological Study on the Continuation of Soccer Players' Careers

Jungwon Lee, Taiwoo Kim, Jieun Won
seoul national university, Korea, Republic of Korea

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of soccer players who continue their athletic careers despite various challenges and to understand the meanings they attribute to such persistence. Using a descriptive phenomenological approach proposed by Giorgi, in-depth qualitative data were collected from players competing in the K3 and K4 leagues in South Korea, each with more than five years of adult-level playing experience. The analysis yielded 111 meaning units, 15 sub-components, and 5 core components describing the experience of career continuation. Additionally, the essential meanings derived from these experiences were structured into 44 meaning units, 6 sub-components, and 3 core components. The findings revealed that players encountered persistent difficulties, including unstable systems, limited rewards, and uncertainty regarding future career prospects. Nevertheless, they continued their athletic careers based on deeply rooted personal values, a strong athletic identity, and meaning-making processes grounded in endurance and commitment. These results suggest that the continuation of an athletic career is not merely a behavioral decision but a psychologically meaningful experience shaped by the interaction of internal and external factors. Importantly, the findings highlight the need for practitioners and coaches to support athletes' meaning-making processes and psychological resources, thereby facilitating sustained career engagement in challenging environments. Furthermore, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the lived meaning of "survival" in competitive sport and offers a new perspective on how persistence itself can become a source of psychological strength.

ID: 159 / **Poster Session 3: 5**
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Clinical sport psychology, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: youth sport, mental health, impulsivity

Exploring Associations Between Organized Sport Participation and Dimensions of Impulsivity Among US Youth

Matt D. Hoffmann[1], Joel D. Barnes[2]
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A growing number of studies have investigated the link between organized youth sport participation and mental health (e.g., Panza et al., 2020). Impulsivity—described as the tendency toward rash action (Watts et al., 2020)—is a personality trait relevant to mental health that has received little attention in the youth sport literature. Thus, the purpose of this study was to investigate the associations between organized sport participation and dimensions of impulsivity among US youth. Data were from the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study, a longitudinal study examining health in a broadly representative sample of US youth. Analyses included data from Wave 3 (N=10,584, Mage=12 years). Impulsivity was measured using the youth short-form UPPS-P Impulsive Behavior Scale (Watts et al., 2020), assessing five dimensions (e.g., sensation seeking, negative urgency). Data were analyzed using linear mixed-effects models with random intercepts. Participation in exclusively individual sports (vs. non-sport participation) predicted significantly ($p<.05$) lower negative urgency ($\beta=-0.11$), positive urgency ($\beta=-0.14$), and lack of premeditation ($\beta=-0.16$). Compared to non-sport participation, participation in exclusively team sports, exclusively individual sports, and both predicted significantly lower scores on lack of perseverance ($\beta=-0.20$, $\beta=-0.19$, $\beta=-0.32$, respectively). Conversely, participation in exclusively team sports and participation in both team and individual sports compared to non-sport participation predicted significantly higher scores on sensation-seeking ($\beta=0.17$ and $\beta=0.24$, respectively). Models accounted for 1-6% of the variance in impulsivity scores, suggesting modest effect sizes. In sum, youth sport participation may modestly protect against impulsivity, though it predicts greater sensation seeking.

ID: 169 / **Poster Session 3: 6**
Poster presentation
Topics: Best practice, Ethics in applied settings, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: Professional Practice, Professional Sustainability, Professional Development

Conceptualizing Communities of Practice in SEPP: An International Delphi Study of Purpose, Structure, and Professional Value

Alessandro Quartiroli[1,2], Christopher R. D Wagstaff[2]
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Communities of Practice (CoPs) are increasingly promoted in sport, exercise, and performance psychology (SEPP) as vehicles for professional learning and connection; however, the field lacks a shared conceptual understanding of what constitutes a CoP and how such communities can be effectively developed and sustained. This Delphi study (Quartiroli, 2025) aimed to establish expert consensus on the definition, purpose, structure, and professional value of CoPs in SEPP. An international panel of 72 experts with applied and scholarly experience in SEPP was recruited. Forty-three panelists from six continents completed Round 1, responding to open-ended questions addressing definitions of CoPs, developmental processes, membership and interaction patterns, facilitators of success, and factors that hinder or undermine maintenance. Data were analyzed using conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) from a constructionist perspective (Levers, 2013), informing the structured content presented for consensus evaluation in Round 2. Across rounds, analysis produced a consensual definition and contextualization of SEPP CoPs, alongside identified purposes (n = 11), establishment factors (n = 7), characteristics of successful CoPs (n = 10), perceived benefits (n = 8), factors contributing to struggle or failure (n = 9), potential member groups (n = 7), and core activities (n = 6). Forty panelists completed Round 2. While the definition and contextual features reached consensus, fourteen items did not, eight reached moderate consensus, and 22 items progressed to Round 3. The greatest disagreement concerned CoP membership. Findings provide a clearer conceptual foundation and practical guidance for the intentional design, facilitation, and sustainability of CoPs across SEPP contexts.

ID: 194 / **Poster Session 3: 7**
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: physical activity, anxiety, depression, problem behaviors

The Sequential Mediating Role of Anxiety and Depression in Physical Activity and Adolescent Problem Behaviors

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This study, grounded in the Health Promotion Model and Emotion Regulation Theory, examined the association between physical activity and adolescent problem behaviors and further tested the mediating and serial mediating roles of anxiety and depression. Participants were 447 junior and senior high school students from Shandong Province, China (aged 12–18 years, M = 15.26, SD = 1.72; 51.7% male). Measures included the Physical Activity Rating Scale, the Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale, the Depression Scale, and the Problem Behavior Scale. Data were analyzed using SPSS 27.0 and the PROCESS V4.3 component, including group comparisons, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and mediation analysis. Results showed that physical activity was negatively associated with anxiety, depression, and problem behaviors. Anxiety and depression functioned as independent mediators in the association between physical activity and problem behaviors and also formed a significant serial mediation pathway. The serial mediation pathway accounted for the largest proportion of the total indirect effect, indicating that anxiety and depression play a central role in the development of adolescent problem behaviors. These findings clarify the mechanisms linking physical activity to adolescent problem behaviors and highlight the importance of targeting anxiety and depression in intervention. The results provide theoretical support and practical implications for reducing negative emotions and behaviors and for promoting adolescents' participation in physical activity and their overall physical and mental health.

ID: 201 / **Poster Session 3: 8**
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Mental skills training, Personality, Talent identification/development
Keywords: mental toughness, assessment, elite athletes, self-awareness

Triangulating Mental Toughness: Correlations between Personality, Skills, and Self-Perception in National Athletes

Marina Gerin
Italian Federation of Sport Psychologists FIPsiS, Italy

Mental Toughness (MT) is widely recognized as a pivotal factor in elite sports performance. Theoretically, it is a multidimensional construct combining stable personality traits with trainable mental skills. Assessing these dimensions in isolation often fails to capture a competitor's complex psychological architecture. The challenge for the sport psychologist lies in understanding how an athlete's innate foundation aligns with learned strategies and self-awareness, as a lack of integration between these areas can lead to ineffective interventions. To investigate this, the current research involved 10 Italian national-level athletes (aged 20-26) utilizing a triangulated assessment protocol comprising three distinct self-report measures: the MTQPlus evaluating the trait component of MT via the 4Cs model (Control, Commitment, Challenge, Confidence); the QuAM2 measuring MT through eight trainable skill-based constructs; and the Performance Profile assessing idiosyncratic self-awareness. Data analyzed using Spearman's rho revealed specific, highly significant correlations. Notably, high Emotional Control (MTQPlus) correlated strongly with a realistic self-perception (rho = 0.79, p = 0.007) and a reduced current-ideal discrepancy (rho = -0.79, p = 0.007). Furthermore, advanced goal-setting (QuAM2) correlated with high Commitment (rho = 0.77, p = 0.009), while assertiveness aligned with Total Control (rho = 0.79, p = 0.007). Although the small sample size is a limitation necessitating larger future studies, the high specificity of this elite group provides valuable preliminary

insights. Ultimately, this triangulated protocol empowers the sport psychologist to identify psychological blind spots and craft highly tailored, evidence-based interventions bridging the gap between potential and actual performance.

ID: 202 / Poster Session 3: 9
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Perception & attention, Physical activity, Youth
Keywords: psychomotor abilities, reactive agility, youth, football

Relationships Between Cognitive Accuracy, Psychomotor Speed, and Reactive Agility in Youth Football

Izabela Huzarska-Rynasiewicz, Wojciech Paśko, Maciej Śliż, Patryk Marszałek, Natalia Jasińska, Krzysztof Przednowek

Rzeszów University, Medical College, Faculty of Physical Culture Sciences, Rzeszów, Poland

Football is a dynamic sport that requires advanced perceptual and motor abilities due to rapidly changing stimuli (Spierer et al., 2011). This study examined the relationship between psychomotor and cognitive abilities and reactive agility in youth football players. 101 teenage male football players (M = 14.95±0.87) from Polish clubs participated in the study. Cognitive abilities were assessed using the Optimis Computer System (Tarnowski, 2016) with test CHORT (choice reaction task) and PUT (visual search task) and reactive agility was measured with the SKILLCOURT (Hülsdünker et al., 2023) with tests: Random 50m Run (reactive agility task) and Random Star Run (multidirectional planned task). The results showed that reaction times were consistently higher than movement times in all psychomotor tests. Spearman rank correlation showed that performance in ball and non-ball variants was partially related (r=0.28, r=0.18). Processing speed in PUT correlated positively with reactive agility (r=0.35), while reaction time in CHORT negatively with multidirectional task (r=0.20). Stepwise regression analysis revealed that reactive agility were stronger explained by processing speed and movement time in older players (16 yrs). In the youngest group (14 yrs), agility performance was mostly explained by cognitive accuracy in CHORT. These patterns suggest that importance of cognitive accuracy and movement efficiency is highest at younger ages and shifts toward processing speed with maturation. Incorporating cognitive-focused exercises into training may improve agility and overall performance, especially in tasks involving ball control.

ID: 257 / Poster Session 3: 10
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Leadership
Keywords: coaches, self-compassion, psychological safety, sustainability

Self-compassion and psychological safety as predictors of depression/anxiety and sustainability in high-performance coaches

Johanna Belz[1], Karin Hägglund[2], Richard Eirikur Taehtinen[3], Göran Kenttä[4]

[1]German Sport University Cologne; [2]The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences; [3]University of Akureyri; [4]The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences, The University of Ottawa

Objectives

Coaches in high-performance environments face long hours, extensive travel, job insecurity, and professional isolation (Bentzen et al., 2016). These demands may increase the risk of mental health challenges like depression and anxiety, threatening career sustainability (Olusoga et al., 2025). This study examined whether self-compassion and psychological safety predict depression/anxiety symptoms and career sustainability in high-performance coaches.

Methods

The study involved 216 high-performance coaches from 40 Swedish national sport schools (22.9% female). The average age was 45.1 years (SD = 10.6). Depression/anxiety symptoms were assessed with the PHQ-4 (Löwe et al., 2010); sustainability with a single item; self-compassion with the Self-Compassion Scale (Neff, 2003a); and psychological safety with the Psychological Safety Scale (Edmondson, 1999). Linear regressions tested whether self-compassion and psychological safety were associated with depression/anxiety symptoms and sustainability.

Results

Self-kindness ($\beta = -.34$, $p < .05$) and psychological safety ($\beta = -.16$, $p < .05$) were significant negative predictors of depression/anxiety symptoms, $F(4, 209) = 17.46$, $p < .001$; adjusted $R^2 = .24$. For sustainability, psychological safety ($\beta = .16$, $p < .05$) was a significant predictor, $F(4, 209) = 10.36$, $p < .001$; adjusted $R^2 = .15$. A significant interaction between mindfulness and psychological safety ($\beta = .25$, $p < .05$) emerged in predicting sustainability, $F(7, 206) = 6.79$, $p < .001$, adjusted $R^2 = .16$.

Conclusion

Self-kindness and psychological safety were significant predictors of depression/anxiety symptoms and sustainability. The findings highlight the combined importance of individual and environmental resources for a coach's mental health and career sustainability.

ID: 273 / Poster Session 3: 11
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Health, Physical activity
Keywords: habit, boredom, contextual stability, physical activity

Boring Habits? Cross-Sectional Studies Investigating the Relationships Between Habit, Boredom, and Contextual Stability

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[1]Goethe University, Germany; [2]University of Konstanz, Germany; [3]University of Hamburg, Germany

The formation of habits requires the pairing of contextual cue(s) with a response. Therefore, the relevant cues must remain stable across repetitions. At the same time, high contextual stability may lead to increased monotony and thereby triggers sensations of boredom, which can promote exploration and disrupt contextual stability. The present study aims to examine (a) the associations between habit strength, boredom proneness, and activity-related boredom, and (b) whether distinct aspects of contextual stability are differentially related to habit strength and boredom variables in the context of exercising and running. Two cross-sectional online surveys with gym exercisers (n1 = 119, Mage = 29.38 ± 13.88 years, 47 female) and runners (n2 = 340, Mage = 35.68 ± 13.88 years, 182 female) assessed habit strength, boredom proneness, activity-related boredom, and contextual stability. Analyses comprised correlational analyses including Bayesian cross-sectional networks. Across both activities, habit strength was negatively associated with boredom proneness and activity-related boredom, whereas boredom proneness was positively associated with activity-related boredom. Analyses including contextual stability indicated that timing was more strongly associated with habit strength, whereas the characteristics of the activity showed stronger associations with perceived boredom. Whereas current habit interventions recommend maximizing contextual stability, the present findings indicate a more differentiated perspective. Keeping cues consistent that are central to habit formation while varying non-essential contextual features may help prevent boredom without undermining habit strength. Longitudinal studies are required to test causality.

ID: 294 / Poster Session 3: 12
Poster presentation
Topics: Health, Movement, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Organizational well-being, Exercise-adherence, Sedentary-behavior, Intervention-design

Bridging the Gap: A Multidimensional Person-Centered Approach to Organizational Wellness

Hila Sharon David
College of Management, Department of Behavioral Sciences, Israel

Workplace wellness interventions often fail to translate organizational intentions into sustained employee health behaviors (Nielsen et al., 2017). This study utilized the OneWell™ model, a holistic, multidimensional diagnostic tool grounded in the biopsychosocial framework (Engel, 1977) and Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), to map employees' wellness needs within a global pharmaceutical organization. A mixed-methods approach was applied to 105 employees (83% female, 37% managers) working in a hybrid setting (54% office, 46% field). Participants completed a six-dimension wellness inventory (Physical, Emotional, Social, Intellectual, Environmental, Purpose) alongside open-ended qualitative questions. Findings indicated an intention–behavior gap: while employees reported relatively high levels of Purpose (M = 5.63, SD = 0.99) and Social Support (M = 5.51, SD = 1.03), the Physical (M = 4.57) and Environmental (M = 4.36) domains were lower. Nearly half of the sample (49%) reported less than six hours of continuous sitting, suggesting elevated occupational sedentary behavior. Office-based employees reported lower environmental satisfaction (M = 3.84, SD = 1.20) compared to field employees (M = 5.20, SD = 0.82). Qualitative responses highlighted a perceived "time paradox," whereby workload limits engagement with available wellness resources. These findings suggest that standardized approaches may not sufficiently address contextual needs. Data-informed, context-sensitive strategies may better support the translation of organizational intentions into daily health behaviors and highlight the role of sport and exercise psychology in workplace wellness.

ID: 296 / Poster Session 3: 13
Poster presentation
Topics: Emotion, Group dynamics, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Youth
Keywords: Interpersonal emotion regulation, Social Relations Model, Dyadic processes, Teammate relationships

How Do Teammates Exchange Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Efforts? A Social Relations Model Approach

Maria Wei Blanes, Joan Pons
University of the Balearic Islands, Spain

Interpersonal emotion regulation (i.e., efforts addressed at changing how another person feels; Niven, 2017) has received considerable attention in the sport domain in recent years (Tamminen et al., 2024). However, few studies have examined this process from a dyadic perspective to uncover the actor-partner effects in interpersonal emotion regulation exchanges. This study aims to a) Decompose actor, partner, and relationship variance components in interpersonal emotion regulation transactions in sport; and b) Test how reciprocal are the actor-partner exchanges among teammates. The sample included 37 team sports, consisting of 11 athletes each (n = 407 Spanish athletes; Mage= 16.85, SD=2.99; 46.2% female). Using a round-robin design, athletes rated their perceptions of the exchanged interpersonal emotional efforts toward each teammate (EROS; Niven et al., 2011). We used Social Relations Model as analytic framework. Variance decomposition indicated that interpersonal emotion regulation

among teammates was primarily due unique dyadic relationship effects (relationship variance = .553, p < .001), followed by smaller but still significant partner (partner variance= .277, p < .001) and actor effects (actor variance = .170, p < .001). This suggests that athletes' perceptions depend more on specific teammate pairings than on individuals' general tendencies to regulate others or to be regulated. Regarding reciprocity, results show a strong reciprocity; athletes who tend to regulate many teammates tend to also be regulated by others (generalized reciprocity = .738, p < .001). This study shows the relevance of specific relationships between teammates in providing emotional support to others. Interventions should focus on strengthening dyadic teammate relationships.

ID: 308 / **Poster Session 3: 14**
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: longitudinal study, sports injuries, self-compassion, well-being

Be Kind to Yourself: The Role of Self-Compassion in Athletes' Post-Injury Well-Being

Stefan Berti[1,2], Tabea Werner[1,2], Alena Michel-Kröhler[1], Karolina Grebner[1,2], Michèle Wessa[1,3,4]
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Sports injuries can have a significant impact on athletes' mental health, for example through performance loss, precarious financial situations or uncertain career prospects. As longitudinal studies related to sport injuries are scarce, though, the exact interplay between sports injuries and mental health and moderating factors remains unclear. Thus, the present study had two main objectives. The first was to investigate athletes' well-being (WHO-5; Brähler et al., 2007) on a weekly basis post-injury. The second was to examine the role of self-compassion (Neff, 2003) measured as state (SSCS-S; Neff et al., 2021) as a protective factor. 144 competitive athletes (female: 91, Mage = 23.01, range: 16-40 years) from various sports with a mean training duration of 11.36 hours per week and 21% competing internationally completed up to twelve weekly surveys after sustaining a sports injury, resulting in 1409 observations. Results from linear mixed models suggest that self-compassion and well-being vary over time both between (49% to 68%) and within individuals (32% to 51%). Well-being slightly, but significantly increased over time (ß = 0.13) and higher self-compassion was consistently associated with higher mental well-being at both the within- (ß = 1.29) and between-person (ß = 1.59) levels even after controlling for age, gender, expected time loss due to injury, injury status, and the average pain experienced over the week (p < .001). Results highlight the potential of self-compassion as a protective mechanism during times of injury. Intervention and ecological momentary assessment studies could build on these results and further investigate the causal mechanisms.

ID: 313 / **Poster Session 3: 15**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Emotion, Human factors, Movement
Keywords: psychophysiology, competitive pressure, arousal, in situ measurement

Formula Racing Study: Feasibility of Measuring Pit Crew Heart Rate During Tire Changes in a Race

Jumpei Yamashita, Hiroki Terashima
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Theories of arousal and performance posit that a high but manageable sympathetic state supports optimal execution of well-learned skills under pressure (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908; Easterbrook, 1959; Zajonc & Sales, 1966; Fazey & Hardy, 1988). However, field heart rate data are often confounded by movement, whereas laboratory stressors such as the Trier Social Stress Test elicit only modest increases (Kirschbaum et al., 1993). Formula racing pit stops may offer an ecologically valid, relatively low-movement window on competitive arousal. This case report assessed the feasibility of obtaining analyzable electrocardiography (ECG)-derived heart rate during a single pit-stop tire change to quantify physiological arousal. On race day, three professional pit crew members wore chest-mounted sensors recording ECG and triaxial accelerometry. Two executed the tire change; one remained off task. Heart rate was derived from ECG, and accelerometry was used to contextualize movement. We compared the pit-stop heart rate response with values observed during other race periods and qualifying. ECG was successfully recorded during the pit-stop window, yielding physiologically plausible heart rate estimates. In the two performers, ECG-derived heart rate showed a marked, transient increase time-locked to the tire change interval, while concurrent accelerometry suggested limited whole-body movement. Heart rate during other race and qualifying periods was lower. The off-task crew member exhibited a smaller concurrent rise. These observations are consistent with a brief surge of physiological arousal during a competitive, one-shot task with relatively limited movement. This pit-stop measurement setting may be useful for future in situ tests of physiological arousal theories.

ID: 314 / **Poster Session 3: 16**
Poster presentation

Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: Transition, Intervention, Olympic-Games

The Five Rings for Soft-Landing: A Multidisciplinary Intervention Program for Transitioning Back Following the Olympic Games

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For many athletes, the Olympic Games (and other peak events) represents their highest aspirations. When the Olympic Games (OG) ends, athletes must find the strength and motivation to return to arduous training toward their next goals. Lacking proper support in this transitional stage, athletes may experience anxiety, burnout, doubt their athletic identity, mood swings, and isolate themselves (DeWolfe, & Dithurbide, 2022). Diment et al. (2023) found that 27% of the Danish Olympic athletes suffered from post-OG moderate-to-high depression or below-average well-being scores. To assist athletes facing these challenges, a scientific-practitioner intervention program was developed, named the "Five Rings for Soft Landing". It aims at providing athletes with a modifiable set of psychosocial services and tools during this post Olympic period of adjustment and adaptation. The intervention program consists of five pillars that each includes various course of actions based on the athlete's needs: one preparatory (pre-OG, e.g., meetings with former Olympic athletes) and four post-OG - personal empowerment (e.g., motivational interviewing); contribution to community (e.g., educational lectures); sport/self-development (e.g., Cycle of Life mentoring program), and social support (e.g., joint fitness activities). This multidimensional intervention model provides a scaffold for the emotional, cognitive, social, and motivational aspects of the athletes' lives. Based on extensive scientific and practical knowledge. drawn from sport psychology, training theory and career change-events literature, this intervention program can serve practitioners while providing services for athletes who strive to continue their athletic career post OG or peak competitions in general.

ID: 329 / Poster Session 3: 17
Poster presentation
Topics: Esports
Keywords: lifestyle, esports, health

Esports and Lifestyle: Players' Perspectives on Health, Social Relationships, and Balance

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The rapid growth of esports has generated increasing interest in how players perceive their health, social interactions, and everyday life. This study employed a qualitative research design aiming to explore their lived experiences, perceived challenges, and coping strategies related to participation in esports. participants were 81 amateur esports players (M = 26.4 years, SD = 7.1, 17.6 playing hours/week), recruited through academic, professional, and community networks. Participants took part in semi-structured interviews. Participants generally viewed esports as a source of entertainment and social connection, highlighting opportunities for interaction, teamwork, and a sense of belonging (Rudolf et al., 2020). However, they also reported that excessive engagement could lead to negative outcomes, including physical fatigue, headaches, musculoskeletal discomfort, and increased emotional strain (Poulos et al., 2026). Still, many players emphasised the importance of balance, noting that moderate involvement in esports didn't hinder their professional, academic, or personal development. The interviews further revealed a notable absence of structured health promotion initiatives specifically designed for esports players, despite participants expressing strong interest in programmes that would provide practical guidance on posture, physical exercise, nutrition, and time management. Players consistently highlighted self-regulation and moderation as central elements of "healthy gaming," recognising that personal discipline and boundary-setting are critical for maintaining well-being (Kaegelars et al., 2025). Overall, the findings suggest that esports can represent a positive and enriching activity when embedded within a balanced lifestyle. The study underscores the need for targeted health and well-being interventions to support esports players in a rapidly expanding field.

ID: 332 / Poster Session 3: 18
Poster presentation
Topics: Talent identification/development, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Youth football players, Dual career, coach perspectives

Between the Classroom and the Pitch: Balancing Athletic and Educational Demands Among Saudi Youth Football Players

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The purpose of this study was to examine how Saudi youth football players balance academic and athletic demands, as well as coaches' perceptions of the challenges and resources influencing this process. A qualitative research design was adopted using structured focus group discussions to explore participants' experiences. The study sample consisted of 24 youth football players aged 15–19 years enrolled in Saudi club academies and 4 coaches working with players in the same age group. Data were analyzed using inductive thematic analysis through a systematic process of coding, categorization, and theme development to identify recurring patterns grounded in participants'

experiences. The analysis generated four main themes: (1) scheduling conflicts between academic and athletic demands, (2) performance pressure in both sport and education, (3) institutional and social support systems, and (4) self-management and coping skills. These themes were defined as interconnected factors influencing players' ability to manage dual-career demands. The findings indicated that time conflicts and performance pressures represent major challenges for players. Coaches emphasized the importance of support systems, including family support, psychological support, and time-management skills. This study contributes to the limited body of research on dual-career development in Saudi youth football by providing context-specific qualitative insights. Future efforts should focus on enhancing coordination between educational institutions and sports organizations and developing structured support programs to ensure both academic and athletic continuity.

ID: 350 / Poster Session 3: 19
Poster presentation
Topics: Mental skills training, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement, Perception & attention
Keywords: Time perception, motor imagery, action observation, flight time

The Effect of Motor Imagery and Action Observation on Time Perception in Short-Term Motor Tasks

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Time perception systematically alters during physical activity, yet temporal accuracy and directional bias in short-duration ballistic movements remain poorly understood. This study examined the effects of a 6-week combined Action Observation and Motor Imagery (AOMI) intervention on time perception during Countermovement Jump (CMJ) and Drop Jump (DJ) tasks. Twenty-four athletes were randomly assigned to an experimental (AOMI; n = 11) or control group (n = 13). The experimental group completed a structured intervention (3 sessions/week, 24 minutes/session) involving synchronous observation and kinesthetic imagery. Actual flight time was measured using an OptoJump system, while perceived flight time was self-reported. Each condition consisted of two trials, and mean values were used for analysis. Absolute error (AE) quantified temporal accuracy, and constant error (CE) assessed directional bias. Mixed-design ANOVA revealed no significant Group × Time × Task interaction for AE ($p > .05$), indicating no improvement in temporal accuracy. In contrast, CE analysis showed a significant main effect of group, $F(1, 22) = 14.23$, $p < .001$, $\eta p^2 = .39$, and a significant Group × Time interaction, $F(1, 22) = 3.98$, $p = .046$, $\eta p^2 = .15$. The experimental group demonstrated increased underestimation of flight time over time, whereas the control group exhibited a tendency toward overestimation. No task-related effects were observed ($p > .05$). These findings suggest that AOMI does not enhance temporal accuracy in millisecond-level movements but may systematically alter directional bias in time perception, highlighting a dissociation between perceptual accuracy and estimation tendencies.

ID: 363 / Poster Session 3: 20
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Coaching, Consulting/ counseling, Group dynamics
Keywords: Boxing, Inner Game, Mental Health, Coaching

Boxing for Mind, Mood, and Movement (BM3): A pilot study exploring applied sport psychology intervention impact.

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The BM3 non-contact boxing program is a novel, integrated, applied sport psychology framework promote positive mental health change. The BM3 program is an instructor-led, manualized exercise group (delivered 1x per week for 75 minutes). BM3 integrates Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) strategies (Goyal et al., 2014), Teaching Games for Understanding (TGFU) (Rodrigues et al., 2025), and principles from the Inner Game (Gallwey, 1974). The pilot implementation of BM3 was conducted within a university course over a 13-week period (N = 10; self-selected, general population students; age 20-23; 3 female, 7 male; 68% attendance), using valid pre–post single-item self-report measures scaled from 1 not at all to 10 extremely for depression, stress and anxiety were administered before and after each BM3 session (Elo et al., 2003; Zimmerman et al., 2006; Turon et al, 2019. Average reductions at the end of the BM3 program were observed in depression (51.3%), stress (48.2%), and anxiety (52.6%). These results compare favorably with those of Bozdarov et al. (2025), who used a similar study design, sample size, and programming, and reported similar improvements in mental health among individuals with a clinical diagnosis. Qualitative weekly subject responses yielded five dominant themes: acute psychophysiological regulation, activation fatigue, cognitive reorientation, identity micro shifts, and residual stress. The findings of the BM3 program suggest it is a feasible and acceptable exercise and behavioral intervention for mental health enhancement. Future well-designed randomized controlled trials with larger sample sizes and stronger comparative analyses among individuals with clinical diagnoses are warranted to confirm clinical benefits.

ID: 386 / Poster Session 3: 21
Poster presentation

Topics: Best practice, Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Motivation
Keywords: Elite, Coaches, Empowering, Climates

Supporting Elite Coaches' Creation of Empowering Motivational Climates Through Coach Education and Follow-up Community of Practice

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This study examined the perceived impacts of Empowering Coaching™ (EC) training (Duda, 2013) and subsequent development and maintenance of a Community of Practice (CoP, Lave & Wenger, 1991) on elite athletics coaches' (1) understanding of workshop content, and (2) coaching practices. Views on the addition of the CoP were also garnered. Nine multi-national elite athletics coaches (7 male, 2 female) completed the EC™ workshop online (two 2.5-hour sessions). Data were collected through individual semi-structured interviews. Coaches subsequently participated in an ongoing CoP and interviews were conducted post-CoP to explore its impact. Questions asked : What did coaches understand and learn from the training? How and what did coaches change or enhance in efforts to be more empowering? All interviews were transcribed verbatim and data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Four themes captured coaches' learning from the training: reflections and dialogue facilitated EC understanding, ABCs central to athlete & group engagement, communication critical, and awareness of consequences of empowering versus disempowering climates. Three themes reflected impacts on coaching: becoming self-aware, confident & open to change, enhanced quality and quantity of autonomy support and more / improved & deliberate communication. Two themes indicated that the CoP facilitated reflection & enhanced communication and promoted coaches becoming more empowering. Findings suggest that EC™ training, supported by an ongoing CoP, can enhance self-awareness and confidence, and facilitate the application of EC principles in elite sport contexts.

ID: 397 / Poster Session 3: 22
Poster presentation
Topics: Emotion, Youth
Keywords: Self-Conscious Emotions, Perfectionist Climate, Sport Commitment

The Mediating Role of Self-Conscious Emotions in the Relationship Between Perfectionist Climate and Commitment to Sport

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Grounded in self-conscious emotion theory, which suggests that social-evaluative climates shape athletes' emotions and subsequent motivational outcomes, this study aimed to examine the mediating role of self-conscious emotions in the relationship between perfectionistic climate and sport commitment.177 athletes (Mage = 15.37, SD = 1.28; 95 boys, 82 girls) completed the Perfectionistic Climate Scale–Sport (expectations, criticism, control, conditional acceptance, anxiety), the Body-Appearance Related Self-Conscious Emotions Scale (shame, guilt, authentic pride, hubristic pride), and the Sport Commitment Scale (enthusiastic commitment, constrained commitment). Structural equation modelling with bootstrapping indicated acceptable model fit, ($\chi^2(6) = 11.12$, $p = .085$, CFI = .96, TLI = .69, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .03). Perfectionistic climate positively predicted shame ($\beta = .30$, $p < .001$) and guilt ($\beta = .42$, $p < .001$), but didn't predict authentic pride ($\beta = .03$, $p = .693$) or hubristic pride ($\beta = .09$, $p = .229$). It also had a significant direct effect on constrained commitment ($\beta = .30$, $p < .001$). Shame positively predicted constrained commitment ($\beta = .27$, $p < .001$), whereas authentic pride ($\beta = .19$, $p = .014$) and hubristic pride ($\beta = .32$, $p < .001$) positively predicted enthusiastic commitment. The total indirect effect of perfectionistic climate on constrained commitment via self-conscious emotions was significant ($\beta = .14$, 95% CI [.05, .25]). Via shame ($\beta = .08$, 95% CI [.03, .16]), the total indirect effect on enthusiastic commitment was not significant ($\beta = -.02$, 95% CI [−.09, .05]). Overall, a perfectionistic climate may increase constrained commitment by elevating shame and guilt, while enthusiastic commitment appears more strongly linked to pride experiences, independent of perfectionistic climate.

ID: 402 / Poster Session 3: 23
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Social psychology, Violence
Keywords: Normalization, Psychological Abuse, Aesthetic Sport, Grounded Theory

Understanding the Process of Normalizing Psychological Abuse: A Grounded Theory Study

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Psychological abuse is defined as "a pattern of deliberate non-contact behaviours by a person within a critical relationship role that has the potential to be harmful," such as verbal threats, humiliation, and degrading comments (Stirling & Kerr, 2008, p.178). Despite growing recognition that psychological abuse is normalized in sport (Eliasson, 2024; Jacobs et al., 2017; Rawn et al., 2023), there remains a gap in understanding how these harmful behaviours become normalized within sport contexts. Existing research suggests that such practices are often framed as necessary for achieving success and winning performances (Parent & Fortier, 2018). Although normalization has been theorized in fields outside of sport (e.g., Ashforth & Anand, 2003; May et al., 2009), the process of normalizing psychological abuse has yet to be empirically examined and conceptualized within sport. The purpose of this

research was to explore the underlying conditions that contribute to the normalization of psychologically abusive behaviours experienced in aesthetic/artistic-based sports. Adopting a constructivist grounded theory approach, sixteen high-level (i.e., university, provincial, national, and/or international) women athletes aged 18–35 years participated in one-to-one, semi-structured interviews (Charmaz, 2006; Holt, 2016). A data-informed theoretical model will be presented, illustrating the process of how psychological abuse is experienced and normalized in sport, offering insight into how the normalization of these harmful behaviours may be effectively targeted and disrupted. This study contributes a nuanced understanding of the vulnerabilities that underpin the normalization of psychologically abusive behaviours and identifies targeted strategies to mitigate these risks to promote safer sport practices.

ID: 421 / Poster Session 3: 24
Poster presentation
Topics: Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches)
Keywords: Mental Representation, Schwimming, Structure–Dimensional Analysis, Motor Control

Distance-Specific Mental Representations in Freestyle Swimming: A Structural Analysis

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Motor skills are stored in long-term memory as structured mental representations (MR) that support planning, execution, and learning. In swimming, sprint and long-distance events impose different technical and functional demands, yet little is known about how these differences are reflected in the MR of freestyle technique. This study examined whether distance-specialed freestyle swimmers differ in MR structure and how such differences may inform technique training. Freestyle swimmers (n = 36), all competing at the national level, were grouped by primary competition distance (sprint vs. long-distance). Data were collected during a national training camp. MR of freestyle swimming were assessed using the Structure–Dimensional Analysis of MR, capturing how key technique elements are cognitively organized. Hierarchical cluster analyses were used to derive individual and group-level representation structures. Group differences were examined via invariance analysis (dcrit = 4.57, α = 0.01). Selected individual cases were analyzed to illustrate training-relevant patterns beyond group averages. Sprint swimmers showed a more functionally integrated MR organization with tighter coupling of propulsion-related elements, reflecting faster transitions between movement phases. Long-distance swimmers exhibited stronger representation of glide-related elements, indicating greater emphasis on movement efficiency. MR structures differed significantly between groups ($\lambda = 0.49 < \lambda crit = 0.68$). Individual analyses further revealed technique-specific deviations that were not evident at the group level but provided concrete cues for targeted training interventions. Freestyle distance specialization may be associated with systematic differences in MR structures. Assessing these structures may provide a useful diagnostic tool for individualized technique training by aligning cognitive and motor aspects with distance-specific performance demands.

ID: 441 / Poster Session 3: 25
Poster presentation
Topics: Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Prevention, Sport-plus, experiential learning, secondary education

SMARTS: Evaluation of a Sports-Based Preventive Mental Health Intervention in Secondary Schools

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Mental health problems are among the most pressing public health concerns for children and adolescents, particularly in urban contexts. Schools offer a key setting for preventive and promotive mental health initiatives. Sport, and physical education (PE) in particular, has been proposed as a promising “hook” to engage young people in mental health programmes and as a context for experiential learning. However, there remains limited evidence on sports-based preventive mental health interventions specifically developed for and embedded within secondary school settings. The SMARTS (Strengthening Mental Health and Resilience Through Schools) project addresses this gap by co-designing a sport-based mental health programme tailored to pupils aged 13–15 years in the Brussels urban context. The intervention integrates the development of key social-emotional competencies within PE classes. A group-randomised controlled trial is being conducted across four secondary schools with approximately 400 pupils during the 2025–2026 academic year. Using a mixed-methods design, quantitative outcomes include well-being, resilience, psychological symptoms, and emotion regulation. In addition, qualitative interviews with intervention providers (i.e., PE teachers) and pupils are being used to examine implementation processes and participants’ lived experiences of the programme. Data collection for this project has concluded in April 2026. This poster presents preliminary findings from the ongoing trial, with a focus on early indications of impact and implementation feasibility in real-world school settings.

ID: 470 / Poster Session 3: 26
Poster presentation

Topics: Social psychology, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19), Any other topic
Keywords: Online Abuse, Professional Female Athletes, UK Team Sports, Social Media

The Impact of Online Abuse on Professional Female Athletes

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Women's sport has seen a disproportionate rise in online abuse directed at female athletes (Bowes & Culvin, 2021; World Athletics, 2022). This is particularly prevalent in male-dominated sports, such as football, rugby, and cricket (Williams et al., 2025). Existing literature in this area is limited to secondary analyses of the abuse itself (Kearns et al., 2022). This study explores the psychological impact of online abuse on professional female athletes. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 representatives (M=3; F=7) from eight clubs, organisations, player unions, and governing bodies at the top level of women's professional leagues for football, rugby, and cricket in the UK. Key stakeholders include well-being, player care, and safeguarding managers; heads of communication; sport psychologists; and social media and account managers. The data were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and guided by Foucault's governmentality framework (Burchell et al., 1991). We reveal that despite stakeholders acknowledging the growing issue of online abuse for their athletes, professional sportswomen remain vulnerable to the impact of online abuse. This unique insight includes stories of female athletes experiencing online abuse, discussions of the risks and forms of online abuse that threaten their physical safety, and circumstances which have required psychological intervention. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on digital harm and athlete welfare. The proposed recommendations and interventions would establish safer digital spaces that reduce harm, safeguard mental health, and enable more effective psychological support for female athletes, while promoting the sustainable growth of women's professional sport.

ID: 477 / Poster Session 3: 27
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Consulting/ counseling, Decision making and judgement, Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: luck, skill, attribution

Reading Results Right: How Context Shapes Skill and Luck in Sport

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Sport outcomes (results such as win-loss, ranking, or medals) reflect both skill and luck, yet post-competition explanations often treat them as entirely skill or entirely luck. Even with the same skill, performance varies from attempt to attempt, whereas luck reflects uncontrollable randomness. This poster introduces a conceptual framework to help athletes, coaches, and sport psychologists (a) identify situations where outcomes are strongly shaped by luck and (b) make more accurate attributions by weighting skill and luck according to their likely contributions. Based on models of success across sport and business, we specify contextual conditions in which similar performance quality can lead to very different outcomes, thereby increasing the role of luck: (1) high performance density among elite competitors, (2) competition format (league vs. knockout/cup), (3) the number and interdependence of opponents (solo, head-to-head, team events), (4) the degree of standardization of conditions (e.g. pool vs open water), and (5) the shape of the reward structure (e.g., medal vs no medal). We argue that luck is frequently underestimated in elite sport because it is difficult to quantify and because acknowledging it can threaten perceived control. Grounded in theory-driven reasoning, we suggest that calibrating skill–luck attributions may improve goal setting and emotional recovery. It may also legitimize "bad luck" accounts while preserving agency by focusing on controllable process factors and acknowledging uncontrollable randomness in outcomes, which may support athletes' mental health. Rather than eliminating luck, the applied challenge is to recognize when its influence is likely high and to interpret outcomes accordingly.

ID: 482 / Poster Session 3: 28
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Exercise psychology, Neuropsychology
Keywords: physical activity, cognitive function planning, executive function

Effects of Exercise and Cognitive Training on Metacognition in Older Adults: The Moderating Role of Intervention Frequency

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The present study examined the effects of exercise and cognitive training performed at different intervention frequencies on metacognition in older adults. A total of 92 community-dwelling older adults (mean age = 76.45 years) were randomly assigned to one of three groups: a once-weekly training group (n = 23), a twice-weekly training group (n = 37), or a control group (n = 32). The intervention comprised 60 min sessions over 12 weeks that integrated multicomponent exercise training (aerobic, resistance, balance, agility, and coordination-based neuromuscular exercises) with concurrent cognitive training targeting memory, reasoning, and processing speed. Metacognition was assessed before and after the intervention using the Tower of London (TOL) task. Results showed that the twice-weekly training group demonstrated a significantly lower Total Move Score at post-intervention compared with pre-intervention. Moreover, at post-intervention, the twice-weekly group exhibited superior performance (fewer total moves) relative to both the once-weekly training group and the control group. No significant pre-to-post changes

were observed in the once-weekly training group or the control group. In addition, no significant group differences or intervention effects were found for other TOL indices, including total correct score, total initiation time, total execution time, and total problem-solving time. Overall, these findings suggest that exercise training with cognitive demand performed twice per week may effectively enhance planning quality and efficiency in older adults. In contrast, a once-weekly training frequency appears insufficient to elicit comparable benefits. The results highlight intervention frequency as a key moderating factor in the cognitive benefits of cognitively demanding exercise on metacognition.

ID: 489 / Poster Session 3: 29
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches)
Keywords: Working memory, verbal and visual instructions, motor learning, sport

The effect of verbal and visual instructions on working memory and motor learning in sport: a scoping review

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Working memory plays a fundamental role in learning and sports performance, as it allows relevant information to be processed, stored and manipulated during practice and competition. Besides, in the sports the type of instructions provided by the coach can significantly influence the cognitive load of the athlete and, consequently, their performance and acquisition of skills. The aim of this systematic review was to analyse the existing scientific evidence on the relationship between working memory and the different types of coaching instructions in the sports field. A systematic review was conducted using the PRISMA method. The databases consulted were Web of Science, SCOPUS and PubMed. Empirical studies that evaluated working memory in sports contexts and compared different types of instructions, such as explicit, implicit, external, or internal instructions were selected. The time period was limited between 2000 to 2025. A total of 91 articles were identified, of which 11 were included in the final analysis. The results indicate that instructions that reduce the load on working memory, such as implicit instructions or those with an external attentional focus, tend to facilitate motor learning and performance, especially in situations of high complexity or competitive pressure. In contrast, explicit and highly detailed instructions can overload working memory, negatively affecting performance, particularly in novice athletes. In conclusion, these results are very important from a practical point of view since they suggest that adapting the type of coach instructions based on the demands of working memory can optimize learning and sports performance.

ID: 498 / Poster Session 3: 30
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Emotion, Motivation, Self
Keywords: self-regulation, substitution, athlete experience

On the Bench: Athletes' Experiences of Substitution and Self-Regulation in Team Sport

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Substitutions play an integral role in team sports, enabling tactical flexibility and workload management, while representing critical psychological moments for athletes. For example, prior work indicates that substitution experiences may shape emotional responses and readiness to contribute when called upon. However, athletes' experience of these situations and the ways they regulate their responses have received little empirical attention. Accordingly, this study explored athletes' experiences of being benched, their self-regulatory processes, and whether these processes differed between sports with and without in-game re-entry. Using an exploratory design, eight competitive athletes (men and women) participated in semi- structured interviews conducted within a constructivist paradigm. Data were analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis to capture participants' idiosyncratic meaning-making while identifying patterns of convergence within sport-structure groups. Findings indicated distinct ways athletes interpreted reduced playing time, appraised its fairness and implications for role and identity, and attempted to regulate attention, emotion, and readiness. Analysis of preliminary findings suggested shared patterns within re-entry versus non-re-entry contexts that carry practical implications for coach communication and practitioner support. Specifically, it appears that coach feedback for substitution rationale plays a significant role in reducing ruminations, impacting preparedness for performance in re-entry sport types. These insights inform recommendations for preparing athletes for substitution situations and supporting self- regulatory responses in ways that protect both immediate readiness and longer-term wellbeing in the team environment. Future research should examine how athletes' substitution experiences and self-regulatory strategies evolve across a competitive season, with particular attention to changes in identity, role clarity, and readiness.

ID: 519 / Poster Session 3: 31
Poster presentation
Topics: Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Powerlifting, Eating Disorders, Weight Control, Sport Psychology.

Risk of Eating Disorders in Strength Sports: Evidence from Spanish Powerlifting

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Eating Disorders (ED) have been extensively studied in aesthetic sports; however, their presence in strength disciplines such as Powerlifting has received less attention. The present study aimed to analyze the relationship between weight control practices and the development of symptoms associated with ED in Powerlifting athletes in Spain. A cross-sectional study was conducted with a sample of 200 athletes, with ages ranging from 18 to 40 years, using the Eating Habits Questionnaire for Athletes (CHAD) for assessment. The results showed that 22% of the sample presented some degree of risk for ED. Significant differences were found by gender, with higher levels of symptomatology in women, while no significant differences were observed regarding age or weight category. In conclusion, these findings suggest that, despite not being an aesthetic sport, Powerlifting involves relevant risks to the psychological and nutritional health of its practitioners, especially in women. The implementation of specific prevention and evaluation strategies for this discipline is recommended, as well as future longitudinal studies with a gender perspective to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon.

ID: 526 / Poster Session 3: 32
Poster presentation
Topics: Health, Physical activity, Psychophysiology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: University students, depression, cardiorespiratory fitness

Association between cardiorespiratory fitness and depression in university students: The mediation effect of lifestyle

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Cardiorespiratory fitness (CRF) has been negatively associated with depressive symptoms in university students (Jalene et al., 2019). However, the mechanisms underlying this relationship remain unclear. This study examined whether global score for lifestyle mediates the association between CRF and depressive symptoms. This is a cross-sectional analysis from the prospective cohort UniLife-M. 654 university students from 10 different Brazilian universities were included. CRF was assessed using the 20-m shuttle-run test. The U-SMILE questionnaire was used to assess lifestyle, and depressive symptoms were assessed using the PHQ-9. Structural equation modeling with maximum likelihood estimation and 5,000 bootstrap resamples was conducted to test a mediation model in which CRF predicted depressive symptoms indirectly through lifestyle. Fully adjusted model (sex and BMI) indicated that CRF was positively associated with lifestyle (a: $\beta = 0.158$; $p = 0.005$), and lifestyle was inversely associated with depressive symptoms (b: $\beta = -0.358$; $p < 0.001$). After inclusion of the covariates, the direct effect (c') of CRF on depressive symptoms was no longer statistically significant ($\beta = -0.074$; $p = 0.142$). However, the total effect of CRF on depressive symptoms (c) was significant ($\beta = -0.130$; $p = 0.014$). The indirect effect (a*b) confirmed that lifestyle mediated the relationship between CRF and depressive symptoms ($\beta = -0.057$; $p = 0.011$), accounting for 19.7% of the variance in depressive symptoms. Lifestyle mediates the association between CRF and depressive symptoms, suggesting that both fitness and health-related behaviors contribute to depressive symptoms. Interventions targeting improvements in CRF and healthier lifestyle may exert beneficial effects on depression.

ID: 566 / Poster Session 3: 33
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Emotion, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: emotional and physical exhaustion, devaluation

Burnout and Well-Being Among Coaches

Galina Domuschieva-Rogleva, Maria Yancheva
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Understanding and managing stress and burnout is of paramount importance for sports coaches, as they often face dual pressure: managing their own stress while regulating their athletes' emotional state. The objective of this study was to analyze levels of perceived stress, burnout, and psychological well-being, and to examine the interdependencies among these variables in coaches from various sports. The research was conducted with 107 coaches (37 women and 80 men; M age = 39.6 years), categorized by age and sport type. The following instruments were used: the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10; Cohen et al., 1983), the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ; Raedeke & Smith, 2001), and the WHO-5 Well-Being Index. Results indicated that 49% of the coaches exhibited moderate levels of perceived stress, 31% high levels, and 20% low levels. Regarding burnout, the reduced sense of personal accomplishment subscale shows the highest levels among the studied coaches, followed by emotional and physical exhaustion and devaluation of interest in sport. Among coaches, differentiated by type of sport, a statistically significant difference was found in the emotional and physical exhaustion subscale ($H = 6.492$, $p = .05$). Increased perceived stress significantly contributed to the devaluation of interest in sport among the studied coaches ($\beta = .464$, $p < .01$). The results of the study on perceived stress and burnout highlight the necessity of implementing psychological strategies and programs aimed at improving mental well-being and work efficiency when training and supporting athletes.

ID: 572 / Poster Session 3: 34
Poster presentation
Topics: Mental skills training
Keywords: Mental Skills Training, Athletic Performance, Emotional Regulation

Mental Performance Optimization in Modern Sport: A Sport Psychology Perspective

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Hashemit University, Jordan, Hashemite Kingdom of

Sport psychology is increasingly recognized as a key factor in optimizing athletic performance and supporting mental well-being. This study examines the impact of psychological skills training on motivation, concentration, and emotional regulation among competitive athletes. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected through standardized questionnaires from athletes across various sports disciplines. Results indicate that athletes who regularly applied mental strategies such as goal setting, visualization, and positive self-talk experienced higher self-confidence, better stress management, and more consistent performance. The study highlights the importance of integrating sport psychology practices into daily training routines to enhance both performance and psychological resilience. Collaboration between coaches and sport psychologists is recommended to create supportive environments that promote long-term athlete development. These findings provide practical insights for athletes, coaches, and sport organizations aiming to achieve excellence while maintaining mental health.

ID: 588 / Poster Session 3: 35
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Health
Keywords: ABQ-6, emotional/physical exhaustion

Informal Help-Seeking Intentions Buffer Daily Stress and Reduce Athletic Burnout in a Longitudinal Study of Competitive Athletes

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Athletes are often exposed to a broad range of sport-specific and non-sport-specific stressors, which significantly increase their risk of athletic burnout (Gustafsson, Kenttä, & Hassmén, 2011). Mental health knowledge, as a core mental health literacy component, and help-seeking behavior, an adaptive coping strategy, are considered an important predictor of mental health (Rickwood & Thomas, 2012; Wei et al., 2015), including burnout. To investigate whether mental health knowledge and Help seeking behavior has an influence on stress and athletic burnout, we conducted a seven-wave longitudinal study with assessments every two weeks. Mental health knowledge (UMHL-A) and help-seeking intentions (ATSPPH-SF) were measured at t0; stress (1-item question) was averaged across t1–t5 to obtain a mean stress level over 10 weeks, and athletic burnout (ABQ-6) was assessed at t6. For this analysis, only data from participants that completed t0, t6, and at least one of the timepoints t1-t5 were used (N = 177; Mage = 22.4, range = 16–40; 118 women, 59 men; across diverse sports and performance levels). Structural equation modeling (robust CFI = .970, robust RMSEA = .077, SRMR = .054) showed that mental health knowledge did not significantly influence help-seeking intentions. However, higher informal help-seeking intentions were associated with reduced daily life stress, which subsequently decreased symptoms of the athletic burnout sub dimensions reduced sense of accomplishment and sport devaluation. These findings underscore the protective role of informal help-seeking intentions in reducing daily stress, thereby indirectly alleviating key burnout components. They stress promoting such intentions alongside stress-reduction strategies for non-sport stressors to support athlete well-being.

ID: 590 / Poster Session 3: 36
Poster presentation
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Youth
Keywords: perceived soccer competence, adolescent, validity, reliability

Psychometric Properties of Turkish Version of the Perceived Game-Specific Soccer Competence Scale

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[1]Ağrı İbrahim Çeçen University, Turkey (Türkiye); [2]Hacettepe University, Türkiye

Measuring sport-specific perceived competence is essential for understanding the development of soccer skills in young athletes; however, general self-efficacy measures may not capture domain-specific, game-related abilities, and the lack of a validated Turkish instrument underscores the need for the present study. This study aimed to examine the validity and reliability of the Turkish version of the Perceived Game-Specific Soccer Competence Scale (Forsman et al., 2016), among 240 Turkish male soccer players aged 12-15 years (Mage=13.50, SD =1.20). The scale comprises three factors—offensive skills, one vs one skills, and defensive skills—with 18-items rated on a five-point Likert scale. Construct validity was evaluated via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Convergent validity was

assessed using average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR), and discriminant validity using average shared variance (ASV) and maximum shared variance (MSV). Reliability was examined through Cronbach's alpha and CR, while test-retest reliability was assessed with the intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) The CFA indicated good model fit (χ^2/df=1.44, RMSEA=0.04, CFI=0.99, TLI=0.98). For all items, factor loadings ranged from 0.39-0.81. Subscales showed partial support for convergent and discriminant validity: defensive skills (AVE=0.57, CR=0.79, MSV=0.33, ASV=0.31), one vs one skills (AVE=0.40, CR=0.76, MSV=0.60, ASV=0.47), offensive skills (AVE=0.31, CR=0.81, MSV=0.60, ASV=0.46). Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.72 to 0.79 for the subscales, and 0.86 for the total scale. Test-retest results indicated very high stability (ICC=0.92-0.97; p<0.001). The findings suggest the scale is a valid and reliable measure of perceived soccer competence in young players.

This study was funded by TUBITAK # SOBAG-324K276.

ID: 591 / **Poster Session 3: 37**
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Stigma mental health, well-being, elite sport

The Impact of the "Elite Athlete" Stigma on Mental Well-Being Among Athletes of Different Performance Levels

Petya Petrova-Whelan, Tatiana Iancheva
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In the context of sport, particularly at the elite level, stigma is most commonly associated with mental health. Athletes frequently encounter stigma-related challenges both in the media and within sports organizations. These forms of stigma may negatively affect their psychological, physical, and social well-being, potentially influencing help-seeking behaviors and overall adjustment. The present study aimed to examine the manifestation and impact of different forms of stigma on mental well-being among athletes of varying qualification levels in Bulgaria. Measures included the Psychological Well-Being Scale (Ryff et al., 2010), the Stigma Scale for Receiving Psychological Help (SSRPH; Komiya et al., 2000), the Athlete Psychological Strain Questionnaire (APSQ; Rice et al., 2020), the Sport Psychology Consultation Questionnaire (SPCQ; Martin et al., 2002), and the Perceived Stigma of Seeking Help (PSOSH; Vogel et al., 2009). Participants were 130 athletes divided into three groups: Olympic Games and World Championship medalists, international-level competitors, and national-level competitors. All participants provided informed consent. Results demonstrated varying degrees of stigma depending on sport type and qualification level. Significant correlations were identified between perceived stigma, psychological strain, and psychological well-being. Perceived stigma emerged as a significant predictor of the Positive Relationships and Life Goals dimensions of well-being. These findings provide important implications for designing targeted psychological interventions tailored to the specific demands of sport and the developmental stage of elite athletes.

ID: 599 / **Poster Session 3: 38**
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Personality, Physical activity
Keywords: temprament structure, personality, anxiety

Temperament Structure, Dimensions of Personality, and Anxiety Level in Soccer Players

Joanna Basiaga-Pasternak, Jan Blecharz, Malgorzata Siekanska
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Despite the concept of temperament stability, it has been observed that individual dimensions of temperament may change slightly with age (Modrzejewska et al., 2024; Josefsson et al., 2013). It has also been observed that participation in sport leads to certain modifications in temperament (Gracz & Sankowski, 1995). The aim of the study was to determine whether age-related changes can be observed in personality traits, temperament, and anxiety among soccer players. The study had an exploratory character. The sample consisted of 54 male soccer players divided into two age groups: 21 juniors (mean 18,31 years) and 12 seniors (21,83 years). Both groups represented a high athletic level. The Formal Characteristics of Behaviour - Temperament Inventory, the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire – Revised, the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory were used. Due to the small sample size of the groups under study the analysis included the Mann–Whitney U test. Statistically significant differences were observed between the groups in terms of Endurance (p = 0,03, r=0,29), Activity (p<0,001, r=0,38), Extraversion (p = 0,02, r= 0,31). Higher levels of these characteristics were found in older players. The juniors demonstrated higher level of state anxiety (p = 0,03, r=0,28). The results indicate a significant relationship between selected temperamental and personality traits and the athletes' age. Due to the exploratory nature of the analysis, no corrections for multiple comparisons were applied. The obtained results are preliminary and require confirmation in further studies taking into account the athlete's position and training load as additional variables.

ID: 606 / **Poster Session 3: 39**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Self, Social cognition, Social psychology
Keywords: Fan social identity, Sports consumption, Digital media, Football fans

Fan Identity and Consumption Among Turkish Football Fans: Preliminary Findings

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Canakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Sports Management Department, Turkey (Türkiye)

This study examines how fans' emotional and social bonds with their teams and the influence of fan groups predict direct consumption patterns. In addition to traditional fan behaviors, the study examines emerging digital consumption, including subscription to broadcast platforms, social media engagement, and streaming media use. 128 football fans from Türkiye participated in the study (74.2% male, 25.8% female; M = 28.99, SD = 10.21). The Fan Social Identity Scale (Cameron, 2004) was used to measure fan identity characteristics. Fan consumption behaviours (e.g., stadium attendance, media use, and digital engagement) were assessed using a demographic form comprising 7-point Likert-type frequency items on social media use and continuous variables specific to the current season. The predictive role of fan identity on traditional and mediated consumption parameters was analyzed using linear regression. Fan identity was not a significant predictor of stadium attendance ($p > .05$). However, the "Centrality" dimension of social fan identity significantly predicted the number of matches fans "intended to attend but could not." It also predicted both digital and traditional media consumption. Following social media profiles ($B = .498$; $p < 0.05$) was a stronger predictor than sports programs ($B = .383$) and TV match following ($B = .290$). Fisher's Z results showed no significant difference between these regression coefficients ($p > 0.05$). This research indicates centrality is a key component of fan identity in shaping consumption behaviours. Highly identified fans appear to favor accessible digital channels despite expressing intentions to attend matches.

ID: 616 / Poster Session 3: 40
Poster presentation
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Elite sports and expertise, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: Future Time Perspective, Elite Athletes, Focus Group Study

Future Time Perspective Across the Elite Sport Career: A Focus Group Study

Elisabeth Åström, Paul Davis
Umeå University, Sweden

Future time perspective (FTP), rooted within socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen et al. 1999), refers to individuals' perceptions of their future in terms of opportunities, limitations, and remaining time, and how these perceptions shape socioemotional goal setting. This study explored elite athletes' FTP in relation to the life course of their sport participation including critical events (e.g., injury). Two focus group interviews with eight elite ice hockey players (four women and four men) competing in the top national league in Sweden were undertaken. Preliminary analyses indicated that over the course of their careers, athletes' FTP shifted gradually as well as more abruptly due to key events (e.g., career transition). These perceived changes appeared to link with athletes' priorities and approach to performance, as well as life outside of sport. Early in their careers, athletes described a tendency to perceive their future as open-ended, pursuing opportunities for individual career development and formation of an athletic identity. Over time or in the case of critical events (e.g., injury), their FTP in relation to sport participation became more limited; their focus appeared to shift toward more team-oriented relational goals perceived as being more emotionally meaningful and on goals potentially extending beyond the sport context. In conclusion, changes in elite athletes' FTP, driven by career transitions and/or injury, can shape goal pursuit and motivational priorities. Understanding and recognizing these shifts in FTP could be relevant for facilitating elite athletes' performance, wellbeing, injury rehabilitation, and career transitions beyond sport.

ID: 623 / Poster Session 3: 41
Poster presentation
Topics: Health, Motivation, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Virtual Reality, Exergames, Enjoyment, Self-Efficacy

Feeling Capable, Having Fun: Self-Efficacy Aligns with Enjoyment in iVR Cycling - Preliminary Results

Salvatore Alberto Rosito[1,2], Matteo De Angelis[1,2], Anna Carideo[1], Maurizio Bertollo[1,2], Selenia Di Fronso[2,3], Francesco Sartor[1,2,4]
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Affective responses during physical activity (PA) are associated with intensity regulation and adherence (Ekkekakis, Backhouse, & Lind, 2008). Immersive virtual reality (iVR) exergaming may enhance enjoyment (Mouatt et al., 2020). This pilot study investigated the impact of iVR on the association between self-efficacy and enjoyment, specifically examining whether perceived environmental valence moderates this relationship. Ten inactive adults (recruited via university bulletins) completed an iVR cycling session across multiple environments at a target RPE of 11 (6–20 Borg scale). Each 3-minute environment condition was separated by 1.5-minute rest period, after which participants rated environment valence using a color-coded system (red/yellow/green). Enjoyment and self-efficacy were assessed using a numerical-rating scale (0-10). Linear mixed-effects models were employed to account for inter-individual variability. A significant positive association was observed between self-efficacy and enjoyment ($\beta=0.57$, $SE = 0.13$, $p<.001$), indicating that higher confidence in one's performance was linked to a more enjoyable experience. However, the environment's valence did not significantly moderate this relationship (self-efficacy ×

valence: β = −0.04, SE = 0.19, p = .841). While individual preferences for specific environments were noted, they did not appear to alter the primary role of self-efficacy. Allowing valence effects to vary across participants improved model fit, suggesting inter-individual variability in valence-related enjoyment. Overall, higher self-efficacy was associated with greater enjoyment across iVR environments, highlighting the importance of self-efficacy–focused designs for iVR PA interventions. However, given the small sample, we cannot exclude a Type II error for the valence moderation effect.

ID: 632 / Poster Session 3: 42
Poster presentation
Topics: Motivation
Keywords: self-control, motivation, dart throwing performance

Prior Self-Control Exertion and Dart Throwing Performance

Ruth Boat, Toby Saunders, Simon B Cooper
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

The exertion of self-control has been associated with impaired performance on a number of subsequent physical tasks also requiring self-control, including skill-based tasks (Hunte et al., 2021). Motivation has been suggested as a potential mechanism that may explain why this occurs. However, it remains unknown whether dart-throwing performance is negatively affected by the prior exertion of self-control, in a trained population. Therefore, the current study examined whether prior self-control exertion reduces performance on a dart-throwing task and potential mechanisms for these effects. Fourteen male competitive dart players (aged 22.3±2.8 years), competing in the University Darts UK competitive league, completed a 99-dart accuracy task aimed at the treble 20 segment (with scoring and accuracy recorded), on two occasions. Prior to the task, participants completed a congruent Stroop task (non-self-control exertion) or an incongruent Stroop task (self-control exertion) for 4 min. Participants motivation (measured via a VAS) was recorded at the start of each task. Paired samples t-tests revealed that there was a significant difference in accuracy (p=.049, g=0.43) during the task, whereby accuracy was reduced in the self-control exertion condition (-2.90±1.85), compared to the non-self-control exertion condition (-2.24±1.04). However, there was no significant difference in overall score (p=.581, g=0.09) or motivation (p=.104, g=0.70) on the dart-throwing task, between the trials. The findings suggest that the prior exertion of self-control leads to reduced accuracy during a dart-throwing task, however, there was no difference in motivation. Although speculative at present, self-efficacy may explain why the prior exertion of self-control affects subsequent dart-throwing performance.

ID: 672 / Poster Session 3: 43
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Emotion, Exercise psychology, Neuroscience
Keywords: Virtual reality exercise, Emotional memory, Directed forgetting, Psychiatric disorders

Can Acute Virtual Reality Exercise Selectively Modulates Emotional Memory? Preliminary Effects on Remembering and Forgetting

Miyuki Nakamura[1,2], Yujiro Kawata[1,3,4], Takuma Matsumoto[1], Shimin Song[3,5], Yuka Murofushi[1,3], Nobuto Shibata[5,6,7], Tsuneyoshi Ota[1,3,4,7]

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Stress-related psychiatric disorders are associated with memory bias and a tendency to disproportionately encode and recall negative information, contributing to their onset and persistence. Despite the modulating role that exercise plays in emotional memory, studies have predominantly employed high-intensity, monotonous exercise protocols, limiting their practical utility. In contrast, this study preliminarily examines the effects of immersive and enjoyable virtual reality (VR) exercise on emotional memory. Eight healthy adults (one man, seven women; mean age = 23.25, SD = 3.61 years) completed two 10-minute conditions: rest and VR exercise. For the latter, participants performed a head-mounted display-based boxing game at 60–89% heart rate reserve. After each condition, the participants completed an emotional memory task with directed forgetting instructions, followed by a recognition test. Recognition performance (percentage of correct responses) was analysed using a two-way repeated-measures ANOVA, with intervention conditions and directed forgetting (to-be-remembered, TBR; to-be-forgotten, TBF) as factors. The results revealed no significant differences between the resting and VR exercise conditions for either TBR item or TBF item in negative memory. For positive memory, a significant interaction between condition and instruction was observed ($p = .026$, $\eta^2 = .041$). However, no significant simple main effects were found, and recognition performance following VR exercise was inconsistent across participants, with both increases and decreases observed. These findings suggest that acute VR exercise may differentially influence emotional memory depending on task conditions, but the effect varies among individuals. Further investigation incorporating indices of immersion and psychological responses during VR exercise is warranted.

ID: 688 / Poster Session 3: 44
Poster presentation
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives
Keywords: long-term athlete development, dropout, motivation, athlete retention

The LTAD Model of Hungarian Swimming and its relationship to athlete dropout

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The LTAD Model of Hungarian Swimming and Its Relationship to Athlete Dropout

The Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model is a central framework in youth sport, promoting structured progression, prevention of early specialization, and sustained engagement (Côté et al., 2003; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2008). Hungarian swimming operates within an LTAD-based system coordinated by the federation (Nagy, Szemes, & Szájer, 2024). However, international research reports high adolescent dropout rates in swimming, particularly in individual endurance sports (Monteiro et al., 2017; Múgica Corrales & Olaya-Cuartero, 2022). Examining how structural and psychosocial elements of the Hungarian LTAD model relate to dropout is therefore essential. Document analysis was conducted on the Hungarian swimming LTAD framework (Nagy et al., 2024). Findings were interpreted in light of longitudinal and survival analyses (Difernand et al., 2025; Masismadi et al., 2025), systematic reviews (Monteiro et al., 2017; Múgica Corrales & Olaya-Cuartero, 2022), and empirical studies on early specialization, training volume, and motivational climate (Larson et al., 2018).

The Hungarian model comprises seven stages. While structurally aligned with international principles, adolescence represents a critical period of vulnerability. Dropout peaks in early-to-mid adolescence, particularly among lower-performing athletes. Key determinants include perceived incompetence, excessive load, declining motivation, coach conflict, and reduced enjoyment. Early specialization alone doesn't predict dropout; rather, autonomy-supportive coaching and training context are decisive. Although the Hungarian LTAD model supports elite development, it isn't sufficient as a comprehensive talent development framework. Although the federation has talent development programs, the model requires targeted modifications to better address athletes' psychosocial needs and developmental differences.

ID: 717 / Poster Session 3: 45
Poster presentation
Topics: Personality
Keywords: sensation seeking, temperament, elite sports, performance

Temperamental Determinants of Success in Professional and Amateur Sports: A Sensation Seeking Perspective

Malwina Fituch, Izabela Głębicka
Mindfitness, Poland

This study explores the temperamental differences between elite athletes and amateur sports enthusiasts, focusing on the trait of sensation seeking as defined by Marvin Zuckerman's sociobiological model. The primary objective was to identify specific temperamental profiles that correlate with sports success and high-performance engagement. Using the Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS-V) in its Polish adaptation, we examined a group of 99 participants, including 41 professional athletes across seven disciplines—including high-risk sports such as American football and boxing—and 58 amateurs or non-athletes. The research tested hypotheses regarding differences between professional and amateur groups, high versus low achievers, and contact versus non-contact sports participants. The SSS-V measured dimensions including Thrill and Adventure Seeking (TAS), Experience Seeking (ES), Disinhibition (Dis), Boredom Susceptibility (BS), and Intellectual Sensation Seeking (I). Preliminary results indicate that professional athletes, particularly those in high-risk and contact disciplines, exhibit significantly higher levels of thrill-seeking and lower boredom susceptibility compared to amateurs. These findings suggest that specific temperamental configurations may act as a functional constraint and a predictor for elite athletic career paths. Understanding these psychological foundations is crucial for talent identification and tailoring mental training programs to the individual temperamental needs of athletes. By bridging the gap between biological predispositions and competitive performance, this study contributes to a more nuanced personality-based approach in applied sport psychology.

ID: 725 / Poster Session 3: 46
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Leadership, Motivation, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: artificial intelligence, coaching, sport psychology, human factors

The Limits of Artificial Intelligence in Coaching: Why Human Presence Remains Irreplaceable

Costin Valentin
Hyperion University of Bucharest, Romania

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming sport through performance analysis, training optimization, and data-driven decision-making. However, important dimensions of coaching remain deeply human and cannot be fully replicated by technology. This paper examines the limitations of artificial intelligence in coaching based on practical experience gained over 38 years of coaching boxing and kickboxing athletes of different ages and performance levels. While AI can efficiently analyze movement patterns, training loads, and performance indicators, it cannot

genuinely understand emotions, build trust, recognize subtle psychological states, or provide authentic human support during critical moments. Effective coaching requires empathy, motivation, leadership, ethical judgment, and the ability to adapt communication to the athlete's individual needs. These qualities emerge from human experience and interpersonal relationships rather than algorithms. The paper argues that the future of coaching should not be viewed as a competition between coaches and artificial intelligence, but as a collaboration in which technology supports evidence-based decision making while coaches remain responsible for human development, character formation, and emotional guidance. The findings highlight the continuing importance of human presence in sport and suggest that coaches who successfully integrate artificial intelligence into their practice will achieve better outcomes than those who reject technological innovation entirely.

11:00am - 12:15pm

Positive Youth Development: Life Skills, Teaching Responsibility and Self-Transcendence as Pathways to Well-Being

Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 641 / Symposium 23: 1
Symposium 75 minutes
Topics: Leadership, Motivation, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: life skills, social responsibility, self-transcendence

Positive Youth Development: Life Skills, Teaching Responsibility and Self-Transcendence as Pathways to Well-Being

Athanasios Papaioannou[1], Marta Borrueco[2], Hanna-Mari Toivonen[3]
[1]University of Thessaly, Greece; [2]Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain; [3]University of Jyvaskyla, Finland

This symposium examines which intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and motivational processes promote youth well-being, and how they can be enhanced through coaching and teaching in sport and physical activity. Integrating Positive Youth Development and motivational perspectives, the three presentations identify key psychological mechanisms linking instructional climate and life skills to youth well-being. The first study demonstrates that intrapersonal life skills, particularly emotional skills, as well as interpersonal skills, such as social skills, robustly predict well-being and lower distress in youth sport. The second employs a randomized controlled design to show that Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) training enhances novice instructors' responsibility-focused behaviors and athletes' basic psychological need satisfaction. The third provides experimental evidence that peer tutoring increases social self-efficacy and vitality through the activation of self-transcendence goals, highlighting prosocial motivation as a distinct pathway to well-being. Methodologically, the symposium combines large-scale predictive modeling, triangulated observational assessment, and randomized and quasi-experimental designs. Collectively, the findings advance theory and practice by identifying skills, motivational processes and instructional approaches that foster social development and psychological flourishing through participation in appropriately structured youth sport.

11:00am - 12:15pm

Psychological Support in Military Aviation: a Lifecycle Approach to High Performance in Extreme Environments

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 610 / Workshop 28: 1
Workshop
Topics: Coaching, Human factors, Mental skills training, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: Psychological support, lifecycle approach, human performance training; crm

Psychological Support in Military Aviation: a Lifecycle Approach to High Performance in Extreme Environments

Evelien Maria Eijsink, Martijn Hengeveld
Royal Netherlands Air and Space Force

Military aviation represents a high-performance environment characterized by prolonged training, substantial cognitive demands, and direct implications for operational effectiveness and flight safety. In this workshop, we present a lifecycle approach to psychological support developed within the Royal Netherlands Air and Space Force, where aviation psychologists are embedded across all phases of a pilot's career: selection, training, operational deployment, and career exit. Within this lifecycle approach, we integrate evidence-based human performance training practices, including psychophysiological regulation through breathwork (Laborde et al., 2017), mental imagery (Moran, 2012), and crew resource management (Salas et al., 2001). These practices are conceptually grounded in theories of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000), psychological resilience (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012), and long-term expertise development across career stages (Ericsson et al., 2018). Psychological support is organized as a continuous adaptive process aligned with changing task demands and challenges across the pilot's career. Learning objectives: After the workshop, participants will be able to (a) describe a lifecycle-based model of psychological support in a high-risk performance domain, (b) identify phase-specific psychological demands, and (c) translate lifecycle principles to elite sport and talent development contexts. Teaching methods: After each phase of the lifecycle approach, participants engage in small-group discussions and exercises to exchange tools and strategies and to translate insights to their own sport context. Materials: Participants will receive digital slides and a practical lifecycle framework handout including guidelines for implementation. This workshop demonstrates how applying a lifecycle approach can provide continuous support, helping athletes achieve and maintain high performance long-term.

11:00am - 12:15pm

Oral Presentations 36: Cultural sport psychology

Location: **A01**
Session Chair: **Anastasiya Khomutova**

ID: 625 / Oral Presentations 36: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Social psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Female empowerment, Menstruation, Psychological safety, Cultural hegemony

The Invisible Barrier: Menstrual Experiences of Female Footballers and the Culture of Silence Constructed with Male Coaches

Betül Ağaç[1], Safter Elmas[1], İlknur Hacısoftaoğlu[2], Hülya Aşçı[3]
[1]Marmara University; [2]Bilgi University; [3]Fenerbahçe University

In Türkiye, football continues to exist as a field where hegemonic masculinity norms discipline women's bodies. This study aims to examine the menstrual experiences of female football players who train exclusively with male coaches, using a critical feminist approach. It focuses on the psychological safety threats shaped by the silence and taboo created by masculine sports culture, and the female empowerment strategies developed in response to these threats. Emphasising experiential depth rather than generalisability, the study provides context-sensitive insights into menstruation in male-dominated sport. Adopting a qualitative approach, data obtained from semi-structured in-depth interviews with 5 female footballers and 2 male coaches across different teams using reflexive thematic analysis. The analyses have revealed three main themes. The first is “The Comfort Zone of Male Authority: Preferential Ignorance and Denial”; it shows that coaches avoid menstrual literacy by relying on cultural codes and label the situation as a “performance excuse,” creating risks for athlete health. The second theme is “The Spiral of Silence: Shame, Concealment, and Distance”; it has been found that athletes' concealment of menstruation due to their apprehension towards male authority figures and fear of leakage leads to high stress and anxiety. The third theme, “Survival Strategies: Sisterhood and Empowerment,” shows that athletes build their own psychological safety zones through social support (sisterhood), sharing materials, and wearing black uniforms. In conclusion, we can say that communicative silence around menstruation threatens athletes' well-being and psychological safety, but that women increase their psychological resilience by empowering themselves through solidarity.

ID: 434 / Oral Presentations 36: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Social psychology
Keywords: Combat Sports, Female Athletes, Gender Stereotypes

Understanding Stigma in Female Combat Sports: A Narrative Review and Psychoeducational Perspective

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While women’s sport has gained increasing popularity, many sports continue to be perceived as either masculine or feminine. In particular, sports characterized by bodily contact or physical domination, such as combat sports, are still widely viewed as unsuitable for women (Kerékgyártó et al., 2025; Metheny, 1965). Previous research has examined how gender-typing of sports influences female participation and athletic experiences (Hopkins et al., 2022; Mateo-Orcajada et al., 2021). The aim of this narrative review was to describe female combat sports athletes’ experiences of sport participation, analyze the current landscape, and consider future directions for sport psychology interventions related to gender norms, participation, and stigma reduction. Eligibility criteria included qualitative studies published in the last 10 years, written in English, and focusing on female combat sports athletes. Existing literature on stigma and discrimination remains limited (Kerékgyártó et al., 2025; Li et al., 2024; Lindsay et al., 2023; Mathisen et al., 2022; Rodríguez-Rodríguez & Perrino-Peña, 2019; Yang & Montez de Oca, 2025). Five studies met the criteria and were included. Thematic analysis identified key themes, including societal gender role expectations, stigmatizing labeling, challenges in mixed-gender training, and persistent patriarchal structures within combat sports. Although gender-typing appears to be declining, female athletes continue to face substantial barriers. These findings highlight the need for targeted sport psychology interventions. We propose the development of psychoeducational group interventions designed to address the unique challenges faced by female combat sports athletes, with a focus on identity development, gendered expectations, and stigma reduction.

ID: 118 / Oral Presentations 36: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19), Talent identification/development, Violence
Keywords: Sport psychology, Lebanon, VUCA environments, mental health & trauma-informed care.

Rethinking Applied Sport Psychology Considering Cultural Differences in Chronically Unstable Contexts

Nathalie Jbeily, Denis Hauw
University of Lausanne, Switzerland

This paper examines the relevance of global sport psychology frameworks to Lebanon's cultural and structural environments. Sport psychology is still in its premise in Lebanon, significantly influenced by socio-political instability, sectarian politics, and chronic economic crises. The context described as C-VUCA (Chronically and Constantly Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) invites a rethinking of the sport psychology approaches commonly developed in Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) nations. This study takes a conceptual and applied perspective, informed by cultural sport psychology. It highlights key challenges shaping practice in Lebanon, including fragmented sport systems, limited access to psychological services, the absence of stable referral pathways, and ongoing mental health stigma. In such conditions, psychological support often shifts from performance enhancement toward helping athletes maintain continuity in the face of disruption. The paper introduces the concept of "forced adaptation" to describe how athletes navigate repeated instability. While these adaptations may support short-term functioning, they can also carry longer-term psychological costs, including emotional exhaustion, identity strain, and disrupted developmental pathways. In response, it proposes a culturally grounded and trauma-informed approach to sport psychology practice, emphasizing mental health literacy, shared responsibility for early detection, and context-sensitive forms of support. Moreover, it recognizes that implementing such approaches remains challenging in environments where institutional support, trust, and structural stability are limited. Lebanon is therefore positioned not only as a context of constraint, but also as a meaningful case for rethinking how sport psychology can remain relevant, ethical, and effective in chronically unstable environments.

ID: 456 / **Oral Presentations 36: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Elite sports and expertise, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Perfectionism, critical case study, racialized athletes, intersectionality

University Sports Staff's Perspectives on Perfectionism in Competitive Racialized Athletes

J'mi Worthen[1], Katherine Tamminen[1], Gretchen Kerr[1], Janelle Joseph[2], Andrew Hill[3]
[1]The University of Toronto, Canada; [2]Brock University; [3]York St. John University

The pursuit of perfection is common for participants of all backgrounds in competitive sports. Recognized as a multidimensional construct in sport, perfectionism is linked to both achievement and distress. Yet, the lived experiences of racialized athletes navigating perfectionism within predominantly white, high-performance university environments remain underexplored. This methodological presentation addresses the design and application of a critical case study approach to investigate how university athletics sports staff perceive, experience, and support racialized athletes with perfectionistic tendencies. Drawing from critical sport and intersectional frameworks, this study foregrounds the socio-cultural dimensions of perfectionism, positioning it as a personal, cultural, and institutional phenomenon embedded within high-performance sports. Eight athletic departments from seven universities in Ontario, Canada were used as cases within the presented study. From these cases, data was collected through semi-structured virtual interviews with fifteen coaches, administrators, and support staff. Guided by case study methodology as indicated by Creswell (2013), Schoch (2020), and Yin (2018), within-case and cross-case thematic analyses were used to identify how perfectionistic norms are reproduced, negotiated, and resisted within university sport. Rather than focus on research findings, this presentation emphasizes the methodological value of critical case study design for uncovering hidden dynamics in athlete well-being, perfectionistic environments, and racialized sport structures. By blending methodological rigor with critical inquiry, the presentation offers insights on how researchers can use critical case studies to examine complex, environment-dependent experiences in sport, while offering guidance for investigations into perfectionism, racialized student-athlete well-being, and equity in high-performance environments.

11:00am - 12:15pm

Oral Presentations 34: Elite sports and expertise

Location: **A02**
Session Chair: **Julian Fritsch**

ID: 200 / **Oral Presentations 34: 1**
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Emotion
Keywords: Affect, Avoidance, IZOF, IAPZ

Are We Negative? The Frequency, Intensity, and Performance Effect of Negative Emotions in Elite Sport

Lael Gershgoren[1], Asaf Blatt[1], Royi Yablochnik[2]
[1]The college of management Academic Studies, Israel; [2]Reichman University, Israel

Competitive sport elicits rich and dynamic emotional experiences. The study of emotions–performance linkage has been primarily guided by the Individual Zones of Optimal Performance (IZOF; Hanin, 2000) and the Individual Affect-related Performance Zones (IAPZ; Kamata et al., 2002) frameworks, with a focus on anxiety as the primary emotion. While this body of work has yielded important insights, it has arguably constrained our understanding of the broader emotional experiences that shape athletic performance. Despite calls to widen the emotional lens in sport psychology (see Janelle et al., 2020), several performance-relevant emotions such as anger, shame, envy, guilt, regret, and frustration remained markedly underexplored. The present mixed-methods study seeks to address this gap, offering a more comprehensive examination of negative emotions in elite sport. Data were collected from over 30 professional adult athletes using a combination of semi-structured interviews and self-report questionnaires graded on a 7-points Likert scale pertaining the frequency, intensity, and performance effect (experience and avoidance) of each emotion. This integrative approach enabled a content analysis of athletes' emotional experiences across practice and

competitive contexts, focusing on the frequency with which specific negative emotions arise, their perceived intensity, and their differential effect on performance. Findings reveal meaningful variability between emotions traditionally grouped under a single “negative” label. Moreover, results illuminate the complex role of emotional avoidance strategies, demonstrating how attempts to suppress or disengage from certain emotions may affect performance. Altogether, from a scientific-practitioner stand point, these findings provide important implications for emotion-specific interventions and emotional regulation training.

ID: 406 / **Oral Presentations 34: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Emotion, Personality, Social psychology
Keywords: affiliative humour, self-enhancing humour, three-dimensional model of performance anxiety, structural equation modelling

Beyond Laughter: The Role of Humour Styles and Perceived Control in Sport Achievement

Min Pan[1], Wen-Nuan, Kara Cheng[2]
[1]College of Human Development and Health, Natioinal Taipei University of Nursing and Health Sciences, Taiwan; [2]Department of Recreation and Sport Management, University of Taipei

Extant research has established a significant link between humour, anxiety, and performance outcomes; specifically, positive humour styles can enhance task engagement and productivity by mitigating psychological distress (Ford et al., 2017; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). Despite the potential of humour styles as critical psychological resources (Martin et al., 2003; Martin & Ford, 2018), the complex relationships among athletes' humour styles, anxiety, and sport achievement warrant further discussion. The study investigated the relationships among humour styles, three anxiety dimensions (Cheng et al., 2009), and sport achievement among 599 collegiate athletes (Mage = 20.43, SD = 2.50). The Humour Styles Questionnaire for Athletes (Pan & Cheng, 2026), Three-Factor Anxiety Inventory (Cheng et al., 2011), and McKay et al.’s (2022) framework were used to measure humour styles, performance anxiety and sport achievement. SEM was employed to examine the hypothesized structural pathways among the three variables. Results showed that both affiliative and self-enhancing humour positively predicted sport achievement. Specifically, self-enhancing humour negatively predicted cognitive anxiety and positively predicted perceived control, whereas self-defeating humour positively predicted both cognitive and physiological anxiety. Notably, while affiliative humour positively predicted achievement, it also positively predicted cognitive anxiety. Among the anxiety dimensions, only the regulatory dimension (perceived control) positively predicted sport achievement. These findings highlight humour's nuanced role: while self-enhancing humour directly mitigates anxiety, affiliative humour may coexist with social concerns while supporting success. Practically, fostering adaptive humour offers a viable strategy for enhancing regulatory capacity and supporting career progression in sport.

ID: 504 / **Oral Presentations 34: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.)
Keywords: Elite sport, Coping, Emotion regulation

Self-Regulation Under High Pressure: An Interpretative Phenomenological Study of Elite Sabre Fencers

Ionuț Alexandru Iscru[1,2,3,5], Mary Hassandra[1], Anne-Marie Elbe[2], Maria Ștefania Ionel[3,4], Alexander T. Latinjak[5]
[1]University of Thessaly, Greece; [2]Leipzig University, Germany; [3]Sport and Exercise Psychology (SEP) group, RIDDLE Lab, Department of Psychology, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania; [4]Assessment and Individual Differences – AID Lab, Department of Psychology and Cognitive Science, University of Bucharest, Romania; [5]University College Dublin, Ireland

Elite sabre fencing is characterised by rapid exchanges, unpredictable score reversals, and severe temporal constraints, placing substantial cognitive and emotional demands on athletes. In such environments, effective self-regulation is critical for sustaining performance under pressure. Grounded in the Integrative Self-Regulation Model for Sport and Exercise (Latinjak, 2025), which conceptualises self-regulation as a cohesive, cyclical, and contextually embedded process integrating diverse theoretical perspectives, the present study adopts a holistic approach to explore how the elite sabre fencers self-regulate during high-pressure moments. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 elite national-level sabre fencers aged 18-27, for a range of 40 – 60 minutes. The theoretical model functioned as a sensitising framework for the development of the interview protocol (e.g., “What felt important for you to manage in that moment?”), rather than as a prescriptive structure. Data were analysed in line with IPA principles, integrating inductive thematic development with theoretically informed interpretation. The participants' narratives allowed reconstructions of recent high-pressure episodes, capturing athletes’ subjective meanings of pressure (e.g., anticipation of failure), exploring their self-awareness (e.g., monitoring of psychophysiological activation), the processes of strategy selection (e.g., to calm down by leaving the gym), and the dynamic enactment of self-regulatory behaviours (e.g., talking to the coach) and mental control (e.g., controlled breathing). By grounding self-regulation in the real-world experiences of elite fencers, this research deepens theoretical insights into regulatory processes and supports the creation of theory-informed, athlete-centred studies aimed at enhancing adaptive self-regulation and maintaining performance under high-pressure conditions.

ID: 196 / **Oral Presentations 34: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Decision making and judgement, Elite sports and expertise, Leadership, Violence
Keywords: Safe Sport, Team Leaders, Safeguarding Initiatives

Amplifying Athletes' Voices: The Role of Team Leaders in Advancing Safeguarding

Bryanna Campbell, Ashley Stirling
University of Toronto, Canada

In response to widespread cases of athlete maltreatment, safeguarding initiatives and sport policies have been developed to protect athletes (Mountjoy et al., 2022). While these efforts increase awareness, they often fail to incorporate meaningful athlete representation and are predominately implemented from a top-down approach (Mazzucco & Findlay, 2024; Willson et al., 2022). Advancing safe sport requires involvement of all sport members, with athletes positioned centrally in decision-making processes intended to protect them (Bekker & Posbergh, 2022; Lang, 2021). Team leaders occupy a distinctive role, often serving as key communication point between teammates and coaches (Dupuis et al., 2006). Through role modelling, attentiveness to teammates' needs and positive feedback, team leaders contribute meaningfully to athlete development (Duguay et al., 2016). Despite extensive research on the importance of team leaders for team success, little attention has been given to other areas of sport, where they may play a beneficial role. Therefore, this study explored the role of team leaders in advancing safe sport. Guided by a constructivist paradigm, assuming a relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology, twelve university-level athlete leaders (7 female, 5 male) participated in one semi-structured interview. Participants shared their perceptions of their role in advancing safe sport, experiences responding to relational maltreatment and further support needed to contribute to safeguarding. The findings highlight that team leaders are already contributing to safeguarding practices at multiple levels within their organization. However, formal training and open communication with organizational staff members are needed to better support team leaders in advancing safe sport.

11:00am - 12:15pm

Oral Presentations 37: Developmental / lifespan perspectives

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Faye Didymus**

ID: 317 / **Oral Presentations 37: 1**
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Moral action, Youth
Keywords: Sportsmanship, Youth Sport, Language Analysis

A Meaning Extraction Analysis of High School Student Athlete Essays on Sportsmanship

Tjaša Pintar[1], Kylee Ault-Baker[2], Jedediah Blanton[1]
[1]University of Tennessee; [2]The Ohio State University

Sportsmanship is expected to derive from participating in education-based athletics, with national organizations calling sportsmanship "the foundation for interscholastic sports and activities" (NFHS, n.d.). Administrators recognized that positive outcomes are not automatically derived from participation, so we must address perceptions of experiential benefits by allowing athletes to tell their stories (Blanton et al., 2024). The purpose of this study was to analyze a large natural language text corpus from athletes on the importance of sportsmanship through athletes' answers (N= 9532) to the prompt: "Write an essay on the importance of sportsmanship in educational athletics" (M= 428.6 words). The most rigorous approach to address the question utilizes LIWC-22, a computerized text analytic software, which introduces a novel method to the exploration of sportsmanship. First, we mathematically organized the text corpus to identify the frequency of meaningful words through a meaning extraction method. Following that linguistic inquiry, a principal component analysis was conducted to quantitatively capture the relationships across meaningful terms. Through an iterative qualitative approach, an 11-component structure was identified as the most appropriate representation following the PCA (KMO = .769, Bartlett's test = 134293.899, $p < .001$), explaining 14.355% of the variance. Identified components were further organized into a novel and empirically derived latent structure that captures the importance of: 1) when sportsmanship is important, 2) why sportsmanship is important, and 3) how sportsmanship is demonstrated. Through a meticulous linguistic approach, our participant-centric framework captures a thorough account of how athletes perceive the importance of sportsmanship in education-based athletics.

ID: 272 / **Oral Presentations 37: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Exercise psychology, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: athletic retirement, diet, exercise

After the Last Lap: Body Image, Diet, and Physical Activity in Former Canadian Women Olympic Swimmers

Erika Spagnuolo, Lindsay Duncan
McGill University, Canada

Elite athletes are often perceived as the epitome of health, presumed to embody ideal eating habits and physical activity. However, bodily ideals and practices emphasized in high-performance sport can have lasting harmful effects, enduring well beyond their athletic careers. Former swimmers' relationships with their bodies, diet, and exercise are

often shaped by years of body-focused comparison, weight preoccupation, and unrealistic expectations consistent with the athletic body transition model. Situated within a constructionist paradigm, with a relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology, this study aimed to explore how retired women Olympic swimmers experience body image, diet, and exercise long after athletic retirement. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six former Olympic swimmers retired for at least eight years, exploring their post-sport experiences with body image, diet, and exercise. Data were analyzed using interpretive phenomenological analysis. Results indicated that even when retirement was voluntary and experienced as positive, challenges related to body image, diet, and exercise (i.e., compulsive exercise and body dissatisfaction) persisted for years after sport. Participants described an ongoing, non-linear negotiation between "the athlete I am" and "the athlete I was," reflecting both a continued connection to and gradual redefinition of their identity as former Olympians. While athletes retained evolving aspects of their athletic self, they also reconstructed new identities and meanings around body, diet, and exercise, which functioned as both resources and constraints in post-sport life. Collectively, the results suggest that internalized elements of elite swimming culture remain enduring aspects of identity, with lasting implications for body image, diet, and exercise.

ID: 539 / Oral Presentations 37: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Ethics in applied settings, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career, Youth
Keywords: educational neglect, pre-professional ice hockey, student-athlete, athlete maltreatment

Student-Athlete or Athlete-Student?: Educational Neglect of Pre-Professional Hockey Players

Thomas Leaf, Gretchen Kerr, Francesca Principe
University of Toronto, Canada

This study explored how former pre-professional ice-hockey players in Canada experienced and interpreted their educational experiences throughout their careers in the Canadian Hockey League (CHL). Theoretical Background: Neglect remains significantly understudied, described by scholars as the "neglect of neglect" (Kobulsky & Dubowitz, 2022). This lack of empirical data is perplexing given that neglect was the most frequently reported form of athlete maltreatment among former Canadian national athletes, with educational neglect as the second most reported form (Willson et al., 2022). Educational neglect occurs when athletes' academic needs are not integrated into training schedules due to excessive training and travel demands (Kerr, 2023). Despite reports of an "anti-education" culture in Canadian pre-professional hockey (Centre for Sport and Human Rights, 2022), empirical data regarding educational neglect in sport is lacking. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with former athletes aged 25-28 (N = 8) from the CHL. Interviews explored participants' educational experiences during their playing careers ($\bar{x}$ years since retirement = 6.3). Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Findings revealed the systemic prioritization of hockey over education. Educational neglect manifested through academic advisors excusing players from assignments while downplaying their academic significance, frequent class absences, and athletes exerting minimal effort to meet requirements. This 'box-ticking' approach valued immediate hockey performance over meaningful, long-term learning. This presentation will contribute to our knowledge of neglect by identifying constituents of educational neglect and providing recommendations to uphold educational rights while pursuing sport.

ID: 398 / Oral Presentations 37: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Talent identification/development, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career, Youth
Keywords: Transition, Social Support, Football

Tracking Social Support for Male Athletes Through Their Transition Into a National Football Academy

Oisin MacManus, Dr Lee-Ann Sharp, Dr David Woods, Dr Kyle Ferguson, Dr Kyle Paradis
Ulster University, Belfast, Northern Ireland

National football academies represent a unique developmental sports environment within Europe (UEFA, 2023). Where athletes balance a full school day with intensive training, creating substantial physical, psychosocial, and academic demands. Support is primarily provided by coaches, support staff, and family members (Wylleman & Lavalle, 2024). This study aimed to examine athletes, families, and coaching staff perspectives, on how perceived support evolved across athletes' first year of transition into a national football academy. Individual semi-structured interviews (n=21; M=16, F=5) were conducted with three participant groups, athletes (n=8, M=8), parents (n=5, M=2, F=3), and academy staff (n=8, M=6, F=2). Interviews were analysed using deductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Athletes transitioned into the academy while also moving away from home to live at the academy during the week. This challenging transition was supported by parental and staff support. Athletes identified School as a significant challenge, highlighting its impact on Friendships, including the development, maintenance, and loss of friendships. Pre-Academy Staff Engagement , particularly a pre-selection residential weekend, was also identified as important in facilitating a more positive transition. Parents discussed the importance of Parental Support, and Academy Staff Support in helping athletes adjust to the academy environment. This initial transition represents a critical period for athletes with changes to their athletic, residential, and possibly educational environments. These combined challenges require consistent and effective support. Continued monitoring of support across the first year may provide valuable insight into how support changes over time.

11:00am - 12:15pm

JustMove: Inclusive Physical Activity and Technology-Based Fitness Strategies for Persons with Disabilities

Location: **A10**

ID: 719 / Workshop 30: 1
Workshop
Topics: Best practice, Physical activity, Special needs, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: special needs, fitness, health, web platform

JustMove: Inclusive Physical Activity and Technology-Based Fitness Strategies for Persons with Disabilities

Monica Stanescu[1], Mihaela Zahiu[1], Gabriel Popescu[1], Ayse Kaygisiz Yildiz[2], Luciela Vasile[1]
[1]National University of Physical Education and Sport from Bucharest, Romania, Romania; [2]MOBILE ADVENTURE, Warszaw (Poland)

Persons with disabilities across Europe continue to face substantial inequalities in access to and participation in physical activity compared to the general population. This applied, evidence-based workshop is grounded in the Erasmus+ project “Unlocking Potential: Promoting Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyles for Persons with Disabilities through Technology and Collaboration” (JUSTMOVE). The workshop will present practical strategies for developing inclusive physical activity programs and demonstrate how digital technologies can support participation in physical exercises. Participants will actively engage in experiential demonstrations, case-based learning, physical activities, and interactive discussions, focused on inclusive fitness and dance practices. By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to apply principles for designing inclusive fitness and physical activity programs; identify key barriers and facilitators to physical activity participation among persons with disabilities; and explore the role of web-based platforms in supporting physical activity participation and exercise self-management. The workshop will employ a range of interactive and experiential learning approaches, including demonstrations of disability-specific physical exercises; small and large group collaborative physical activities; case-study analysis based on real scenarios from the JUSTMOVE project; group discussions on barriers to participation and inclusive practice; and interactive exploration of the web platform and digital tools. These methods are designed to promote active participation, peer learning, practical skill development, and knowledge transfer. Participants will receive access to the inclusive fitness program guidelines, a summary document containing key recommendations, references, and inclusive didactic strategies, and resources from the JUSTMOVE web platform.

11:00am - 12:15pm

Examining Norms and Group Dynamics in Elite-Level Refereeing Using NBA Last Two Minute Reports

Location: **A11**

ID: 130 / Symposium 22: 1
Symposium 75 minutes
Topics: Decision making and judgement
Keywords: Referees, Omission bias, Basketball, Group dynamics

Examining Norms and Group Dynamics in Elite-Level Refereeing Using NBA Last Two Minute Reports

Elia Morgulev[1,2], Eran Sabag[2], Michael Bar-Eli[3]
[1]Kaye College of Education, Israel; [2]Levinsky-Wingate Academic Center; [3]Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Judgment and decision making in sport can be approached from four complementary perspectives: economic, social, cognitive, and ecological, each capturing distinct determinants of performance. Within this framework, previous research suggests that both norms and group dynamics play an important role in the quality of officiating in elite sport. The National Basketball Association’s Last Two Minute (L2M) reports provide official evaluations of referees’ decisions during the closing phase of tightly contested games. Using reports from 1,755 games across four seasons, we examine how team-level dynamics and action–inaction preferences relate to decision accuracy in critical game moments. In the first study, drawing on signal detection theory and the omission bias literature, we show that referees tend to favor inaction when the outcome of the game is at stake. This conservative decision approach is especially evident for violations that are difficult to judge and for which informal norms have developed not to call them. The second study focuses on teamwork within three-person officiating crews. By examining decisions originating from primary versus secondary coverage areas and across officiating roles, we find that accuracy is closely related to adherence to prescribed officiating mechanics. Errors are more likely when referees make calls outside their assigned coverage areas, highlighting the importance of coordination, clear role boundaries, and trust among referees. To conclude, we discuss how norms and crew-level dynamics jointly shape elite-level refereeing and consider implications for rules design, training, and evaluation of decision-making quality within crews.

11:00am - 12:15pm

Oral Presentations 35: Mental health

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Laura Giurgiu**

ID: 304 / Oral Presentations 35: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Group dynamics, Social psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: communal coping, social identity, mental health, team sports

Dynamic Relationships of Coping and Social Identity in Football: Influence on Players' Mental Health

Emilie Pété, Eliott Alletru, Véronique Thomas-Ollivier
Nantes Université, Movement - Interactions - Performance, MIP, UR 4334, F-44000 Nantes, France

Stress and coping in sport psychology have predominantly been examined from an intrapersonal perspective (Tamminen & Neely, 2021), limiting understanding of how athletes collectively experience stress and its impact on mental health. From a theoretical perspective, social identity may play a key role in communal coping, as shared group membership can shape how athletes interpret stressors and mobilize collective resources. However, to date, only Tamminen et al. (2016) have suggested links between communal coping and social identity in team sport contexts. Addressing this gap, the present study examines the relationships between stress, social identity, and coping processes, and their consequences for burnout among national football players during the second half of the championship season, a period of heightened competitive demands. Seventeen national football players (Mage = 26.2 years, SDage = 4.9 years) participated in this longitudinal study over a half-season (January-May 2026). Using a single-item definitional approach, players completed a weekly online questionnaire assessing stress appraisals (i.e., stress direction, perceived control), social identity, individual and communal coping strategies, and burnout. Data collection is still in progress. Random coefficient regression models will examine within-person relationships between stress, social identity, coping, and burnout during this phase, when distinct patterns are expected (Madigan et al., 2020; Pété et al., 2023). This study is expected to provide novel insights into how social identity and communal coping interact with stress appraisals to influence burnout, emphasizing the role of the team context in supporting athletes' mental health during this high-pressure period.

ID: 121 / Oral Presentations 35: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Clinical sport psychology, Elite sports and expertise, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: mental health, female, elite sport

Exploring Protective Factors Against Mental Ill-Health and Promotive Factors for Mental Health in World-Class Female Athletes

Kate Walsh, Samuel Giles, Chris Harwood, Chris Saward
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

Existing research into the mental health of elite athletes has largely focused on mental ill-health and related risk factors, with limited attention given to protective and promotive processes in females (Kuttel & Larson, 2020). This is despite the comparatively higher prevalence of reported mental ill-health in elite female athletes (Kew et al., 2024). This study therefore explored elite female athletes' perceptions of factors that protect against mental ill-health and promote mental health. Thirty-one world-class and elite British female athletes across 16 Olympic, Winter Olympic and professional sports took part in a semi-structured interview (M=81.28mins, SD=18.9mins) involving biographical mapping (Schubring et al., 2019). Participants explored their mental health, environmental support, and performance. Four overarching themes were generated: (a) internal compass guides me through the chaos, reflecting self-awareness, identity and capacity for regulation; (b) catch me if I fall, representing the role of perceived and accessible support; (c) value me, listen to me, trust me and I'll soar, highlighting the importance of relational trust and feeling valued within the environment; and (d) performing is a dance, I'll do it in the rain, capturing the ability to thrive under pressure. These themes and related factors were mapped across ecological levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This study represents the most extensive qualitative exploration of elite female athletes mental health experiences across the career to date. The use of innovative methodology allowed differentiation between factors protecting against mental ill-health and promoting mental health, providing foundations for future research and informing recommendations for supporting athlete mental health systemically.

ID: 530 / Oral Presentations 35: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Health, Psychotherapeutic approaches (e.g. psychodinamic, systemic), Any other topic
Keywords: Psycho-sensory, athlete mental health, distress, mental well-being

A Comparison of Self-Administered Havening Technique and Active Control on Athlete Mental Health

Kelly Johal, Ella Mcloughlin, Chris Saward, Kirsty Hunter, Mustafa Sarkar, Alex Sumich, Chris Harwood
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

Research suggests that athletes are at increased risk of poor mental health, partly due to the intense demands of sport. One potential evidence-based intervention to support athlete mental health is the Havening Technique. The Havening Technique is a psycho-sensory technique that has been shown to positively influence mood and psychological health in the non-sporting population (Sumich et al., 2022). Therefore, the present study examined the effectiveness of self-administered Havening Technique compared to an active control condition on athletes' mood, distress and mental well-being. A repeated-measures experimental design was employed with 137 athletes (Mage= 29.51 years, SD = 5.58). Participants were allocated to either a Havening or an active control condition and completed three sessions per week over a two-week period. At baseline and post-intervention, distress, coping skills and mental well-being were assessed. At the session level, mood and distress were assessed pre- and post-session.

Data were analysed using multi-level modelling to account for the hierarchical structure of repeated observations. Results revealed significant changes over time for both conditions across all outcome measures. Significant pre- to post-session reductions were observed in distress and mood, but no between-condition differences were present. A significant interaction between condition and time was observed at post-intervention (p = 0.04), indicating a change in treatment effects between conditions over time. The findings suggest that a brief, remote intervention can produce short-term effects on distress-related and well-being, but there is limited evidence supporting Havening-specific effects. Improvements may reflect common session-related factors rather than intervention-specific mechanisms.

ID: 661 / Oral Presentations 35: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Mental skills training, Social psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: mental health, performance, coaching, consulting

A Mental Health and Sport Performance Continuum Tool: Behavioral Indicators and Practical Strategies for Athlete Longevity

Jess Kirby
University of Colorado Colorado Springs, United States of America

Mental health and sport psychology services are often treated as separate considerations; however, both exist along interconnected continua. This presentation introduces the Mental Health & Sport Performance Continuum (MHSPC) tool, which maps mental health functioning onto the continuum of sport performance across five mental health-performance pillars: 1) thriving, 2) flourishing, 3) surviving, 4) languishing, and 5) burnout/crisis. This non-clinical tool draws from mental health and performance practice with collegiate athletes and from empirical frameworks such as the sport mental health continuum and the dual-continuum model of mental health. The MHSPC tool aligns behavioral indicators and risk factors for athletes across the mental health continuum with common corresponding performance states. This tool was created after consideration of existing mental health continua models and from evaluation of outcomes following implementation of comprehensive mental health and performance programming for approximately 1,500 collegiate athletes over four years to include case notes from 198 one-on-one athlete support sessions and 36 team sessions. The resulting tool was designed to extend existing mental health models, from measuring constructs of psychosocial wellbeing and illbeing in sport, to identifying common athlete behavioral indicators and risk factors, and to suggest practical tools to support athletes along this continuum. Tools include health behavior evaluation, mental and emotional skills training, peer-to-peer support, and mental health referrals. The MHSPC offers a theoretically grounded, novel approach to supporting athlete mental health. By enabling early identification and intervention, it has potential to reduce demand for emergent clinical services and support long-term athlete wellbeing and performance.

11:00am - 12:15pm

Biopsychosocial factors associated with refereeing performance in football

Location: **A13**

ID: 524 / Symposium 21: 1
Symposium 75 minutes
Topics: Decision making and judgement, Elite sports and expertise, Mental skills training, Perception & attention
Keywords: Biopsychosocial, Cognitive processes, Video Assistant Referee, Football refereeing

Biopsychosocial factors associated with refereeing performance in football

Pedro Teques[1,2,3], David Peris[4], Roy David Samuel[5]
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Refereeing performance in football unfolds within fast-paced, socially evaluated, and increasingly technology-mediated environments that place simultaneous cognitive, emotional, and contextual demands on officials. Understanding performance in this domain requires an integrated perspective capable of capturing how individual resources and match environments interact in real time. This symposium brings together complementary empirical and conceptual contributions examining biopsychosocial determinants of refereeing performance in football.

The first presentation advances an integrative framework situating cognitive resources such as perceptual processing speed and attentional control within the broader experiential ecology of match officiating, including social evaluation and technology-mediated interruptions. The second presentation provides psychometric evidence on key psychological dimensions underpinning referees' functioning, including anxiety regulation, distractibility, self-confidence, and strategic planning, contributing to the development of structured assessment approaches in football officiating. The third presentation examines the mental and behavioural impact of Video Assistant Referee (VAR) interventions, highlighting how technology-related disruptions influence mental fatigue, perceived performance, and subsequent decision-making patterns during matches. Together, these contributions adopt a biopsychosocial lens to advance an ecologically grounded understanding of refereeing performance in contemporary football. By integrating cognitive, psychological, behavioural, and contextual evidence, the symposium aims to stimulate discussion on multidimensional assessment and training strategies that support referee performance and well-being in elite football environments. The session will conclude with an integrative synthesis and discussion on future research directions and applied implications for referee development and performance support systems.

11:00am - 12:15pm

2Steps4Health Workshop Series – Fostering Resilience and Mental Health in Competitive Youth Athletes

Location: **048**

ID: 360 / Workshop 29: 1
Workshop
Topics: Health, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Mental Health, Resilience, Youth Athletes, Prevention Program

Workshop Series – Fostering Resilience and Mental Health in Competitive Youth Athletes

Luc Riedmayr, Josephine Kroll, Anna Eckert, Moritz Schnöckel, Nadja Walter
Leipzig University, Germany

Competitive youth athletes face various demands such as balancing school and training, managing expectations, and navigating adolescence, which can increase vulnerability to psychological strain and mental health issues. Although prevention programs exist, few take a comprehensive, context-specific approach tailored to competitive youth sport. The #blinded-for-review# project addresses this gap through a two-step prevention framework promoting resilience and mental health (Kaiser et al., 2023). Its universal level comprises six theory-based 90-minute workshops on mental health, positive psychology, communication, conflict management, sleep, and nutrition (Kroll et al., 2026), integrating sport psychology strategies with experiential learning, emotional reflection, and transfer to sport and school contexts. This applied workshop combines theoretical input with practical exercises, focusing on evidence-based strategies to promote mental health and resilience in competitive youth sport. It covers the biopsychosocial health framework, daily stressors and coping, and positive psychology (e.g., hot air balloon analysis, gratitude jar), alongside sleep-focused activities such as the sleep barometer and a short quiz. The workshop is designed for sport psychologists, coaches, and support staff. Following participation, attendees will be able to 1) describe the specific mental health challenges and risk factors faced by competitive youth athletes, 2) explain key components of a universal prevention level for mental health in youth sport, 3) apply selected methods (e.g., reflective exercises, positive psychology) in their professional practice, 4) reflect on and evaluate the transfer of mental health promotion strategies to sport contexts. Presentation slides and materials will be shared after the session.

11:00am - 12:15pm

Navigating Motherhood and Identity Change: A Humanistic Workshop for Sport and Performance Psychologists Supporting Mothers

Location: **130**

ID: 291 / Workshop 31: 1
Workshop
Topics: Emotion, Exercise psychology, Health, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: Motherhood, Exercise, Identity-transition, Mental-Skills

Navigating Motherhood and Identity Change: A Humanistic Workshop for Sport and Performance Psychologists Supporting Mothers

Hila Sharon David[1], Carly Block[2]
[1]College of Management, Department of Behavioral Sciences, Israel; [2]Boston University, Wheelock College of Education & Human Development, USA

The transition to motherhood, conceptualized as matrescence (Athan, 2015), is a profound biopsychosocial developmental process involving identity reorganization, neurobiological change, and physical adaptation. Although return to activity is increasingly addressed, women's psychological reintegrationת especially among those with an athletic or physically active identity- remains under-integrated in applied sport and exercise psychology. This applied workshop equips sport and performance psychologists with evidence-based, humanistic tools to support women navigating matrescence, including athletes, recreationally active women, and those experiencing disrupted relationships with movement. Participants will learn to (a) conceptualize matrescence as a normative transition, (b) identify key psychological challenges related to identity, motivation, body trust, and self-regulation, and (c) apply adapted sport psychology interventions to support well-being, sustainable engagement in physical activity, and identity integration during early motherhood. Grounded in humanistic and sport psychology frameworks, this interactive workshop integrates experiential learning, reflective dialogue, and applied skill practice. Using Personal-Disclosure Mutual-Sharing (PDMS), participants will explore bodily change, guilt, fatigue, and shifting performance expectations. Hands-on practice includes cognitive reframing, healing imagery, arousal regulation using micro-rest protocols, and flexible goal-setting models (Plan A/B/C). Systemic strategies for engaging partners and fathers as support resources will also be demonstrated. Participants will receive a Motherhood-Support Toolkit including intervention scripts, experiential exercises, and holistic health checklists.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

Mental Health Promotion in High-Performance Sport: a Multidisciplinary and Organisational Perspective

Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 508 / Symposium 25: 1
Symposium 75 minutes
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Well-being, ecological, mental health literacy

Mental Health Promotion in High-Performance Sport: a Multidisciplinary and Organisational Perspective

Jolan Kegelaers[1], Janja Usenik[2], Maximiliano Devoto[3], Laura Spolverato[1]
[1]Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium; [2]University of Maribor, Maribor, Slovenia; [3]Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

Attention for mental health in high-performance sport has increased drastically in the last few years. Research and practice both suggest that mental health forms a core component of any contemporary sport culture of excellence. Sport organisations, therefore, have a duty of care by protecting and promoting the mental health of all members within their organisation (Grey-Thompson, 2017). As such, there is a clear need for evidence-based and contextually grounded mental health initiatives that integrate prevention, early intervention, and specialised support (Henriksen et al., 2024; Henriksen et al., 2019; Purcell et al., 2019). The purpose of this symposium is to propose an organisational and multidisciplinary perspective on mental health promotion. The first presentation will outline the results of a recent large multi-site (including Slovenia, Belgium, and South Africa) intervention, examining the implementation and effectiveness of a mental health literacy intervention for athletes. Extending beyond the level of the individual athlete, the second presentation will focus on the perspectives of Spanish organisational leaders and policymakers (e.g., high-performance managers, technical directors) regarding their perceived role in setting up organisational mental health initiatives in high-performance sport. Finally, the third presentation will present a newly developed mental health promotion framework for high-performance sport organisations. This framework was co-designed with relevant stakeholders, athletes, entourage members, and academic experts from across Europe; and aims to support different types of applied sporting organisations in the design and evaluation of a comprehensive mental health policy.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

Transforming Power Cultures That Malnourish Mental Health into Empowered Cultures: Jamming a Square Peg into a Round Table

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 536 / Workshop 34: 1
Workshop
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Ethics in applied settings, Organizational development and quality management, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Ethical practice, client protection, nourishing cultures

Transforming Power Cultures That Malnourish Mental Health into Empowered Cultures: Jamming a Square Peg into a Round Table

Julie Hayden-Blackburn, Chelsea Norris, Dr. Vicki Tomlinson, Dr. Michael Gerson
National University, United States of America

The ISSP Consensus Statement on high-performance sport environments (HPSEs) and mental health (Henriksen et al., 2024) outlines key differences between environments that nourish versus those that malnourish mental health, and provides recommendations for fostering mentally healthy HPSEs. Mental Performance Professionals (MPPs) are uniquely positioned to implement such interventions with sport teams, organizations, and systems. Many performance cultures harbor harmful dynamics of discrimination, coercion, and abuse (Alexander et al., 2023). These dynamics create environments where athletes feel unable or reluctant to advocate for themselves, citing power imbalances between coaches and decision-makers (Muhonen, 2024). This can result in long-term psychological harm, possibly necessitating clinical support in the future (Salim & Winter, 2022). Attempts to protect athletes through honest communication have been met with resistance and retaliation that may further harm clients (Knott et al., 2025). In working toward fostering transformative and nourished HPSEs, MPPs benefit by becoming knowledgeable and equipped with strategies that embody these characteristics. As such, this workshop will engage MPPs in reflective analysis of the HPSEs they support and how they can employ strategies discussed by Henriksen et al. (2024). Through case conceptualizations, also shared by Henriksen (2015), and group discussions, the focus will be how MPPs can be empowered to share their experiences, expertise, and challenges in developing more holistic HPSEs. Attendees will build on these recommendations published in the ISSP Consensus Statement to collaboratively problem-solve and generate ideas and momentum to foster mentally healthy HPSEs, ultimately enhancing client well-being and contributing to more sustainable, enriching performance cultures.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

EFPA Session

Location: **A01**

ID: 722 / EFPA Session: 1
Special session - EFPA session
Topics: Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: Professional Development, professional standards, practice

Applying EFPA's Recognition of Sport Psychology in Europe: Challenges and Considerations for the EuroPsy Certificates in Sport

Chris Harwood
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

In 2023, the European Federation of Psychology Associations (EFPA) granted 'field of practice' status to sport psychology, placing the discipline alongside clinical and health, work and organisational, and educational psychology in terms of contexts of practice. This allowed practitioners with appropriate education, training and supervised experience in sport psychology to attain the EuroPsy Certificate of Psychology within Sport (EuroPsy- Sport) and be placed on the EuroPsy Register. Following these decisions, there has been a gradual push to promote sport psychology much further within EFPA and grow this certificate. This session will focus on the ongoing work led by the European EuroPsy Committee (EEC) of the EFPA to promote the visibility and value of the European Certificate of Psychology within Sport (EuroPsy- Sport). It will update attendees on the progress of the ad-hoc working group

developed by EFPA on current projects, opportunities and challenges. It will also discuss potential next steps and decisions associated with the Specialist Certificate in Sport. Adopting a 'town hall' style, reflections and questions from the audience will be welcomed.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

When Everything Is Violence, Nothing Is Measurable: Operationalising Violence and Severity in Sport Psychology

Location: **A02**

ID: 615 / Symposium 24: 1
Symposium 75 minutes
Topics: Violence
Keywords: Interpersonal violence, Abuse, Safeguarding in sport, Severity measurement

When Everything Is Violence, Nothing Is Measurable: Operationalising Violence and Severity in Sport Psychology

Tine Vertommen[1], Marie-France de Lafontaine[2], Sylvie Parent[2], Laurie Schwab[3,4], Miguel Nery[5], Bruno Avelar Rosa[6]

[1]Thomas More University of Applied Sciences, Belgium; [2]Department of Physical Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Université Laval, Canada; [3]Swiss Federal Institute of Sport, Magglingen, Switzerland; [4]Institute of Sport Sciences, University of Lausanne, Switzerland; [5]Faculdade de Motricidade Humana, Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal. CIDESD – Centro de Investigação em Desporto, Saúde e Desenvolvimento Humano. Qantara Sports; [6]Universidade Lusófona, Centro Universitário de Lisboa, Portugal. CIFEDES – Centro de Investigação em Desporto, Educação Física, Exercício e Saúde. Qantara Sports

Sport psychology is increasingly engaged in the prevention of interpersonal violence in sport settings. Yet across research and practice, the term violence is applied inconsistently, ranging from bounded coercive acts to a broad spectrum of negative sport experiences. This conceptual expansion creates methodological and practical problems: prevalence estimates lose comparability, mechanisms become obscured, and safeguarding responses risk being either disproportionate or insufficient. Building on broader definitions of violence that include the misuse of force or power, this symposium emphasises that in sport contexts, violence is often relational and psychological, shaped by how power, coercion, and harm are experienced within relationships. Without transparent decision rules, harmful climates may be normalised, less severe experiences are over-labelled, and sport psychologists lack consistent criteria to distinguish harmful relational dynamics from non-violent stressors inherent to performance environments. This symposium proposes a shared measurement framework linking definitions to severity and appropriate response. Presentation 1 introduces a minimum operational standard for classifying interpersonal violence in sport. Presentation 2 moves beyond binary exposure models by operationalising severity in psychological violence and neglect, identifying empirically derived profiles and their differential associations with adolescent psychological and behavioural health outcomes. Presentation 3 applies these frameworks to martial arts and combat sports through case-based vignettes, examining how distinctions between legitimate aggressiveness and violence can be made transparent and defensible. Together, the symposium offers a coherent approach to defining, measuring, and responding to violence in sport.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

Oral Presentations 41: Organisational development, Well-being and quality of life

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Louise Kamuk Storm**

ID: 301 / Oral Presentations 41: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Emotion, Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: burnout, psychological configurations, elite athletes, amateur athletes

Psychological Configurations and Burnout Trajectories in Sport

Verónica Tutte Vallarino
Universidad Católica del Uruguay, Uruguay

Burnout in sport has traditionally been explained through demand- and stressor-based models (Gustafsson et al., 2017; Raedeke & Smith, 2001). However, recent evidence suggests that it is a transversal and heterogeneous phenomenon (Malán et al., 2025; Tutte et al., 2022, 2026). The aim of this study was to analyze burnout in elite and amateur athletes using a person-centered approach, identifying psychological configurations associated with different risk and protective trajectories. A cross-sectional study was conducted with 511 athletes (38.0% elite; 62.0% amateur). Burnout was assessed using the Revised Athlete Burnout Inventory (IBD-R, Garcés de los Fayos et al., 2012). Descriptive and inferential analyses were performed, together with hierarchical and k-means cluster analyses, to identify burnout profiles. No significant differences were found between competitive levels in emotional exhaustion or depersonalization, although differences emerged in reduced personal accomplishment. Cluster analysis identified four distinct profiles: Healthy, Reduced Accomplishment, Emotional Exhaustion, and Depersonalization-dominant burnout. These profiles reflect differentiated psychological configurations, with some aligned with more adaptive trajectories and others associated with higher burnout risk, regardless of competitive level. The findings indicate that burnout does not manifest uniformly across athletes and support a configurational perspective for understanding risk and protective trajectories in sport. This approach provides a more comprehensive framework for developing targeted and context-sensitive interventions within a scientist–practitioner perspective.

ID: 177 / Oral Presentations 41: 2
Oral presentations

Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Esports, Organizational development and quality management, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: eSport Psychology, Elite performance, Organisational culture, Self-care

A Multi-Phased Study of Self-Care in Elite Esports: Perspectives of Players, Coaches, Managers, and Sport Psychology Practitioners

Jon Brain[1], Alessandro Quartiroli[2,3], Christopher R. D. Wagstaff[3]
[1]Thomas More University of Applied Science, People and Well-being, Safeguarding Sport and Society, Belgium; [2]UW - La Crosse, United States of America; [3]University of Portsmouth

Self-care is increasingly acknowledged as an important contributor to athlete development and well-being (Cosh & Tully, 2015), however, limited research has examined how self-care is conceptualised within elite esports. This study explored understandings of self-care among 24 elite esports stakeholders (players, coaches, managers, and sport psychology professionals) using semi-structured interviews analysed through reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). A multi-phase sequential design was adopted, whereby findings from each stakeholder group were translated into creative knowledge-exchange outputs (including a narrated summary script, polyphonic vignettes, and videos; Middleton et al., 2021). These materials were subsequently presented to the next group to prompt reflection and critical commentary. This iterative and cumulative analytic process facilitated the co-construction of nuanced, layered insights into player self-care in elite esports. Findings indicated that player self-care was holistic and highly context-dependent, extending beyond recovery to encompass professional growth and identity development. Self-care was understood both as a means of enhancing performance and as a source of personal value, with engagement strongest when strategies were perceived as simple, enjoyable, and culturally aligned. Player self-care was further shaped by organisational culture, team environments, education, role modelling, and broader social networks. Collectively, these findings offer applied implications for sport psychology professionals to develop adaptable, culturally sensitive self-care practices, for organisations to embed care within team structures and climates, and for publishers and tournament organisers to use their systemic influence to support and normalise sustainable self-care practices within elite esports.

ID: 579 / Oral Presentations 41: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Human factors, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: transition, professional women's football, organ

Is it Really Growth for All? Professional Female Footballers' Perceptions of the Growth of Women's Football in the UK

Céline Plée[1], Thierry Middleton[1], Chris Wagstaff[1], Alessandro Quartiroli[2]
[1]University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom; [2]University of Wisconsin - La Crosse

Since the UEFA Women's Euro in 2022, women's football in England has evolved in a transitional period: the sport itself is transitioning from a "second-class" status with less exposure to a valued and promoted sport. As such, the Women's Super League has seen record breaking attendances and heightened attention. However, despite these incredible improvements, there have been some concerns around the players' physical and mental health (Culvin, 2023; FIFPro, 2025). Therefore, it is of paramount importance to understand the impact of the growth of women's football on professional female footballers in the UK. This paper aims to understand how professional footballers have experienced the growth of women's football in the UK since the Euro 2022. A feminist critical realist approach is used to explore the topic via semi-structured interviews with 13 professional female footballers playing in the WSL 2. The data were analysed following thematic analysis and presented in the form of creative non-fiction story: a player's reflective letter to her younger self. Players' stories reflect the unequal growth of the women's game, the impact of the growth on players' mental wellbeing and implications of the lack of support accessible to players to adapt to the growth. Key messages around players' welfare, the importance of effective support and positive culture will be highlighted. The paper concludes by highlighting elements of change to promote positive and supportive professional environments within the Women's Professional League.

ID: 149 / Oral Presentations 41: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Mental skills training, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: psychological strengths, positive psychology intervention, applied practice

Psychological Strengths in Sport as Relational Constructs: An Applied Perspective

Yekta Sahin[1,2], Velittin Balcı[1]
[1]Ankara University, Türkiye; [2]Gaziantep Youth and Sports Provincial Directorate, Ministry of Youth and Sports

Positive psychology interventions in sport often rely on generic frameworks that target psychological strengths in isolation, overlooking how these strengths are culturally and relationally organized. In collectivist sport contexts, individual attributes such as competitiveness and responsibility tend to merge with relational processes such as coach interaction and commitment, producing culturally distinct strength configurations. This preliminary pilot study examined the feasibility and initial outcomes of a psychoeducational intervention grounded in this culturally adapted measurement structure. Based on the Turkish adaptation of the Sport-Specific Psychological Strengths Questionnaire (SSPSQ), a five-week positive psychology program was developed to align with relationally organized strength patterns identified in a Turkish athlete sample. A pretest-posttest control group design was employed with

10 active athletes randomly assigned to an experimental group (n = 5) and a control group (n = 5). The experimental group participated in weekly 60-minute sessions incorporating interactive exercises and group activities targeting commitment, emotional regulation, competitiveness, and responsibility, while the control group received no intervention. Results indicated statistically significant increases in overall psychological strength scores for the experimental group (Wilcoxon Z = −2.060, p < .05, r = .92), with no meaningful changes observed in the control group (Z = −0.813, p > .05). Between-group comparisons at post-test confirmed experimental group advantages across all five subscales (Mann–Whitney U, all p < .05, r = .72–.85). These preliminary findings support the feasibility of culturally grounded positive psychology interventions in sport and highlight the applied value of culture-sensitive strength frameworks in intervention design.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

The Spiritual Compass: Integrating the Spiritual Domain into Sport & Performance Psychology

Location: **A10**

ID: 696 / Workshop 32: 1
Workshop
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: self-transcendence theory, positive psychology, self-Connection, connection with others

The Spiritual Compass: Integrating the Spiritual Domain into Sport & Performance Psychology

Michael Gerson[1], Vicki Tomlinson[2], Julie Hayden-Blackburn[3], Eszter Biro[4], Eric Ballelos[5]
[1]National University; [2]National University; [3]National University; [4]University of Western States; [5]Eric Ballelos LLC and Red Rock Volleyball Club

Athletes are whole human beings—physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual—yet the spiritual domain remains underexplored in applied sport and performance psychology. Increasingly, athletes describe peak performance using language of transcendence, connection, meaning, and alignment, suggesting that spirituality is already embedded within high-performance experience. Drawing from humanistic psychology (Maslow, Frankl, Rogers), self-transcendence theory, positive psychology, and contemporary mindfulness-based approaches, this experiential workshop introduces a structured and ethically grounded framework for integrating spirituality into applied practice. Spirituality is defined broadly and inclusively as connection to self, others, and something greater, without requiring religious belief or affiliation. Participants will engage in a four-part applied model organized as a navigational compass: True North (orientation, shared definitions, and ethical considerations), Inner Alignment (cultivating self-awareness, values clarity, and alignment under pressure), Relational Field (enhancing connection, belonging, and team cohesion through shared meaning), and Transcendent Horizon (developing perspective, purpose, and access to self-transcendent states linked to resilience and flow). Learning outcomes include the ability to (a) define spirituality within a performance-relevant and inclusive framework, (b) apply a four-part model to structure interventions in sport and performance settings, (c) facilitate experiential practices that enhance awareness, meaning, and connection, and (d) integrate spiritual domain strategies ethically alongside existing mental skills training approaches. Attendees will leave with experiential insight, practical tools, structured discussion prompts, and immediately applicable interventions to support holistic, meaningful, and sustainable performance.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

Oral Presentations 40: Safeguarding, Social Psychology

Location: **A11**
Session Chair: **Laura Healy**

ID: 537 / Oral Presentations 40: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Self, Any other topic
Keywords: Safe Dance, Safeguarding in Dance

Professional Identity Formation of Safe Dance Educators

Aalaya Milne[1], Jenna Magrath[1], Elisa Lefever[2], Nicole Chateau[1], Lauren Amato[1], Sarah McGee[1], Pip Kyle[3], Ashley Stirling[1]
[1]University of Toronto, Canada; [2]Ghent University, Belgium; [3]Newcastle University Business School, UK

In recognition of cases of abuse and harm occurring in the dance environment, safe dance practices are becoming increasingly important (Cumming et al., 2024; Wensel et al., 2024). Given the importance of dance educators and their impact on dancers' experiences (Milne et al., 2024; Moola & Krahn, 2018), it is important to understand how these individuals come to value safe dance practices. "Safe Dance Educator" is used to describe dance educators who prioritize elements of safe dance practices to promote dancers' holistic health, safety, and well-being; however, little is known about how these individuals come to value safe dance practices. The purpose of this research was to explore the professional identity formation of safe dance educators. Following ethics approval, eight dance educators, both men and women, were recruited using purposeful and snowball sampling. Using ongoing consent practices, participants were interviewed using a life history approach. Data were analyzed using narrative thematic analysis. Findings were interpreted in light of Baxter Magolda's (2008) concept of self-authorship as it relates to professional identity formation, including three narrative themes: The familiar trail, the crossroads, and forging your own path. Narratives suggest that dance educators construct and reconstruct their safe dance professional identity throughout their life and career. Additionally, professional identity was influenced by personal experiences as a dancer and the acceptance or rejection of the type of education style they received. Findings can be used in developing safe dance educator trainings and further implications will be discussed as they apply to the dance environment.

ID: 366 / Oral Presentations 40: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Group dynamics, Organizational development and quality management, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: conceptual clarity, conceptual advancement, definition, transferability

Psychological Safety in Sport: Deconstructing Conceptual Challenges

Angela Heinisch[1,2], Gretchen Kerr[1]
[1]University of Toronto, Canada; [2]University of Melbourne, Australia

Psychological safety originates from the field of organizational psychology, where it has become widely recognized and extensively researched (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). More recently, research on psychological safety has begun in sport (Lima et al., 2025) in attempts to address concerns about athletes' experiences of abuse and poor mental health (Walton et al., 2024). As interest in the construct grows within sport, varied conceptualizations and debates have emerged (Taylor et al., 2025), creating challenges for theoretical advancement and limiting practical impact (Vella et al., 2024). To clarify ambiguities and identify gaps, a concept analysis of psychological safety in sport was conducted. Drawing on the strong research foundation in organizational psychology, we analyzed the challenges of conceptual transfer and alterations in conceptualizations in sport psychology and identified the ambiguities that underlie inconsistencies within in-sport conceptualizations. Five major ambiguities in psychological safety in sports are addressed: conceptual transfer into sports (conflict vs. adaptability), level of analysis (individual vs. team/group-level), sport context (employment vs. leisure), scope (harm-free vs. positive environments), and agenda (enhancing performance vs. fostering mental health). To enhance conceptual clarity, researchers are advised to disclose the extent, context, and purpose of conceptual adaptations made, and clarify their stance on identified ambiguities. Transparency may reduce reliance on out-of-sport notions and increase contextual fit (Şenel et al., 2025). Adaptations with high contextual fit are more likely to inform the appropriateness, credibility, and implementation of policies and interventions to improve athlete safety and mental health (Vella & Rice, 2026).

ID: 164 / Oral Presentations 40: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Physical activity, Violence
Keywords: Violence in sport, Athlete support professionals, Mixed study

Training Needs of the Athlete Support Professionals on Interpersonal Violence (IV) in Sport

Corinne Fréchette[1], De Guise Audrey-Anne[2], Gillard Allyson[1], Radziszewski Stephanie[1], Boudreault Véronique[3], Durand-Bush Natalie[4], Mountjoy Margo[5], Vertommen Tine[6], Parent Sylvie[1]
[1]Université Laval, Canada; [2]Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières; [3]Université de Sherbrooke; [4]Université d'Ottawa; [5]McMaster University; [6]Arch Safeguarding

Interpersonal violence (IV) is a major issue in sport and must be prevented. Athlete support professionals (ASP) have a key role to play in its prevention. Literature suggests that training is an important lever for IV prevention (INPSQ, 2025) and that individual and organizational factors are key determinants of ASP practices (Roberts et al, 2020). To further explore this perspective, a convergent parallel mixed-method was used: (1) to document the attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, behaviours, and readiness to change of the ASP regarding IV in sport, and (2) to define their training needs in terms of content and format. The quantitative phase involved a self-reported online survey answered by 343 ASP and data were analysed using descriptive statistics. The qualitative phase consisted of four focus groups and 24 individual interviews, for a total of 50 participants. Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach. Quantitative data indicated few significant differences between ASP groups on both individual and organizational factors regarding IV. Qualitative data helped identify shared training needs encompassing IV prevention, detection, and intervention. Namely, psychosocial workers emphasize how to act in sporting contexts, medical and paramedical staff emphasize supporting athletes given legal confidentiality obligations, physical trainers focus on how to act with athletes and coaches, and managers seek more system-level support and resources. Overall, integrated findings highlighted individual and organizational factors underlying group-specific needs. This study shows that all ASP consider IV training important and that training programs will need to be specific to each professional context.

ID: 378 / Oral Presentations 40: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Group dynamics, Social psychology
Keywords: Personal Disclosure and Mutual Sharing, intervention, cohesion, communication

Effects of Personal Disclosure and Mutual Sharing Intervention on Youth Team Cohesion

Özce Sıla Karadoğan
Hacettepe University, Turkey (Türkiye)

This study examined the effects of a Personal Disclosure and Mutual Sharing (PDMS) intervention on communication and cohesion in youth sport teams, building on conceptualizations of PDMS as an interpersonal sharing process designed to enhance team functioning (Holt & Dunn, 2006). Seventy-four adolescent athletes aged 13–19 (M = 14.82) from 6 volleyball and 2 basketball teams participated. A matched-pair cluster randomization procedure was employed to ensure baseline equivalence, assigning four teams to the experimental and four to the placebo-control condition. The experimental group completed a seven-session PDMS intervention, while the control group engaged in relaxation-based placebo sessions of equal duration. Communication was measured via the Scale for Effective

Communication in Team Sports (Sullivan & Feltz, 2003), and cohesion via the Youth Sport Environment Questionnaire (Eys et al., 2009). A 2×2 repeated-measures MANOVA was conducted. A significant Group × Time interaction was found for Distinctiveness/Negative Conflict and Task Cohesion. Negative conflict decreased in the experimental group but increased in the control group. Task cohesion significantly improved among experimental athletes but declined among controls, supporting theoretical links between communication processes and task-related cohesion (Carron et al., 2012). No significant interactions emerged for Acceptance/Positive Conflict or Social Cohesion. Observed power for the interaction was adequate (power = .78). The PDMS intervention improved communication quality and task cohesion in youth sport teams. Unlike earlier PDMS applications, this program uniquely combined a multi-session structure with an experimental control group. Results suggest that structured interpersonal sharing interventions can strengthen task-focused team functioning.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

Oral Presentations 39: Well-being and quality of life, Physical activity

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Alexander Latinjak**

ID: 461 / Oral Presentations 39: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: ecological momentay assessment, menstrual cycle, affective wellbeing

The Menstrual Cycle as Moderating Factor in the Physical Behavior and Affective Well-Being Interaction in Individuals With AUD?

Luisa Lutz[1], Dominic Reichert[1,2], Sabine Hoffmann[2], Ulrich Ebner-Priemer[2,3], Bernd Lenz[2], Markus Reichert[1,2]

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Physical behavior (PB), including exercise and non-exercise activity, benefits mental health. Daily life investigations, that study behavior in real-life, near real-time and within-subject, show positive associations between PB and affective well-being (AWB) in patients and the healthy (Timm et al., 2024). In alcohol use disorder (AUD), AWB is a proximal predictor of drinking in daily life (Zaho et al., 2024), so PB may serve as a clinically important intervention target. In women with AUD, drinking considerably fluctuates across the menstrual cycle (Hoffmann et al. 2024), but whether the cycle with its hormonal changes also moderates the PB–AWB associations is fully unknown. To investigate whether the menstrual cycle phases moderate the AWB–PB association in naturally cycling individuals with AUD, we used an Ecological Momentary Assessment approach (Schmalenberger et al. 2021). We conducted a study including 64 naturally cycling individuals with AUD over one year. PB (steps) was measured continuously using accelerometry. AWB (valence and calmness) was assessed every second day, and menstrual cycle information four times over the study period. Preliminary multilevel analyses revealed significant differences in valence and calmness between the luteal and follicular phases ($p < .05$). The PA–calmness relation differed between the follicular and the menstrual phase ($p < .05$). Our findings indicate, that menstrual cycle phases moderate the momentary, within-person association between PB and AWB. This can be a first step leading towards cycle tailored physical activity interventions for individuals with AUD and can be a starting point for menstrual cycle inclusion in different populations.

ID: 503 / Oral Presentations 39: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Menopause, physical activity, drop-out

A Feasibility Study Investigating Effects of Exercise in the Workplace During Work Time for Menopausal Women

Adam Bibbey, Anne Delextrat, Gregory Walsh, Lily Sabir, Katy Baines, Maxine Fletcher
Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom

The menopause is associated with many psychological (e.g., anxiety) and physiological (e.g., hot flushes) symptoms (Santoro et al., 2021). Physical exercise has some benefits to reduce these symptoms; however lack of time is cited as the main barrier to take part in physical exercise in this population (Dugan et al., 2016). Therefore, our objective was to investigate the feasibility of exercise classes undertaken in the workplace during work time in healthy menopausal women and to study the potential benefits. Twenty-eight women (M = 54.3, SD = 6.5 years old; M = 162.6, SD = 7.6 cm; M = 65.6, SD =12.5 kg) performed two testing sessions before and immediately after a 12-week exercise intervention including two exercise classes and two independent exercise sessions weekly (no control group). Feasibility outcomes were measured during the intervention and semi-structured interviews were conducted post-intervention. Psychological outcomes were measured before and immediately after the intervention: Menopause Rating Scale (MRS), Short- Form Health Survey (SF-12), and Behavioural Regulations in Exercise (BREQ-3). Participants' drop-out, retention and compliance were 14.3%, 78.6%, and 70±32%, respectively. The programme had a positive effect on four identified main themes: positive organization work culture, menopausal psychological outcomes, menopausal physiological outcomes, and improvements for the program. Significant improvements between pre- and post-intervention were observed in MRS overall score ($p = .03$), BREQ-3 relative autonomy index ($p = .001$) and SF-12 Mental Health ($p = .028$) scores. A workplace physical activity intervention during work time for menopausal women is feasible and induces significant psychological and physical benefits after 12 weeks.

ID: 445 / Oral Presentations 39: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Health, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Severe Mental Illness, Physical Activity, Temporality, Narratives

Temporal Narratives of Community-Based Physical Activity in Severe Mental Illness

Sreedevi Laxman[1], Melissa Day[1], Chen-an Yu[1], Emily Hunt[2], Ross Wadey[3]
[1]University of Chichester, United Kingdom; [2]Brunel University, London; [3]St Mary's University, Twickenham, London

Severe mental illnesses (SMI) profoundly disrupt experiences of time, everyday rhythms, social participation and recovery journeys (Fuchs, 2013; Slade, 2009). Repeated cycles of hospital admission and discharge can impact continuity and social networks, making sustained recovery within the community particularly challenging. Although physical activity (PA) is increasingly promoted within mental health care, limited research has examined how PA participation evolves, is sustained and becomes integrated into recovery processes over time. This study therefore explores the retrospective experiences of 15 service users diagnosed with SMI (M age = 49.57), who have engaged with Sport in Mind, a mental health charity for more than 3 years. Qualitative data collection included narrative interviews (N=15, mean=62.49 minutes) along with timeline drawing (n=14) to support reflection during the interview. Guided by a narrative thematic analysis, with a temporal lens, five themes were identified: (1) SMI as Disruption to Time, (2) Re-entering Everyday Life through Community-based PA, (3) Finding Internal Time and Bodily Rhythms, (4) Finding Intersubjective Time and Social Rhythms and (5) 'Moving Beyond' Time. Findings conceptualise recovery as a temporal and relational process, characterised by experiences of frozen and cyclical time alongside fluctuating, non-linear PA participation. PA functioned not as a 'standalone intervention' in participants' recovery journeys, but as an adjunctive support facilitating cognitive and affective regulation, shared social rhythms and a renewed sense of belonging. For practitioners, embedding flexible, community-based PA within broader recovery-oriented care pathways can support sustained community re-engagement, including volunteering and employment, when integrated onto appropriate clinical care and safe environments.

ID: 589 / Oral Presentations 39: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: embodied awareness, yoga

Enhancement of Embodied Awareness Following Yoga Practice

Nao Shikanai
Asia University, Japan

Yoga is increasingly incorporated into sport and exercise settings to promote well-being. However, limited evidence exists on how sustained yoga practice influences participants' subjective awareness. The aim of this study was to investigate experiential changes following a 6-session yoga program, focusing on embodied awareness. Final-session reflections from 149 participants aged 18–24 years were analyzed using keyword frequency analysis to identify dominant experiential themes. Additionally, 108 participants completed quantitative evaluations of interest enhancement and satisfaction using 5-point Likert scales. Participants reported high levels of interest enhancement ($M = 4.45$, $SD = 0.66$) and satisfaction ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 0.62$), which were strongly positively correlated ($r = .77$, $p < .001$). Linguistic analysis demonstrated a predominance of body-related terms. Frequently referenced terms included posture (319 occurrences), awareness (220 occurrences), breathing (141 occurrences), change (108 occurrences), and improvement (108 occurrences). These findings indicate that participants primarily experienced yoga as a process of embodied regulation and increased bodily awareness, rather than solely as an affective or relaxation-based activity. Overall, these results suggest that short-term yoga practice enhances embodied awareness and contributes to body–mind integration within sport and exercise settings.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

Oral Presentations 38: Neuroscience

Location: **A13**
Session Chair: **Tsung-Min (Ernest) Hung**

ID: 578 / Oral Presentations 38: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Health, Neuroscience, Physical activity
Keywords: Active travel, Biking, Brain activity, Virtual reality

Associations between cycling behaviour, spatial cognition, and prefrontal activity among adults: A VR and fNIRS study

Melinda Herfet[1,2], Julius Debertshäuser[2], Wei-Peng Teo[3], David Broadbent[1], Farah Farizi[1], Emiliano Mazzoli[1], Thuong Hoang[1], Susanne Tittlbach[2], Anna Timperio[1]
[1]Deakin University, Australia; [2]University of Bayreuth, Germany; [3]Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Introduction: Active travel holds potential for promoting physical activity and cognitive health. Particularly, it may enhance cognitive function by increasing brain activity efficiency. Combining virtual reality (VR) simulation with functional near-infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS), we aim to investigate how prefrontal hemodynamic responses differ by traffic scenarios and cycling behaviour, and how these responses relate to visuospatial cognition.

Methods: 48 adults (MAge = 32.58, ♀ = 47.9%, MBMI = 23.5) completed online surveys, visuospatial cognitive tests, and a cycling protocol in an immersive 3D Cave. Using a randomized, repeated-measures design, participants cycled through randomly alternating 2-min blocks of traffic and non-traffic conditions, separated by 30s rest periods. A 24-channel fNIRS system recorded prefrontal oxy- and deoxyhemoglobin (HbO, Hb). NASA-TLX and presence (iPQ) ratings were collected post-task. GLMs estimated channel-wise fNIRS activation, while linear regression and mixed-models examined links between hemodynamics, cycling behaviour, and spatial cognition.

Results: Frequent cyclists outperformed non-cyclists on mental rotation ($\beta = -4.22$, 95% CI [−8.06, −0.38], $p = 0.032$) and situational awareness route-direction tasks ($\beta = -2.92$, 95% CI [−4.91, −0.92], $p = 0.005$). Preliminary findings suggest that both traffic and non-traffic conditions elicited higher HbO relative to baseline, while Hb showed no consistent pattern. Participants rated physical and mental demand as low and perceived the VR environment as moderately realistic.

Discussion: This study shows that VR–fNIRS is feasible for examining cycling-related cognitive processes, though limited realism and low perceived workload reduced ecological validity, warranting refinement of tasks and measurement tools. Despite this, preliminary patterns suggest links between habitual cycling, visuospatial performance, and prefrontal activation.

ID: 222 / **Oral Presentations 38: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Neuroscience, Psychophysiology
Keywords: exercise, affect, mechanisms

High-Intensity Interval Training Activates a Frontothalamic Circuit to Modulate Affect-Related Behavior in Mice

Douglas Affonso Formolo[1,2], Tong Cheng[2], Jiasui Yu[2], Georg S. Kranz[2], Shirley Zhang[2], Yau Suk-Yu[2]
[1]Hong Kong Shue Yan University, Hong Kong S.A.R. (China); [2]The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong S.A.R. (China)

The increasing prevalence of insufficient physical activity suggests our current behavioral models and derived interventions are incomplete. There is increasing interest in integrating affect into cognition-oriented models to better explain and intervene in exercise behavior, which could be supported by identifying the biological underpinnings of the exercise-affect relationship. Nevertheless, neurobiological research has focused on the mood-related effects of regular physical exercise, leaving the mechanisms underlying the exercise-affect relationship elusive. We hypothesized that exercise modulates prefrontal cortex-associated areas involved in affective response. To test this hypothesis, adult male mice underwent a single session of HIIT on a treadmill and were then subjected to affect-related behavioral tests 2 h later. Whole-brain c-Fos mapping (a neuronal activity marker) and network analysis were used to identify key brain regions modulated by exercise, while optogenetics was used to modulate these regions to probe their relevance to the exercise-elicited behavioral effects. The anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) and the anterodorsal thalamic nucleus (AD) were identified as central nodes in the exercise-activated brain network. Optogenetic inhibition of the ACC-AD circuit during exercise blocked the post-exercise improvement in affect-related behaviors, whereas optogenetic activation in sedentary mice mimicked them. Moreover, a deficiency of adiponectin, an exercise-induced adipokine, prevented post-exercise affective changes. Our findings indicate that the ACC-AD pathway could mediate exercise-associated affective modulation and suggest adiponectin as a potential exerkine. They provide neurobiological evidence for the exercise-affect relationship and support the inclusion of affect in exercise behavior models. Nevertheless, further exploration is needed to confirm their relevance to humans.

ID: 656 / **Oral Presentations 38: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Neuroscience, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation, Psychophysiology
Keywords: EEG, concussion, soccer heading, neurodegenerative disease

Does a Short Bout of Football Heading Impair the Neural Control of Balance?

Callum Jarvis, Mohamed Omar Mohamed, Greg Wood, Liis Uiga, Johnny Parr
Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

Growing evidence links repetitive sub-concussive head impacts from football heading with an increased risk of neurodegenerative disease in later life. However, the acute mechanisms through which heading alters nervous system function remain unclear. Experimental studies show that even a short bout of heading can impair cognitive performance and postural control, but it is unknown whether these impairments reflect measurable dysfunctions to neural activity and neuromuscular coordination. To address this, we examined whether a brief bout of repetitive football heading alters the neurophysiological control of reactive balance recovery. A perturbation-based balance paradigm was employed because unexpected balance disturbances require rapid integration of sensory input, central neural processing, and coordinated muscular responses, providing a sensitive test of whole-body nervous system function. To date, thirty amateur footballers have been assigned to either a Heading group (15 machine-delivered headers) or a Control group (15 headers performed in a virtual-reality environment) following our previous study design. Before and immediately after their respective heading intervention, participants completed a treadmill-based perturbation protocol in which unexpected belt translations induced sudden losses of balance. Twenty-two perturbations were delivered under single-task and cognitive dual-task conditions. Cortical activity was recorded using 64-channel electroencephalography (EEG), and lower-limb muscle responses were measured using

electromyography (EMG). Cognitive performance was additionally assessed using the King–Devick test. Behavioural analyses indicate that repetitive heading impairs reactive balance stability following the intervention. Analyses of perturbation-evoked cortical activity and muscle responses are ongoing to determine whether these behavioural changes are accompanied by alterations in neural processing and brain–muscle coordination.

ID: 234 / **Oral Presentations 38: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Motivation, Neuroscience, Neuropsychology, Physical activity
Keywords: perception of physical effort, effort-based reward valuation, effort discounting, reward positivity

How Individual Differences in Perceived Physical Effort Influence Effort–Based Reward Valuation: An Electroencephalography Study

Huiyu Shi[1,2,3], Jian Yang[1,2], Yueyao Qu[1,2], Yumin Liu[4], Matthew W. Miller[5], Ségolène Guérin[6], Yuan Zhang[7], Zhihui Li[1,2], C. J. Brush[5], Boris Cheval[8]

[1]School of Physical Education and Health, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China; [2]The Key Laboratory of Adolescent Health Assessment and Exercise intervention (Ministry of Education), East China Normal University, Shanghai, China; [3]Sino-French Joint Research Center of Sport Science, School of Physical Education and Health, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China; [4]School of Psychology, Shanghai University of Sport, Shanghai, China; [5]School of Kinesiology, Auburn University, AL, USA; [6]Sciences Cognitives et Sciences Affectives, University of Lille, CNRS, Lille, France; [7]School of Physical Education & Health, Hunan University of Technology and Business, Changsha, Hunan, China; [8]Univ Rennes, École normale supérieure de Rennes, VIPS2, F-35000 Rennes, France

According to the theory of effort minimization in physical activity (Cheval & Boisgontier, 2021), effort is generally perceived as aversive, which may explain why some individuals fail to translate intentions into physical activity. Although effort often reduces the subjective value of rewards, the effort paradox suggests that effort enhances the perceived value of rewards for some individuals (Inzlicht et al., 2018). Individual differences in perceived physical effort may be key to effort-based behaviour (Treadway et al., 2012; Maltagliati et al., 2025). However, it remains unclear whether these differences modulate neural processes underlying effort-based reward valuation. This study examined whether individual differences in perceived physical effort influence neural responses to rewards obtained through physical effort. We hypothesized that effort discounting would be enhanced in individuals who value physical effort more negatively. Sixty healthy young adults completed the Effort-Doors task during electroencephalography recording (Bowyer et al., 2021). Perceived physical effort was assessed using the Physical Effort Scale (Cheval et al., 2024). Contrary to our hypothesis, physical effort did not significantly modulate ΔRewP amplitudes following reward feedback. Complementary parent-wave analyses suggested that individual differences in perceived physical effort were associated with distinct neural patterns: stronger avoidance tendencies were linked to enhanced responses to losses, whereas stronger approach tendencies were linked to reduced responses to gains, although the latter effect did not reach statistical significance. These findings suggest that dispositional differences in the perception of physical effort may shape post-effort reward processing, with potential implications for engagement in effortful behaviors such as physical activity.

12:15pm - 1:30pm

Erasmus + Youth Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity)

Location: **048**

ID: 555 / **Erasmus +: 1**
Erasmus+ Projects: Presentations & Dissemination
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Transitions in and out of sport/dual career, Youth
Keywords: Dual career, biathlon, youth athletes

Dual Career for Biathletes (DC4B)

Małgorzata Sławińska[1], Mojca Doupona[2], Anastasiya Khomutova[3], Julia Karbowska[1]

[1]Institute of Sport - National Research Institute; [2]University of Ljubljana; [3]European Federation of Sport Psychology (FEPSAC), University of Brighton

Dual career (DC) pathways require athletes to balance elite sport and education, presenting significant developmental and psychosocial challenges. Grounded in Wylleman and Lavallee's holistic athlete career model and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, the Erasmus+ Sport project DC4Biathletes addressed the absence of sport-specific, culturally responsive DC support for biathletes—a population facing intensified demands due to high training loads, early specialisation, and frequent international travel that heighten educational disruption risk. The project was implemented by a multidisciplinary European partnership comprising the Institute of Sport – National Research Institute (Poland), University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), the International Biathlon Union (Austria), the European Federation of Sport Psychology (Belgium), and Re:visehub Oy (Finland). Methodology integrated four phases: a PRISMA-compliant systematic literature review (n = 12 studies); a multinational questionnaire (N = 148) assessing DC demands, barriers, resources, and coping strategies; focus groups with elite biathletes (N = 73, 17 countries, competitive categories A–D); and semi-structured interviews with coaches (N = 19), analysed through thematic categorisation. Findings revealed that time management and scheduling conflicts were the most frequently cited DC challenges, with teachers and coaches identified as primary support figures. Athletes reported persistent transnational barriers, including language difficulties and academic continuity disruption during competitions. Financial and psychological support gaps were consistently identified across national contexts. Project outputs represent a targeted advance over existing generic DC platforms, which lack winter sport-specific and transnational adaptation. Implications extend to sport federations, coaches, and educational institutions, informing policy on

flexible academic arrangements and integrated DC support systems for winter sport athletes across diverse national contexts.

ID: 689 / **Erasmus +: 2**
Erasmus+ Projects: Presentations & Dissemination
Topics: Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Professional development and mentoring, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Youth
Keywords: career pathways, international collaboration, performing arts, stage performance

Erasmus+ Sport Stage Performance: A Showcase of a Multi-Institutional Programme at the Intersection Between Sport and Art

Bianca Maria Laroëre[1], Jana Černá[1], Kateřina Kolbová[1], Natálie Wolfová[2], Lenka Henebergová[2]
[1]Department of Gymnastics and Combat Sports, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic; [2]Department of International Relations, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

Innovative educational programmes may strengthen psychosocial competencies, engagement, and employability among sport graduates by bridging theory and practice, particularly when supported by international collaborations. The Erasmus+ KA220 Sport in Art project aims to develop a new professional specialisation in higher education through a pilot dual-training programme at the intersection of sport and art. Coordinated by the National Sports Academy Vassil Levski (Bulgaria) and implemented by the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, Charles University (Czech Republic), and partner institutions in Spain and France, the project promotes interdisciplinary integration, student-centred approaches, and digital transformation at the European level. Over three years, the project includes (1) analysis of institutional practices, (2) development of twelve theoretical and methodological modules by expert teams, (3) inter-institutional in-person and digital teaching activities, (4) script-based students' rehearsals and public stage performance, and (5) representative film and student performance at the Festival of World Cultures in France. The project's outcomes include enhanced digital learning tools and strengthened cooperation among universities, industry, and the social environment. The project requires the partner teams to work across multiple roles, including management, research, analysis, teaching, learning, sustainability, results, and transnational project meetings. The programme's development is constantly monitored and evaluated, both inter-institutionally through management, quality, and execution control, and through student feedback assessments, as well as by the National Assessment and Accreditation Agency to ensure implementation standards. Overall, the Sport in Art project's interdisciplinary and international collaborations promote students' involvement and support career trajectories in the sport and cultural sectors.

12:15pm - 1:30pm **Compassionate Mindsets and Motivational Environments in Competitive Sport: An Introduction to Compassionate Mind Training**
Location: **130**

ID: 190 / **Workshop 33: 1**
Workshop
Topics: Best practice, Emotion, Mental skills training, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: compassion, well-being, performance

Compassionate Mindsets and Motivational Environments in Competitive Sport: An Introduction to Compassionate Mind Training

Angus Meichan
University of Hull, United Kingdom

Compassion interventions for reducing and recovering from extreme emotions are of interest in sport and performance environments. There is clear evidence that self-compassion is positively related to well-being and performance outcomes. Evidence also suggests that compassion to and from others is linked to healthier, more adaptive, competitive mindsets. This workshop will introduce participants to Compassionate Mind Training (CMT), the psychosocial and skills building part of Compassion Focused Therapy. CMT will be presented as a means of providing athletes with more compassionate ways of organising their minds and relating to self and others that can protect them from the harsh realities of competitive sport and transform their experiences. The workshop aims to provide participants with the tools, confidence and motivation to introduce compassion into their work. Content covered will include key concepts in CMT such tricky brain, three emotion systems, compassionate self, flows of compassion, and multiple selves. Participants will be invited to engage in experiential practices including breathing and imagery exercises as well as small and large group discussions. Content will be illustrated with reference to COMMIT, a novel 8-week programme of Compassionate Mind Training, which adopts a "game-as-teacher" approach in academy football. A particular focus will be on the use of positive psychology such as hope theory to adapt CMT for sport. Participants will be provided with copies of guided imagery scripts and handouts of key exercises.

1:30pm - 3:15pm **Lunch break**

2:45pm - 3:05pm **Midday Mindfulness**
Location: **A10**

Back-to-back sessions, new people, new ideas, a brain that won't slow down. This is a small pause in the middle of it all to replenish for the second half of the day. Every day after lunch, Gábor Barta and Gergő Gacs will guide you through 20 minutes of

mindfulness: a gentle mix of breathing-based meditation, body scan, visualization, and a mindful walk. Nothing intense, nothing complicated. Just a chance to actually land in your body for a bit before the afternoon kicks off. We'll help you connect with yourself and be fully present so you can experience the conference to the fullest! No previous experience with meditation needed, you just have to show up and be present!

3:30pm - 4:30pm

Injury Prevention Only Works When Athletes Own It: Becoming the Guardian of Health and Performance (Keynote Speaker: Caroline Bolling)

Location: **Aula Magna**
Session Chair: **Yago Ramis**

ID: 727 / 5th Keynote Speaker: 1
Keynote talks

Injury Prevention Only Works When Athletes Own It: Becoming the Guardian of Health and Performance

Caroline Bolling
Amsterdam UMC, The Netherlands

Injury prevention is often presented as a set of evidence-based strategies designed to reduce injury risk. Yet, athletes are not passive recipients of prevention programs. They continuously interpret, adapt, and integrate prevention strategies within the realities of their sporting environment. As a result, injury prevention is not a fixed intervention but a dynamic process shaped by the athlete's experiences, beliefs, relationships, and context.

Drawing on research exploring athletes' perspectives on injury prevention, this keynote will examine how sporting culture, communication, previous injury experiences, learning opportunities, social support, and performance demands influence the way athletes understand and engage with protecting their health and performance. These contextual factors shape not only what athletes do, but also how they perceive risk, make decisions, and prioritize health alongside performance goals.

Research shows that athletes develop individualized approaches to staying healthy, continuously adjusting their behaviors as their circumstances change. This highlights the limitations of one-size-fits-all prevention strategies and emphasizes the need for collaborative approaches that acknowledge the complexity of elite sport environments.

The keynote will discuss how health and performance support staff can move beyond simply prescribing preventive measures and instead help athletes become active owners of their health and performance. By fostering autonomy, shared decision-making, and meaningful support, we can empower athletes to become the guardians of their own wellbeing while creating environments that enable healthy and sustainable performance. Ultimately, injury prevention is most effective when it is contextualized, and owned by the athlete.

5:00pm - 7:30pm

Social programme

Conference Agenda Friday

18th European Congress of Sport & Exercise Psychology

Date: Friday, 17/July/2026

7:00am - 7:30am

Morning Grappling & Conditioning
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

Every morning before the run, we're doing something a little different. This is a 30-minute conditioning session built around movement drills from the world of BJJ and wrestling: animal locomotion, ground flow, tumbling, partner games. The kind of stuff that looks casual but gets your whole body working in ways you didn't expect.

If you've never trained a grappling sport, it is perfect. There's something genuinely fresh about moving close to the ground, figuring out how your body navigates space, and doing it all with another person. It trains coordination, spatial awareness, and functional strength (and it's fun).

No experience needed, no gear needed. Just show up with comfy clothes and some curiosity, and get properly fired up before the morning run.

7:30am - 8:00am

Morning Run
Location: **West University of Timisoara**

To start the conference day focused, energetic and powerful, we are inviting you to our morning running sessions. It doesn't matter if this is your first run or if you're already a seasoned veteran, we'll be running in separate groups at different paces.

We'll start with a warm-up, then run for 30 minutes, and finish with a group stretch. If you're just looking for a light run to start your day, this is the place for you. If you want to challenge yourself and have a more intense workout, this is the place for you, too.

Bring your running shoes and let's go!

The morning grappling workouts and runs will take place one after the other, not at the same time, so you can join just one or the other, or you can even do both (highly recommended)!

9:00am - 10:30am

No One Achieves in a Vacuum: Advancing Understanding of Coach–Athlete Relationships
Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 157 / Symposium 27: 1
Symposium 75 minutes
Topics: Coaching, Group dynamics, Social cognition, Social psychology
Keywords: coach-athlete relationship, communication strategies, shared reality, personality

No One Achieves in a Vacuum: Advancing Understanding of Coach–Athlete Relationships

Sophia Jowett[1], Louise Davis[2], Bard Solstad[3], Laura Healy[4]
[1]Tandem Performance, United Kingdom; [2]Umea University, Sweden; [3]University of Agder, Norway; [4]Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

The coach–athlete relationship is a central pillar of performance, wellbeing, and human development in sport. Quality relationships satisfy fundamental needs for belongingness, foster resilience, and enable individuals to flourish under pressure. No athlete and no coach achieves in a vacuum. Coaches and athletes depend on one another to express needs, pursue goals, and realise potential. When relationships are intentionally nurtured, they create conditions in which coaches and athletes can achieve together what neither could accomplish alone. This symposium highlights recent advances in understanding how coach–athlete relationships are developed and enhanced through targeted strategies and skills. Across 3 studies, the symposium addresses the following questions: (a) Can expanding coaches' knowledge of communication strategies enhance their relational competencies? (b) Does developing a shared reality improve the quality of the coach–athlete relationship? and (c) Can coaches and athletes with different personality profiles collaborate by adopting communication strategies tailored to their personality? Firstly, Davis and colleagues present the educational component of an intervention involving team coaches exposed to three communication strategies designed to promote relationship quality with individual athletes. Analysis of diaries and focus groups showed increased engagement, competence, and confidence in using these strategies. Secondly, Solstad and colleagues examine shared reality using a dyadic design and thematic narrative analysis, demonstrating that open communication, mutual expectations, and shared goals underpin high-quality relationships. Finally, Healey and colleagues employ a mixed-method, longitudinal ethnographic approach, showing that aligning communication and relational strategies with personality traits enhances understanding and interaction.

9:00am -

Training Body Awareness through Embodied Anatomy: Franklin Method Strategies for Perception, Belief, and Motor Regulation
Location: **Aula Biblio**

10:30am

ID: 262 / Workshop 35: 1
Workshop
Topics: Mental skills training, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement, Perception & attention
Keywords: perception-action coupling, mental imagery, embodied anatomy, motor control

Training Body Awareness through Embodied Anatomy: Franklin Method Strategies for Perception, Belief, and Motor Regulation

Amit Abraham PhD, Eric Franklin
Institute for Franklin Method, Switzerland

Attention, perception, and belief are central determinants of motor behavior in sport. Such components should be ideally trained in conjunction with bodily experience. This applied workshop introduces Franklin Method–based strategies that integrate embodied anatomy, mental imagery, and physical movement to refine one's body awareness through, among others, science-based knowledge and pedagogy during action. Participants will (a) explore how anatomically informed imagery alters perception, coordination, and movement efficiency; (b) examine how belief and expectation shape motor output through embodied experience; and (c) learn practical methods for training attention and self-regulation within sport and movement contexts. The workshop emphasizes active participation through guided movement exploration, tactile feedback, imagery-based cueing, and interactive discussion. Participants engage in exercises involving touch, elastic resistance, balance challenges, breathing coordination, and whole-body integration while applying imagery related to bones, joints, fascia, and diaphragmatic systems,, eventually creating a 'toolkit' for future use. Attentional focus is deliberately shifted between internal, external, and embodied anatomical references, allowing participants to compare their immediate effects on stability, coordination, effort, and emotional state. This approach draws on evidence from motor imagery research, embodied cognition, and perception–action models, suggesting that attention and belief are most effectively trained when coupled with sensory and motor experience rather than abstract instruction alone (e.g., Abraham et al., 2019; Gose & Abraham, 2021; Guillot & Collet, 2008). Participants receive a digital handout outlining core Franklin Method imagery principles, embodied anatomy cues, and guidelines for applying these strategies in sport psychology and movement practice.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 43: Group dynamics

Location: **A01**
Session Chair: **Radu Predoiu**

ID: 252 / Oral Presentations 43: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Group dynamics, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: crisis perception, football (soccer), questionnaire development

Development and Validation of a Questionnaire for Assessing Players' Crisis Perception in Football

Constantin Rausch[1], Stefan Altmann[1,2], Jan Spielmann[2], Lena Steindorf[2], Darko Jekauc[1]
[1]Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany; [2]TSG ResearchLab gGmbH, Germany

Performance crises in football are prolonged periods of underperformance where results and performance fall significantly short of expectations, involving dysfunctional processes on individual and group levels. While such crises have been described qualitatively and through performance indices, a subjective measure of players' individual and team-related crisis perception is still lacking. This study developed and validated a brief questionnaire to assess crisis perception in football. Based on the framework by Jekauc et al. (2024), seven items were developed to capture crisis perception dimensions (general perception, controllability, team dynamics). Based on expert ratings, the item pool was refined (2 items removed, 2 added), yielding seven items for validation. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) used a lower-division sample (Leagues 8–11; N=235, M_age=25.95, SD=5.18), while confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) used an independent higher-division sample (Leagues 1–7; N=213, M_age=24.26, SD=4.34). Reliability (Cronbach's α, test-retest) and convergent validity (bivariate correlations with established psychological and team scales) were assessed across samples. The EFA indicated a one-dimensional structure with four items showing high loadings (> .70). The CFA confirmed good model fit ($\chi^2(2) = 5.870$, $p = .053$, CFI = .994, TLI = .981, RMSEA = .096 [90% CI = .000–.190], SRMR = .0134). The scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's α = .896 – .917) and high test-retest reliability (r = .847–.888, $p < .001$). Bivariate correlations with all criteria were significant, supporting convergent validity (range: r = −.240 to −.503). Overall, the scale demonstrates sound reliability and validity, offering a time efficient and practical tool for assessing football players' crisis perceptions in research and applied sport psychology.

ID: 682 / Oral Presentations 43: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Group dynamics, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Social cognition, Social psychology
Keywords: Teamwork, Other-efficacy, Team performance

Confidence in teammates: Teasing apart interpersonal sources of variance

Christine Habeeb, Reagan Daniel, Bishop Guempel, Zachary Domire

East Carolina University, United States of America

Objectives. Confidence in specific teammates, or other-efficacy, can predict performance above and beyond confidence in oneself (i.e., self-efficacy) and confidence in the team (i.e., collective efficacy). While important for success, other-efficacy beliefs may reflect more than a teammate's abilities. Other-efficacy encompasses several interpersonal sources of variance related to personal tendencies of the perceiver (i.e., actor effects), aspects of the teammate (i.e., partner effects), the unique relationship between the two individuals (i.e., relationship effects), and the group context (i.e., group effects). Without identifying the magnitude of interpersonal sources of variance and their predictors, the effort to increase confidence in teammates and optimize team performance remains imprecise. The purpose of this study was to quantify the magnitude of the interpersonal sources of variance in other-efficacy beliefs and explore whether gender, rank, height, and weight predicted variance partitioning. Methods. Eighty Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC; 25% female, 75% male) cadets competed in a 4-person tug-of-war task with the rope anchored to a fixed pole. Participants reported their other-efficacy in their three teammates before each of two pulls. Results. Social Relations Model analyses indicated that 55.9% of the variance in other-efficacy was due to perceiver tendencies (i.e., actor effect), followed by relationship (36.3%), partner (5.2%), and the group (2.6%) effects. The gender of the person being assessed was the only significant predictor within the model. Conclusion. Cadets had mostly personal tendencies to be confident (or not) in all teammates. This can strengthen models of team assignment, especially in teams comprised of men and women.

ID: 533 / Oral Presentations 43: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Elite sports and expertise, Group dynamics, Mental skills training
Keywords: Psychological Preparation, team sports, LMA approach, periodization principle

Psychological Preparation in Team Sport: Conceptual Framework and Application

Iris Orbach[1,2], Lael Gershgoren[1], Asaf Blatt[1]
[1]College of Management, Academic Studies, Israel; [2]Wingate Institute, Israel

In the last three decades, there has been a significant increase in athletic psychological preparation as an important part of the athletic periodization process and as a critical factor for performance enhancement. The Learning-Modification-Application (i.e., LMA) approach was developed for the integration of psychological skill training (i.e., PST) within an athlete's training process (Blumenstein & Orbach, 2012a,b, 2019, 2023). This approach comprises three dimensions (i.e., Learning, Modification, and Application) that are applied using a 7-level stress-distraction scale (i.e., 1-2 light, 3-4 moderate, 5-7 high). Long-term practice with the LMA approach allows the athlete to achieve optimal performance in the critical moments of competitions. The effectiveness of applying the LMA approach within individual sports based on the periodization principle was demonstrated and discussed in previous studies (Blumenstein & Orbach, 2014, 2020; Edmonds et al., 2026). However, few studies have examined the integration of PST based on the periodization principle regarding performance in team sports. This presentation conceptually introduces the LMA approach as part of a psychological training program that considers the unique characteristics of team sports (e.g., seasonal structure and team-dynamics). The psychological preparation based on the principles of PST and the LMA approach is important for athletes in team sports. It allows all other preparations (i.e., physical, technical, and tactical preparations) to be combined into one integrated approach. Based on all the above, it is recommended that the work of the sport psychology consultant in team sports should consider the periodization principle and provide PST based on the LMA model.

ID: 683 / Oral Presentations 43: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Group dynamics
Keywords: Interpersonal relationships, Group dynamics, Youth basketball

Coach–Athlete–Parent Interpersonal Relationship Dynamics and Psychological Outcomes in Youth Basketball: A Longitudinal Study

Ausra Lisinskiene, Marc Lochbaum
Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

The Coach–Athlete–Parent (CAP) system is a dynamic network shaping athletes' motivation and well-being, however, the trajectory across competition stages remains unclear. This study examined CAP dynamics within Lithuanian youth basketball across three competitive levels (A: highest, B: developmental, C: general) during the regular season, playoffs, and finals. Participants were athletes aged 12–19 years. Data were collected at three time points: T1 (regular season, n=198), T2 (playoffs, n=204), and T3 (finals, n=150), with a matched longitudinal sample of 137 athletes (M age=14.5 years). Measures included validated assessments of CAP processes, social-emotional health, intrinsic motivation, and sport commitment. Data were analysed using ANOVA, Spearman correlations, and multiple regression. Significant group differences emerged: Group A showed higher sport enjoyment ($F=6.331$, $p=.002$) and covitality ($F=7.035$, $p=.001$), group B consistently scored lowest on positive variables, and group C showed higher negative CAP at T1–T2 ($F=3.525$, $p=.032$). Intrinsic motivation differed at T3 ($F=3.271$, $p=.040$), while negative CAP was not significant at T3 ($p=.324$). Progression analyses showed lower sport enjoyment at T1 ($p=.021$), but higher covitality ($p=.022$), enthusiastic commitment ($p=.019$), and positive CAP ($p=.049$) at T2, and higher covitality at T3 ($p=.027$). Intrinsic motivation ($\beta=.427$, $p<.001$), covitality ($\beta=.255$, $p<.001$), and sport enjoyment ($\beta=.159$, $p=.002$) significantly predicted positive CAP, with intrinsic motivation as the strongest predictor. Overall, athletes in later competition stages (playoffs and finals) demonstrated higher covitality and stronger CAP relationship quality.

ID: 708 / Oral Presentations 43: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Group dynamics, Motivation
Keywords: coach–athlete relationship, achievement goal theory, motivational climate

Emerging Kinesiology Leaders' Intentions to Apply the 3+1C Model and Achievement Goal Theory in Practice

Keith McShan
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Within the field of sport and exercise psychology, the 3+1C model (i.e., coach-athlete relationship quality) and Achievement Goal Theory (e.g., task-involving and caring climates) have helped researchers and practitioners understand the importance of developing quality relationships and creating positive climates within sports (Fry & Moore, 2019; Jowett, 2025). However, a gap in the literature concerns how emerging kinesiology professionals plan to create these motivational climates and quality relationships. Therefore, the purpose of this faculty-led research was for graduate-level students to engage in focus group projects to explore how emerging professionals in kinesiology planned to implement aspects of the 3+1C model, a task-involving and caring climate, as future leaders. Fifty participants aged 18 to 43 were divided into nine focus groups. Using a thematic analysis, results were divided into themes and subthemes. The themes from the 3+1C model group were represented by the 3Cs in the 3+1C model of closeness, commitment, and complementarity with five subthemes (e.g., intellectual stimulation). The task-involving climate focus group reported themes of positive reinforcement, leader characteristics, equality in interactions, role model behaviors, and communication with four subthemes (e.g., approachability). Finally, the caring climate focus group reported three themes of belonging and connection; support, listening, and accessibility; and inclusion, mindfulness, and rapport with four subthemes (e.g., comfort). If emerging leaders can create task-involving, caring climates and promote high-quality relationships, they will continue to help create environments that have been linked to participants' enjoyment, psychological safety, and greater effort (Fry & Moore, 2019; Jowett et al., 2026).

9:00am - 10:30am

Why Consider the Environment in Youth Sport?

Location: **A02**

ID: 577 / Symposium 28: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Talent identification/development, Youth
Keywords: Athletic development, dual career, holistic athletic approach, youth sport.

Why Consider the Environment in Youth Sport?

Louise Kamuk Storm[1], Line Maj Sternberg[1], Milla Saarinen[2,3], Kurtis Pancow[4,5], Roisin Marie Kelly[6], Chris Harwood[6]
[1]University of Southern Denmark; [2]University of Stavanger; [3]Norwegian School of Sport Sciences; [4]Swansea University; [5]Queen's University; [6]Nottingham Trent University

Youth sport research has largely focused on individuals rather than the environments in which they participate. Across childhood and adolescence, young people move through varied sporting settings that can either support or hinder their development and well-being (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2023). While talent development environments involving athletes aged 16–19 are well-studied and key features of successful settings have been identified (Hauser et al., 2022), the youth sports environments preceding talent development or sports schools are rarely investigated, leaving a notable gap. Studying these settings can help sport organizations design healthy, safe environments that better support young people. Through four presentations, this symposium illustrates new trends in youth sports research (Harwood & Thrower, 2019) and highlights the crucial role of the environment. The first presenter offers a holistic ecological case study of a Danish badminton club, showing how structural and cultural features facilitate multiple developmental pathways for players aged 12-16. The second draws on large-scale longitudinal studies from Norway and Finland, demonstrating how organizational structures and cultural values shape trajectories during lower secondary school. The third shares findings from focus groups with collegiate student-athletes in the United States, illustrating how environmental factors influence attitudes toward help-seeking. As a scientist-practitioner (Schinke et al., 2023), the final presenter reflects on how an academy environment in England can support optimal identity development. Collectively, the presentations demonstrate how environments can be optimized to better support young people's development and well-being. To conclude, the discussant will synthesize key insights, highlight lessons learned, and facilitate critical dialogue.

9:00am - 10:30am

Safeguarding in Sport Psychology: Cultural Contexts, Case Studies, and Applied Practice

Location: **A03**

ID: 553 / Symposium 26: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Ethics in applied settings, Violence
Keywords: safeguarding, cultural sport psychology, applied practice, ethics

Safeguarding in Sport Psychology: Cultural Contexts, Case Studies, and Applied Practice

Anastasiya Khomutova[1], **Ani Chroni**[2], **Jon Brain**[3], **Snežana Stoljarova**[4], **Renata Barić**[5]
[1]University of Brighton, United Kingdom; [2]University of Inland Norway; [3]Thomas More, Belgium; [4]Tallinn University, Estonia; [5]University of Zagreb, Croatia

Safeguarding in sport psychology has become a global priority, yet its translation into practice remains deeply shaped by cultural, structural, and ethical contexts, as recently underscored in the FEPSAC position statement on safeguarding athletes in sport (Khomutova et al., 2025). Existing safeguarding frameworks (often rooted in Western, rights-based paradigms and focused on interpersonal violence and safe sport environments) may not fully accommodate the socio-cultural and relational dynamics present across diverse sporting environments (Chroni, 2026; Kerr et al., 2025). This symposium addresses this critical gap by examining how safeguarding principles are interpreted, negotiated, and operationalised in culturally varied contexts, and how position statements and guidelines can be adapted to local legal and cultural frameworks. Through a collection of international case studies and practitioner-led perspectives, the symposium explores the interplay between culture, ethics, and applied sport psychology practice, aligning with calls to embed safeguarding as a moral, institutional, and cultural commitment in sport. Contributors present empirical, theoretical, and reflective accounts that illuminate both challenges and innovations in athlete protection, including efforts to enhance safeguarding literacy and foster safer sporting relationships, spaces, and practices. Collectively, these studies advance understanding of how culturally informed safeguarding approaches can enhance athlete welfare, refine practitioner competence, and inform the development of globally sensitive, evidence-based safeguarding frameworks within sport psychology, while remaining consistent with emerging European standards for recognising and responding to interpersonal violence in sport.

9:00am - 10:30am

Helping Athletes Manage the Yips: Approaches, Strategies and Interventions

Location: **A10**

ID: 585 / **Workshop 37: 1**
Workshop
Topics: Consulting/ counseling, Elite sports and expertise, Mental skills training
Keywords: Yips, Interventions

Helping Athletes Manage the Yips: Approaches, Strategies and Interventions

Jacob Jensen
California State Universithy, Northridge, United States of America

Athletes in various sports may experience the “yips,” finding themselves unable to perform a motor skill essential to their sport (Smith et al., 2003). Athletes from a variety of sports can experience the yips (Bawden & Maynard, 2001), including golfers putting (Marquardt, 2009; Stinear et al., 2006), tennis players serving, baseball players throwing, and volleyball players setting and hitting, and the causes are difficult to pinpoint (Chambers & Marshall, 2017; Heron & Bilalic 2022). Learning objectives for the workshop will focus on helping practitioners understand effective mental training approaches, strategies, and interventions to help athletes manage the yips. The presenter’s experience of overcoming serving yips, along with over 10 years of consulting, will provide a base for the workshop and will help participants to better understand the debilitating effects of the yips, including feelings of paralysis, humiliation, and embarrassment. The teaching methods will include a presentation and discussion of research and applied work with the yips, as well as hands-on practice using interventions that have been used to help athletes manage the yips, including a specific form of autogenic training (Schultz & Luthe, 1996), mindfulness practices, and tension reduction exercises (Jensen, 2026). The workshop will include case study examples of actual clients from a variety of sports who worked through the yips. Workshop participants will be provided with a copy of the presentation slides with links to audio examples of mental training tools that can be incorporated into their own applied work with athletes experiencing the yips.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 46: Mental Skill Training

Location: **A11**
Session Chair: **Laura Giurgiu**

ID: 326 / **Oral Presentations 46: 1**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Mental skills training, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: Mental imagery, Music interventions, Combined strategies, Mental skills training

The use of Music, Imagery, and Their Combination by Athletes and Coaches

Fernando Castellar[1,2], **Rocco Cavaleri**[3], **Steffen A. Herff**[1,2]
[1]Sydney Conservatorium of Music, The University of Sydney, Sydney, Australia; [2]The MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development, Western Sydney University, Sydney, Australia; [3]Brain Stimulation and Rehabilitation lab, School of Health Sciences, Western Sydney University, Sydney, Australia

The use of mental imagery, music, and their combination (MIMUS) can increase sport performance; however, less is known about how the usage of these strategies differs across roles, expertise levels, and sport settings. This study examined the prevalence of these mental practice strategies among athletes and coaches across different performance levels and sports settings. One hundred and thirty-eight athletes and coaches responded to an online survey reporting their usage of music, mental imagery, and MIMUS, as well as their usage contexts (i.e., when, what, and why). Bayesian binary regression models were used to predict the use of each strategy based on expertise (recreational, regional, national, or international) and role (athlete or coach). Mental imagery (MI, 62%), music (MUS, 66%), and their MIMUS (27%) are common practices in sports, though employed with distinct motivations by roles.

Athletes favour the use of music more (MUS, 68%; MI, 60%, Evidence Ratio; ER = 11.76), whereas coaches more commonly suggest to their athletes the use of mental imagery (MI, 71%; MUS, 45%, ER = 25.06*). At the international level, the use of all strategies increases, especially MIMUS (ER = 38.4*, 17.5, and 22.74* versus national, regional, and recreational levels, respectively). Mental imagery, music, and MIMUS are more prevalent at higher expertise levels, hinting at their efficacy. Athletes, coaches, and practitioners might want to consider implementing these techniques into earlier stages of motor skill acquisition, capitalizing on their complementary effects, as well as preparation for more competitive stages, where every small performance gain matters.

ID: 451 / **Oral Presentations 46: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Esports, Mental skills training, Motivation
Keywords: performance, sports, technology, competition

A Comparison of Flow-Clutch States in Real and Virtual Reality Table Tennis Competitions

Higinio González-García[1], Guillaume Martinent[2], Joel Prieto[3]
[1]Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR), Spain; [2]Université Claude Bernard Lyon 1, France; [3]Universidad Internacional de La Rioja (UNIR), Spain

The main goal of the study is to examine the effects of playing virtual reality or real table tennis on flow-clutch states during a competition. In particular, the present study examines, during a virtual and real table tennis competition, the effect of tournament type (reality versus virtual reality) on flow-clutch states; the effect of serving first on flow-clutch states; and the reciprocal relationship over time between match results and flow-clutch states. A total of 57 table tennis players (5 females; M=29.92, SD=14.47) participated in the study and self-reported their flow-clutch states after four rounds of a tournament. Of these, 39 participated in a real table tennis competition, while 18 competed in a virtual reality (VR) tournament. Results revealed that players in virtual reality table tennis experienced higher scores for the effortlessness of flow and for overlapping characteristics of flow-clutch than did players in real table tennis. In addition, serving first significantly negatively predicted flow and clutch characteristics in both virtual and real table tennis. No significant reciprocal relationship over time was observed between match results and flow-clutch states during a table tennis competition (in both reality and virtual reality). In conclusion, the results indicate that there may be differences between virtual and real table tennis in the experience of flow-clutch states. These differences may be of interest for adapting both modalities for athlete training, given the nature and characteristics of virtual reality table tennis.

ID: 393 / **Oral Presentations 46: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Group dynamics, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Mental skills training
Keywords: MSPE, Mindfulness, Consulting, Team Culture

An Exploration of Team-Level Effects of Mindful Sport Performance Enhancement: Athlete and Coach Perspectives

Thomas Minkler[1], Sam Zizzi[2], Blake Costalupes[3]
[1]California State University, Fullerton, United States of America; [2]West Virginia University; [3]Towson University

Mindfulness-based interventions in sport have largely focused on intrapersonal outcomes related to self-regulation (Noetel et al., 2019). Less attention has been given to how group-based mindfulness training may influence team dynamics. The purpose of this presentation is to examine athlete and coach perceptions of a Mindful Sport Performance Enhancement (MSPE; Kaufman et al., 2018) program on team culture and group functioning. This study utilized a qualitative approach to examine individual and team-level effects of a six-week, group-based MSPE intervention delivered to four U.S. collegiate sport teams (N = 57, Acrobatics and Tumbling, Women's/Men's Soccer, Women's Volleyball) by a Certified Mental Performance Consultant and trained MSPE facilitator. Weekly sessions lasted approximately 60 minutes, following the Kaufman et al. (2018) protocol. Post-intervention semi-structured interviews were conducted with 11 athletes and four head coaches (Mlength=24 minutes) and analyzed using Consensual Qualitative Research (Hill et al., 2005). Coaches were not intervention participants but provided observational perspectives on team changes. Athletes reported enhanced communication and openness, including greater willingness to engage in vulnerability, improved feedback tone, and stronger empathy for teammates, in addition to reported intrapersonal effects like better focus and emotion regulation. Coaches reported increased psychological safety, reduced negativity, enhanced peer leadership, and more respectful practice environments. Initial coach buy-in was a key element of successful implementation. Across data sources, MSPE was perceived to support more cohesive and team-oriented cultures. Findings suggest MSPE may influence team functioning through relational mechanisms. Practitioners may consider intentionally targeting interpersonal processes when implementing mindfulness-based interventions in team settings.

ID: 425 / **Oral Presentations 46: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Mental skills training, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: sport imagery ability, motor imagery, mental chronometry, functional equivalence

Self-Reported and Behavioral Measures of Motor Imagery Correlate in Competitive Athletes

Tamir Bar[1], Gershon Tenenbaum[1,2], Amit Abraham[1]
[1]Ariel University, Israel; [2]Reichman University, Israel

Athletes use motor imagery (MI) for enhancing performance. This skill is assessed by MI ability questionnaires and temporal discrepancy with actual execution (i.e., mental chronometry; MC). Associations between these measures remain debated. We estimated the correlations between MI questionnaires such as Sport Imagery Ability Questionnaire (SIAQ) and Vividness of Movement Imagery Questionnaire-2 (VMIQ-2) with MC. Further, we examined the correlations between behavioral and self-reported measures of MC. Competitive athletes (N = 342; M age = 20.39 ± 6.19 years) completed the SIAQ and VMIQ-2 questionnaires. Of these, 162 physically performed four motor tasks (walking, vertical jumping, squatting, dribbling), followed by three counterbalanced MI conditions (visual-external, visual-internal, and kinesthetic). Temporal discrepancies and MI vividness self-ratings were recorded. Pearson correlations between questionnaire sub-scores, MC discrepancies, and self-ratings were calculated. All SIAQ and VMIQ-2 dimensions shared low negative correlations (r = −.19 to −.31, ps < .001). All VMIQ-2 – but not SIAQ – dimensions were positively correlated (r = .24 to .28, ps < .005) with MC, suggesting that stronger MI vividness aligns with greater MI temporal accuracy. Self-reported MI vividness ratings were negatively correlated (r = −.16 to −.34, p < .05) with MC, suggesting that stronger self-reported vividness aligns with greater MI temporal accuracy. Vividness of MI obtained from the VMIQ-2 and MC self-ratings seems to be associated with MI temporal accuracy, indicating a potential role of vividness in temporal features of MI. Assessment of MI in competitive athletes must, therefore, include both self-reported and MC measures of vividness.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 42: Exercise psychology

Location: **A12**
Session Chair: **Urban Johnson**

ID: 244 / Oral Presentations 42: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Exercise psychology, Health, Motivation
Keywords: ART, AFFEXX, affective memory

A Gateway Hypothesis of Adult Exercise Participation: Early Affective Experiences and PE Memories

Ralf Brand, Reinhold Kliegl
University of Potsdam, Germany

A growing body of research suggests that summary-level affective experiences from exercise are meaningfully associated with exercise participation (Ekkekakis et al., 2021). A key open question concerns the developmental roots of these affective memories. The Affective Memory Scaffolding (AMS) framework explains why and how early affective experiences from childhood and adolescence, particularly in physical education (PE), may influence later behavior (Brand & Ekkekakis, 2018, 2026). Empirical support for this perspective has so far been limited in scope, relying mainly on ad hoc samples. For example, Ladwig et al. (2018) reported a small association between more positive PE memories in adults and lower sedentary behavior (r = −.14), and Limmeroth et al. (2026) a small positive correlation between positive affective PE memories and moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (r = .14). The present study extends this work using data from a quota-representative survey of the German adult population (N = 2,201; stratified by age, sex, education, and federal state), and analyzed with mixed-effects models. Results indicate that adults who locate their most formative affective experiences in childhood are substantially more likely to engage in exercise today than those whose key experiences occurred in adulthood (OR = 0.635, 95% CI [0.491, 0.822]). Moreover, positive affective PE memories primarily differentiate between adults who do not engage in any exercise and those who do (OR = 0.569, 95% CI [0.533, 0.666]). This indicates a gateway into exercise participation via positive PE memories, rather than a driver of “more” exercise, underscoring the potential long-term preventive relevance of affective quality in school-based PE.

ID: 208 / Oral Presentations 42: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Human factors, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches)
Keywords: choking, clutch, expertise, skilled performance

Cross-Task Consistency of Motor Performance under Pressure in Hot-wire, Darts, and Golf—Is it a Thing?

Liane F. Lillich[1], Katharina Utesch[2,3], Mitja D. Back[1], Till Utesch[2]
[1]University of Muenster, Germany; [2]University of Luebeck, Germany; [3]German Aerospace Center, Hamburg, Germany

Success as an athlete is closely associated with the ability to perform well under pressure. Surprisingly, it has not yet been explicitly tested whether individuals who thrive (or choke) at one motor task under pressure also do so at others. Building on prior research on understanding performance under pressure, we test the (implicit) assumption that individuals’ tendency to under- or overperform under pressure is consistent across different motor tasks.

In the present study, a total of 108 participants (M_age = 22,19) completed three coordination-based tasks (dart throwing, golf putting, hot-wire) under low- and high-pressure conditions. They reported low (darts, golf) to medium (fine motor activities) skill levels. Pressure was induced through a combination of motivational (financial incentives,

ego relevance) and self-presentational (videotaping) situational factors. Multilevel modeling was used for data analyses, examining slope–slope correlations.

Increasing average pressure perceptions from low- to high-pressure conditions indicated successful pressure manipulations (ds > 0.4). Multilevel analyses revealed that individual performance responses to pressure were inconsistent across tasks, with negative, non-significant slope-slope correlations. Furthermore, self-reported skill level, training frequency, and pressure resilience did not predict performance responses to pressure in any of the tasks.

The individual tendency to under- or overperform under pressure, compared to a low-pressure baseline, appears to be task-specific rather than a more universal tendency. We discuss these findings in light of boundary conditions of cross-task consistency of motor performance under pressure, such as task characteristics and individual skill level, and outline implications and criteria for task selection in future research.

ID: 423 / Oral Presentations 42: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Exercise addiction, Mental health, Psychological processes

Impact of Exercise Addiction on Psychological Mechanisms and Outcomes

Marie-France de Lafontaine[1], Martin D. Provencher[2], Stéphane Turcotte[3], Guillaume Foldes-Busque[2,3,4]
[1]Research Chair in Safety and Integrity in Sport, Université Laval, Canada; [2]School of Psychology, Université Laval, Canada; [3]Research Center of the Chaudière-Appalaches Integrated Health and Social Services Center, Canada; [4]Research Center of the Quebec Heart and Lung Institute, Canada

Exercise addiction (EA) prevalence is highly variable, partly due to the lack of distinction between primary EA (excessive exercise is characterized as a psychopathology) and secondary EA (excessive exercise is a symptom of an eating disorder; De Coverley Veale, 1987). Exploring links between primary EA symptoms and mental health outcomes could clarify the portrait of EA as a psychopathology, not just as a symptom. EA symptoms may also interfere with processes usually involved in the beneficial effect of exercise, such as the reduction of anxiety sensitivity (AS), and the improvement of self-efficacy. This could explain the elevated distress observed in populations with EA (Colledge et al., 2020), despite high levels of physical activity. This study aimed to 1) determine the prevalence of EA types in regular exercisers; 2) examine the correlations between primary EA symptoms, anxiety and worry; and 3) test if AS dimensions and self-efficacy dimensions mediated these associations. A sample of 192 adult exercisers completed questionnaires. Among the participants (74% women; mean age = 35y), 4.2% had primary EA and 5.7% had secondary EA. Primary EA symptoms were positively associated with anxiety and worry. Only the social dimension of AS completely mediated these associations. In summary, 1 in 10 regular exercisers had EA symptomatology, with secondary EA being the most prevalent form. Primary EA seems characterized by social motivations to exercise, which could explain, to some extent, anxiety and worry in this population. This also suggests that EA could differ from other dependences based on its underlying mechanisms.

ID: 347 / Oral Presentations 42: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Motivation, Physical activity, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity)
Keywords: Women, Ethnically diverse, Physical activity, Cricket

Barriers to Physical Activity Cricket Participation for Women from Ethnically Diverse Backgrounds in the West Midlands

Katie Garstang[1], Sarah Williams[1], Fidelis Navas[2], Sajda Butt[1], Jess Ward[2], Jet Veldhuijzen van Zanten[1]
[1]University of Birmingham, United Kingdom; [2]Warwickshire Cricket Foundation, Birmingham, UK

Local authority reports and health insights have highlighted that in the West Midlands there is a higher prevalence and severity of poor mental health in ethnic minority communities, and overall, a lower healthy life expectancy for women. Physical activity is widely used for promoting positive mental well-being, however, women from ethnically diverse backgrounds are statistically less likely to be sufficiently active enough to achieve any health benefits. This study aimed to identify the barriers and facilitators, and benefits, of attending cricket physical activity programmes for women from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Focus groups with women whom the Warwickshire Cricket Foundation programmes are targeted at, non-attendees (n=15; Mage=43.47±10.47; Asian/Asian British [n = 13: Pakistani {n=7}, Indian {n=2}, Chinese {n=2}, Bangladeshi {n=1}, Kurdish {n=1}], Arab [n=1], and Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African [n=1]) and attendees (n=4; Mage=45±10.54; Asian/Asian British [n=13: Pakistani {n=1}, Indian {n=2}, and Arab [n=1]), and with programme coaches (n=6) were conducted. Photo-elicitation techniques prompted in-depth discussions and detailed experiences. Data was thematically analysed using Theoretical Domains Framework to identify a range of behavioural determinants related to one's capability, opportunity and motivational factors influencing participation. Findings revealed social support could encourage attendance, while competing responsibilities, perceived gendered norms, limited knowledge about sessions/location, and mixed experiences attending with children contributed to women's participation and sustained engagement in cricket sessions. This study will inform the development of a coaching toolkit for future physical activity programmes for women from ethnically diverse backgrounds, enhancing coaches' ability to promote long-term adherence for health benefits in this population.

ID: 228 / **Oral Presentations 42: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Emotion, Exercise psychology, Physical activity
Keywords: Affect, exercise, non-cognitive

Beyond self-Report: Neural and expressive signatures of the exercise experience

Tony Ker[1], Chris Kirk[1], Ralf Brand[2], Lynne Spackman[1], Leighton Jones[3]
[1]Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom; [2]Universität Potsdam, Germany; [3]Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom

Affective responses during aerobic exercise predict future exercise behaviour but their assessment is limited by self-report bias and low temporal resolution. This study employed Electroencephalography (EEG) and Facial Action Coding (FAC) to examine real-time automatic affective dynamics during exercise. Active adults (N = 59) performed a stepped cycle ergometer test to volitional exhaustion. Continuous 64-channel EEG (512 Hz) was recorded and artifact corrected. Spectral power (theta, alpha, and beta frequency bands) was summarised within frontal, central, and parietal cortical regions. Simultaneously, automated FAC provided continuous indices of expressive affect. Subjective affective valence, arousal, and perceived exertion were recorded at the end of each 2-min stage. Multilevel modelling was used to examine associations between neurophysiological, expressive, and self-reported responses across exercise progression. Distinct facial actions predicted different dimensions of the exercise experience. Chin Raise emerged as the strongest predictor of declining affective valence ($\beta = -0.19$, $p = .007$); smile ($\beta = +0.21$, $p < .001$) and cheek raise tracked increasing arousal. Eye-widen was the primary predictor of perceived exertion ($\beta = -0.25$, $p < .001$). EEG showed non-linear spectral redistribution and curvilinear changes in frontal asymmetry across progression, with decreasing alpha and increasing beta power. These findings highlight the value of integrating EEG and FAC to characterise real-time affective dynamics during exercise. By complementing subjective measures and addressing limitations of self-report, this multimodal approach opens novel methodological avenues for exploring affective responses during exercise through neural and expressive processes. Collectively, these insights may inform efforts to improve the exercise experience and support long-term exercise behaviour.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 45: Youth

Location: **A13**
Session Chair: **Francesca Vitali**

ID: 309 / **Oral Presentations 45: 1**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Health, Motivation, Youth
Keywords: Doping, Psychosocial factors, Dietary supplements, Latent profile

Who Is at Risk of Doping? Psychosocial and Behavioral Profiles of Doping Intentions in Adolescent Athletes

Jan Åge Kristensen
University of Agder, Norway

Previous research has shown that both personal and environmental factors influence athletes' decision to dope (Ntoumanis et al., 2024). However, there is a paucity of studies examining how the theoretically informed risk and protective factors interact. The present study, anchored in the theory of planned behavior, utilizes a person-centered approach to explore how combinations of psychosocial and behavioral factors relate to doping intensions in aspiring athletes. The sample comprised 598 adolescent athletes (ages 15–19 years; M = 16.93; SD = 0.83) recruited from eight Norwegian sports academy high schools. Participants answered questionnaires assessing demographics, doping attitudes, normative beliefs toward doping, perceived behavioral control to avoid doping, dietary supplement acceptance, supplement use, and doping intentions. Latent profile analysis identified four distinct risk profiles: vehement doping rejection (profile 1, n = 526), perceived approval of doping (profile 2, n = 7), permissive doping attitudes (profile 3, n = 55), and low doping avoidance (profile 4, n = 10). Covariate analysis indicated that athletes aged 17 or older and being male, were associated with greater odds of belonging to the second and third profile. Overall, athletes in the second profile reported greatest intention to dope, characterized by permissive doping attitudes, beliefs that significant others would approve doping, perceived control to avoid doping, and acceptance and regular use of dietary supplements. Targeting both psychological and behavioral risk patterns, while also challenging sport environments that normalize doping, may be a promising way forward to enhance doping prevention effectiveness in youth sport.

ID: 376 / **Oral Presentations 45: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Cognition, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: Psychology of Practice, Self-Regulated Learning, Autonomous Learning, Practice Contexts

Exploring Opportunities for Athlete-Led Practice in Adolescent Sport Practice Contexts

Royden Radowits[1], Stuart G. Wilson[2], Erin Teschuk[1], Lisa Bain[1], Bradley W. Young[1]
[1]University of Ottawa, Canada; [2]Queen's University, Canada

Athlete-led practice (ALP) opportunities may allow athletes to manage their engagement through metacognitive and motivational processes of self-regulated sport practice (SRSP; Young et al., 2025). Research has not described the

affordances for ALP during coach-supervised practices, which became the goal of this study. Eighty-two Canadian athletes (12-19 years-old) completed Wilson et al.'s (2021) SRSP survey, and seven additional items assessing agreement and frequency (7-point Likert) for whether they recognize and initiate ALP opportunities before, during, and after practices. Exploratory analyses compared ALP between genders, competition levels and sport types, and ALP correlations with age, years competing and SRSP scores. Agreement scores were analyzed first and corroborated with scores for frequency. Girls (vs. boys) agreed more to taking initiative for ALP during practice "when their coach is busy" ($\eta 2$=.087) or "not closely watching" ($\eta 2$=.095); the former replicated for frequency. Individual sport (vs. team) athletes agreed more to doing ALP "when coach is not closely watching" ($\eta 2$=.095), which replicated for frequency. Years competing correlated with agreement to do ALP "before practice" (r=.31), which may have been a gender artifact and did not replicate for frequency. ALP did not vary by age or competition level. Agreement scores for doing ALP "without coach telling them to" correlated with SRSP-Checking (r=.30), and ALP scores for "when coach is busy" correlated with SRSP-Evaluating/Reflecting (r=.29); the former replicated for frequency. Findings highlight both gender and sport type differences in ALP, providing insights to guide coaching practices, while offering direction for future research on locating SRSP within ALP.

ID: 351 / **Oral Presentations 45: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Social psychology, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19)
Keywords: social support, dual career athletes, moderation

The Role of Coaches, Teammates, and Parents' Need Support in Buffering the Effects of Stressors Encountered by Adolescent Athletes

Valentin Duvert-Chenebert[1,2], Aurélie Campagne[2], David Trouilloud[1]
[1]Laboratoire Sport et Environnement Social, Université Grenoble Alpes, France; [2]Laboratoire de Psychologie et NeuroCognition, Université Grenoble Alpes, France

The beneficial effects of social support on athletes are widely recognized. According to the buffering effect model, social support may buffer the impact of stressors encountered by athletes. However, the role of specific providers in buffering specific stressors remains relatively unexplored. Anchored in Basic Psychological Need Theory, this study examines how social support from coaches, teammates, and parents buffers the impact of competitive, organizational, and personal stressors on adolescent-athletes' perceived stress and emotions. Two hundred adolescent-athletes (79.5% male, Mage = 15.59 ± .76 years) from intensive rugby training centers participated in this study. Their perceptions of stressors (College Student-Athletes Life Stress Scale; Organizational Stressor Indicator for Sport Performers), emotions (Sport Emotion Questionnaire), stress (Multi-Component Training Distress Scale), and need-support from coaches, teammates, and parents (Interpersonal Behaviour Questionnaire) were evaluated four times during the season. Data were analysed using multilevel regression models. Results revealed that at the intra-individual level coaches' and teammates' need-support buffered the impact of competitive stressors. Teammates' need-support also buffered the impact of organizational stressors. At the inter-individual level, parents' need-support tended to buffer the effect of personal stressors. This study supports the role of specific providers in buffering specific stressors faced by athletes. More precisely, social support from sport-others (i.e., coaches and teammates) may buffer the effects of sport-related stressors (i.e., competitive and organizational). Conversely, parents' support may buffer the effects of non-sport-related stressors (i.e., personal). From an applied perspective, targeting coaches, parents, and peers to manage specific stressors faced by athletes may be a valuable strategy.

ID: 383 / **Oral Presentations 45: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Physical activity, Youth
Keywords: Interest measurement, psychometrics, physical activity, sports participation

The Revised Sports Interests Inventory (SPIT 36): Development and Validation

Michael J. Schmid[1], Damian Beck[1], Jean Côté[2], Jürg Schmid[1]
[1]Institute of Sport Science, University of Bern, Switzerland; [2]School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada

A key question in today's world, with children and young people becoming increasingly physically inactive, is how to help them find a sport or physical activity that suits their personal interests. As part of a larger project that addresses the fit between individuals (interests) and the environment (requirements of sports), the Sports Interests Inventory (SPIT) has been developed. Although previous analyses showed promising psychometric properties, revisions to some scales and improvements in test efficiency were recommended. Hence, the aim was to address the limitations and further develop and validate the SPIT. Three studies were conducted to achieve this goal: In Study 1, additional items were generated to reduce construct-irrelevant multidimensionality and better capture the domains of interest, which were then refined by a panel of experts. In Study 2, samples of 245 secondary school students and 192 university students were analyzed using classical test theory and item response theory. The item pool was thus reduced to 36 items across 12 dimensions, resulting in the SPIT-36. In Study 3, the psychometric quality was re-examined in 474 university students. Internal consistencies (McDonald's ω) for the 12 dimensions ranged from .74 to .90. Construct validity was confirmed by correlations with three validated measures. Gender, age, and several sport-related characteristics were taken into account in the evaluation of differential item functioning and criterion validity. The results show that the SPIT-36 is a psychometrically sound, efficient instrument that is suitable for individual and group diagnostics in adolescents and young adults.

ID: 372 / **Oral Presentations 45: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Health, Self, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: sport behaviour, social media, body image, biopsychosocial model

The Relationship Between Sport Behaviour, Social Media Use, Body Image, and Mental Health in Adolescents

Annalena Veltmaat[1], Lena Henning[2], Dennis Dreiskämper[1]
[1]TU Dortmund University, Germany; [2]University of Münster, Germany

Sport is a central leisure activity for many adolescents and crucial for their health. Yet, social media is also highly prominent in their daily lives. Beyond sport-related content, adolescents are frequently exposed to idealised appearance and lifestyle images, which can affect wellbeing and sport behaviour (Cataldo et al., 2021). Body image represents a key mechanism in these processes; however, the interplay between social media, body image, and health-related aspects in sport remains poorly understood. This study examines these associations using a biopsychosocial framework. Data from N = 768 German students (M age= 15.22 years, SD = 1.73; 52.1% female) were collected via online questionnaires assessing sport behaviour, motivation (BREQ3-6), body image (BASES, BSE-FIT), social media use, and mental health (Kidscreen-10, Self-Esteem-Scale). Preliminary analyses indicate that pride in appearance and fitness positively correlated with autonomous motivation (r = .162–.494) and mental health (r = .288–.416). Conversely, shame, guilt, and envy were positively associated with controlled motivation (r = .352–.407) and negatively with mental health (r = -.386–-.588). Gender differences emerged in social media effects: among girls only, daily usage time negatively correlated with weekly sport engagement (r = -.167) and autonomous motivation (r = -.160). Exposure to appearance-related content was particularly negatively associated with wellbeing among girls (r = -.161). These findings provide the foundation for structural equation models (SEM) examining the interactions between these constructs. SEM results can inform theoretical model extension and practical recommendations for sport behaviour, social media use, and body image among adolescents.

9:00am - 10:30am

Oral Presentations 44: Health

Location: **048**
Session Chair: **Zsófia Németi-Fehér**

ID: 293 / **Oral Presentations 44: 1**
Oral presentations
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Emotion, Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Menstruation, Teammates, Co-construction, Endometriosis

Between Solidarity and Scrutiny: The Role of Athletic Peers in the Construction of Severe Menstruation

Emma Quinn, Emma O'Donnell, Anthony Papathomas
Loughborough University, United Kingdom

Menstruation has become a priority agenda in sport research and practice. Menstrual disorders are invisible conditions associated with extreme physical and psychological consequences. Within elite sport contexts, struggling to cope with severe menstruation can feel stigmatising, sometimes inducing a sense of failure. How these menstrual experiences are interactionally constructed is unknown. In this study we focused on teammate influence and asked the following research question: How are severe menstrual experiences socially produced among athletic peers? We recruited 11 athletes with experiences of menstrual dysfunction to participate in a semi-structured interview. Over 11 hours of interview data was transcribed and analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. We constructed three core themes to represent athletes' experiences: 1) Alone in a bleeding body, 2) Stuck between silence and responsibility, 3) The redistribution of burden. Theme 1 articulates the isolating and disputed nature of severe menstrual experiences in elite sport and the anticipated and enacted stigma athletes perceived from their teammates. Theme 2 addresses the dilemma athletes experienced balancing a desire to conceal their experiences against an ethical obligation to share. Finally, Theme 3 illustrates the role athletic peers can play in constructing supportive and open spaces that reduce the burden of severe menstruation. Athletes' stories can inform sport psychologists of the role athletic peers have as a source of support or a threat to mental wellbeing for athletes with menstrual disorders. Elite sport organisations can devise teammate education and peer support strategies to facilitate open teammate environments that reduce the burden of severe menstruation.

ID: 362 / **Oral Presentations 44: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Health
Keywords: resilience, burnout, athlete, validation

RESIST: Psychological Resilience in Sport and Its Over Time Relations With Athletes' Burnout

Ayşe Nur Metin, Davide Vitalucci, Federica Galli, Arnaldo Zelli, Luca Mallia
University of Rome "Foro Italico", Rome, Italy

Psychological resilience (PR) is considered a key productive source enabling athletes to adapt to sport-specific environment. Given its multidimensional nature, PR should be assessed using sport-specific measurements. This

study aimed to investigate the prospective associations between multidimensional PR, and athletes' burnout (AB), while also evaluating the psychometric properties and the five-factor structure of the RESilience Qualities In Sport (RESIST) Scale. A total of 187 athletes participated in the study and provided data across three different time assessments (n= 282, 202, and 187 respectively for T1, T2 and T3). Participants completed the RESIST scale and the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire. Test-retest reliability was assessed by computing Pearson correlation coefficients between T1 and T2 scores for each resilience dimension. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) supported the five-factor structure and showed adequate fit indices at T1 (CFI = .944, TLI = .932, RMSEA = .06). Test-retest reliability was acceptable for all resilience dimensions (r = .603 to .719). Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the analysis evaluated the tenets of a model hypothesizing prospective relations linking PR, and AB over a 3-month period. The model had a good fit (CFI = .982, TLI = .978, RMSEA = .069) and showed that PR predicted AB negatively ($\beta = -.21$, $p < .016$). AB did not predict PR. These findings provide robust psychometric support for conceptualizing PR as a multidimensional, five-factor construct in sport. Moreover, the results highlight the prospective possible role of PR dimensions in athletes' psychological functioning over time.

ID: 367 / **Oral Presentations 44: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Health, Personality
Keywords: Competition-related rumination, Latent Profil Analysis, Competitive athletes

A Person-Centered Analysis of Rumination in Athletes: Associations With Selected Coping Strategies and Psychological Resources

Alena Michel-Kröhler[1], Tabea Werner[1,2], Karolina Grebner[1,2], Michèle Wessa[1,3]
[1]Central Institute of Mental Health, Mannheim, Germany; [2]Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz, Mainz, Germany; [3]Division Cancer Survivorship and Psychological Resilience (C160), German Cancer Research Centre (DKFZ), Heidelberg, Germany

Rumination, characterized by intrusive and repetitive negative thoughts, has gained increasing attention in sport psychology due to its relevance for athletes' performance and well-being (Tahtinen et al., 2020; Watkins & Roberts, 2020). However, little is known about inter-individual differences in athletes' ruminative tendencies and their associations with coping strategies and psychological resources. The present study adopted a person-centered approach to identify distinct rumination profiles in competitive athletes and to examine their psychological correlates. In an online cross-sectional study, 106 athletes (67 female; Mage= 20.75 years, range = 16–40) from various sports completed besides demographic questions measures of general and sport-specific rumination, different coping strategies, self-compassion, resilience, athletic identity, and perfectionism. Latent profile analysis revealed three interpretable rumination profiles (low, moderate, and high ruminators), characterized by consistently low, moderate, or high levels across rumination measures. Multinomial regression analyses showed that younger age, lower sport experience, higher athletic identity, and higher perfectionism increased the likelihood of belonging to the high rumination profile. Multivariate analyses of variance further indicated that high ruminators reported more frequent use of maladaptive coping strategies and lower levels of self-compassion and resilience compared to moderate and low ruminators. These findings highlight meaningful inter-individual differences in athletes' ruminative tendencies that are systematically associated with psychological risk and resource factors. From an applied perspective, identifying rumination profiles may inform the development of targeted interventions aimed at reducing rumination and strengthening adaptive coping and self-regulatory resources in competitive athletes. The data presented here are preliminary results, as data collection is still ongoing.

ID: 295 / **Oral Presentations 44: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Exercise psychology, Health, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Body image, health habits, lifestyle, self-image

Body Image Beyond Appearance: Integrating Movement-Based Strategies Into Sport and Health Psychology

Hila Sharon David
College of Management, Department of Behavioral Sciences, Israel

Body image is not merely a cognitive appraisal of physical appearance but a dynamic, embodied experience shaped by sensory, emotional, and relational processes (Piran, 2017). While traditional interventions often target self-esteem or appearance satisfaction, their impact on long-term body image change remains limited, particularly among athletes and individuals in performance-oriented contexts. This presentation introduces a structured, somatically grounded framework for addressing body image through movement-based self-care practices. Rooted in the biopsychosocial model (Engel, 1977) and contemporary embodiment theories (Franzoi, 1995; Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015), the proposed approach is informed by qualitative clinical observations and applied work with both athletic and non-athletic populations. The framework is organized around three core mechanisms: (a) functionality-based movement reframing, (b) interoceptive and sensorial awareness training, and (c) integration of micro self-care rituals into daily routines. Case-informed examples are used to illustrate how these mechanisms support self-regulation, reduce body-related distress, and promote sustainable engagement in health behaviors. The presentation will provide sport and exercise psychologists with concrete, transferable tools that can be implemented in brief interventions, performance settings, and health promotion contexts. Particular attention is given to populations experiencing body image disruption due to injury, transition, or performance pressure, as well as to individuals struggling to adopt health-promoting behaviors. By conceptualizing the body as a source of ongoing feedback and regulation rather than

evaluation, this approach offers a practical pathway for fostering positive body image, resilience, and long-term well-being.

ID: 315 / Oral Presentations 44: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Health, Well-being and quality of life, Any other topic
Keywords: Flourishing, Sport, Performance, Review

Making the Case for Human Flourishing in Sport and Performance Domains

Richard Alastair Cameron Simpson
Leeds Trinity University, United Kingdom

Contemporary developments pertaining to human flourishing have seen a significant rise within the last decade, particularly across health, education, and business domains (Vanderweele et al., 2025). These understandings, which conceptually improve previous frameworks (e.g., Keyes, 2002), define human flourishing as “the relative attainment of a state in which all aspects of a person’s life are good, including the contexts in which that person lives” (Lomas et al., 2025, p. 205). While broader scholarship continues to grow, human flourishing remains underexamined within sport and performance domains, which may stand to benefit from these approaches. The aim of this presentation is to make a conceptual, theoretical, and applied case for advancing knowledge of human flourishing in sport and performance domains. Drawing on a conceptually-driven thematic narrative literature review with critical commentary, which comprised 26 studies, two central areas are considered which include: a) how contemporary perspectives of human flourishing can progress sport and performance psychology scholarship (e.g., greater knowledge diversity), and b) how sport and performance can, in turn, advance human flourishing scholarship (e.g., contribute to individual livelihoods, communities, and humanity). Various recommendations are provided to delegates: first, researchers are advised to consider quantitative (e.g., measuring dimensions of flourishing that are common across sportspeople) and qualitative (e.g., expanding a global lexicon of what it means to flourish) means of making significant progress. Second, academics, practitioners, and decision-makers are encouraged to form closer partnerships which prioritize the co-design of strategies, resources, guidelines, and educational curricular to promote human flourishing across sport and performance.

9:00am - 10:30am — Designing Holistic Season-long Self-Regulation Training Program

Location: **130**

ID: 453 / Workshop 36: 1
Workshop
Topics: Coaching, Mental skills training, Motivation, Self
Keywords: self-regulation, planning, monitoring

Designing Holistic Season-long Self-Regulation Training Program

Richard Hu[1], Ionut Alexandru Iscru[2], Michael Vance[3], Stefano Mastino[4], Alexander T. Latinjak[5]
[1]Leipzig University, Germany; [2]University of Thessaly, Greece; [3]University of Orleans, France; [4]University of Verona, Italy; [5]University College Dublin, Ireland

Self-regulation training in sport has often centred heavily on mental skills sessions, leaving opportunities to integrate other key components for a more holistic development. This applied workshop translates the holistic self-regulation model and training domains (Latinjak, 2025) into practical, season-long planning templates that practitioners can adapt to their sport, age group, level, and delivery setting. The domains integrate evidence across self-acceptance and compassion approaches, coping interventions, self-reflective self-knowledge building, mental skills training, and pressure training to support performance enhancement and health. By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to (a) describe the holistic domains and the distinct contribution each makes to self-regulation development; (b) map athlete/population needs to domain priorities and training dosage across a season; and (c) produce a coherent, context-specific season plan that aligns training content with competitive demands, developmental stage, and practical constraints. After a brief demonstration of the domain framework, participants will form small groups based on similar sport/population interests. Groups will work through guided planning steps: (1) identifying priority domains for specific populations, (2) designing activities to support holistic self-regulation training, and (3) selecting domain-by-domain monitoring options to track progress over time. Workshop deliverers will provide concrete examples and clear directions, facilitate peer critique rounds and provide real-time feedback using structured checklists. At the end of the session, participants will take away a printable planning worksheet, domain definitions and session examples, a season-planning template (editable), and a monitoring self-reflection exercise.

10:30am - 11:30am — Poster Session 4

Location: **West University of Timisoara**

ID: 103 / Poster Session 4: 1
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Health, Mental skills training, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: perfectionistic concerns, perfectionistic strivings, psychological detachment, wakeful rest

A Cross-Sectional Examination of Relationships Between Perfectionism, Burnout, and Mental Rest in College Athletes

Elif Bouthiller[1], David William Eccles[2], Brian Joseph Foster[2], Yanyun Yang[2]
[1]Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany; [2]Florida State University

Prior research indicates that perfectionistic concerns are associated with increased levels of athlete burnout, whereas perfectionistic strivings may serve as a protective factor. To prevent athlete burnout, both physical and mental rest have been recommended. However, researchers have not examined whether perfectionism is linked to mental rest. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationships between perfectionism and athlete burnout, and between perfectionism and mental rest, in women US college team-sport athletes. A total of 390 athletes completed The Sport Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale-2 (Sport MPS-2), The Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ), and the Wakeful Resting Experiences Questionnaire. To group athletes into different perfectionism groups, z-score criteria were used. To test for differences between subtypes of perfectionism in burnout and recent wakeful resting experiences, analysis of variance was conducted. Participants were categorized into one of four perfectionism subtypes: pure evaluative concerns perfectionism (ECP), mixed perfectionism, non-perfectionism, and pure personal standards perfectionism (PSP). The results showed that burnout scores were significantly higher among athletes with pure ECP and mixed perfectionism than those with non-perfectionism and pure PSP, suggesting that high evaluative concerns might represent a vulnerability for burnout. In contrast, non-perfectionists reported significantly more frequent recent experiences of wakeful resting than the other perfectionism subtypes, highlighting the potential role of wakeful resting as a protective factor against burnout. These findings extend prior research by supporting the maladaptive effects of evaluative concerns perfectionism and mixed perfectionism, while demonstrating that perfectionism is not only related to burnout but also to reduced engagement in wakeful resting.

ID: 104 / **Poster Session 4: 2**
Poster presentation
Topics: Health, Physical literacy, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Physical literacy, Youth Sport

The Effectiveness of Community Sports Interventions on Children's Wellbeing: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

Lara Vella[1,2], Chaturani De Silva[2], Johannes Carl[2], Matteo Crotti[3], Lisa Barnett[2], Michael Duncan[1]
[1]Coventry University, United Kingdom; [2]Deakin University, Australia; [3]Università degli studi di Bergamo, Italy

Community sport is increasingly promoted as a setting that can enhance children's wellbeing, yet the evidence base remains fragmented and inconsistent (Sport England, 2022; UNESCO, 2023). This review examined the effectiveness of community-based sports interventions on children's wellbeing using the holistic framework of physical literacy (PL). A systematic search of five academic databases identified studies evaluating community sport programmes designed to improve wellbeing among children aged 4-18 years. From 8,333 screened articles, 22 studies met the inclusion criteria. Study quality was assessed using the Joanna Briggs Institute critical appraisal tools . Where possible, data were pooled for meta-analysis when wellbeing outcomes included at least three intervention groups and a comparable control group. Outcomes were synthesised across seven wellbeing constructs: enjoyment, quality of life, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. Across the included studies, 16 of 24 wellbeing assessments demonstrated positive intervention effects. Meta-analytic findings revealed significant improvements in children's quality of life ($t = 5.27$; $p = 0.01$; SMD = 0.64). Programmes integrating team-based sport, delivered over three to six months, and aligned with all domains of physical literacy showed the most consistent and meaningful impacts across wellbeing measures.Overall, the review highlights community sport as a promising and accessible context for supporting children's holistic wellbeing. The findings underscore the importance of embedding PL principles into programme design and delivery to maximise wellbeing outcomes. Future research should prioritise robust methodologies, including controlled study designs, standardised wellbeing measures, and reporting frameworks that enable stronger comparisons across community sport interventions.

ID: 136 / **Poster Session 4: 3**
Poster presentation
Topics: Physical activity, Youth
Keywords: Adolescents, Physical Activity, Smartphone Use, Body Shape Perception

Move More, Scroll Less? Physical Activity, Smartphone Use, and Body Shape Perception in Adolescents: Gender Differences

Sungho Kwon[1], Juhyeong Kim[1], Seungho Chang[2]
[1]Seoul National University, Korea, Republic of (South Korea); [2]San Jose State University(USA)

This study examined gender-specific within-person associations among adolescents' body shape perception, physical activity, and smartphone use. Using five-wave panel data from the Korean Youth Health Behavior Panel Survey (KYHPS, 2019–2023; Grade 6 to Grade 10), we estimated two-way fixed-effects models (individual and wave fixed effects) to account for time-invariant individual characteristics and shared time-related influences. Body shape perception was assessed with a single 5-point item (1 = very thin to 5 = very overweight). Physical activity was measured as days with ≥60 minutes of activity in the past week (8-point scale). Weekday and weekend smartphone use were reported on 9-point ordinal scales. Among boys, within-person increases in physical activity were significantly associated with lower body shape perception scores (i.e., perceiving oneself as less overweight), whereas smartphone use (weekday/weekend) showed no significant association with body shape perception. Among

girls, increased weekday smartphone use was significantly associated with higher body shape perception scores (i.e., perceiving oneself as more overweight), while physical activity showed no direct association with body shape perception. Physical activity was significantly associated with reduced smartphone use among girls on both weekdays and weekends, but associations were weak or non-significant among boys. Overall, the findings indicate gender-differentiated behavioral patterns linking physical activity, smartphone use, and body-related perceptions. For girls, results are consistent with the possibility that reduced weekday smartphone exposure may be one behavioral route linking physical activity to body shape perception; however, formal mediation was not tested and should be examined in future longitudinal mediation analyses.

ID: 152 / **Poster Session 4: 4**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Health, Neuropsychology, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: SHAAKE, heading, concussion, football

Spontaneous Headshake After a Kinematic Event (SHAAKE): New Concussion Symptom Is Prevalent When Heading the Football

Daniel Walker, Jade Jukes
University of Bradford, United Kingdom

Concussion in sport is becoming better understood and given the shared mechanism attention has now turned towards head impacts in football. Recent work has identified a potential new symptom of concussion, predominantly in American football players, termed the Spontaneous Headshake After A Kinematic Event (SHAAKE). The present study aimed to explore whether this symptom was present when heading in football, the reasons for doing so, and whether there are differences between sexes. Participants completed a questionnaire designed to capture information on demographic variables as well as prevalence of SHAAKE in oneself and others, and reasons for doing so. Of the twenty participants included in data analysis, 45% recalled having made the SHAAKE movement after the heading the football, and 65% reported they had observed another player doing so. Three-quarters of participants reported having sustained concussion before. Additionally, a one-way ANOVA revealed that women were significantly more likely to report dizziness as the reason for SHAAKE than men which may be due to the technical ability of heading the football. With this knowledge, non-players may be more observant of dizziness in women football players shortly after heading the ball this may indicate damage to the brain.

ID: 191 / **Poster Session 4: 5**
Poster presentation
Topics: Transitions in and out of sport/dual career, Violence, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Career transitions, abuse in sport, athlete wellbeing, non-normative

Towards the Exploration of Abuse-Driven Career Transitions in Sport

Nicole Chateau, Michael Atkinson, Ashley Stirling
University of Toronto, Faculty of Kinesiology & Physical Education, Canada

An athlete's pursuit of career excellence necessitates navigating a range of sport environments, some of which may be unsafe, thereby compromising well-being and precipitating non-normative career transitions (Stambulova & Henriksen, 2025). It has been reported that up to 79% of athletes experience maltreatment in sport, including psychological abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or neglect (Pankowiak et al., 2023; U.S. Centre for SafeSport, 2024; Vertommen et al, 2018; Willson et al., 2022). Furthermore, within the athlete maltreatment literature, such experiences have been associated with transition-related outcomes, including sport withdrawal, team transfers, and premature retirement (Alexander et al., 2023; Kavanagh, 2014; Kerr et al., 2020). To date, no research has specifically examined abuse-driven career transitions in sport (ADCTs). The purpose of this presentation, therefore, is to address this gap by introducing ADCTs as a theoretically grounded construct at the intersection of athlete maltreatment and athletic career transition research. Using Jaakkola's (2020) theory synthesis approach, these two bodies of literature are integrated by identifying conceptual overlap and developing a new framework through structured synthesis. Drawing on the FEPSAC position statement on safeguarding athletes in sport (Khomutova et al., 2025), this presentation will outline practical recommendations to strengthen safeguarding efforts, with a focus on non-normative career transitions linked to athlete maltreatment and the supports needed to promote athlete welfare in new sport environments.

ID: 195 / **Poster Session 4: 6**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Emotion, Neuroscience, Youth
Keywords: moderate-intensity aerobic exercise, anxiety symptoms, college students, working memory

Effects of Moderate-Intensity Aerobic Exercise on Working Memory in College Students with Anxiety Symptoms: ERP Evidence

Xinchun Wang[1], Huiyu Shi[1], Minmin Du[2], Jian Yang[1]
[1]College of Physical Education and Health, East China Normal University, Shanghai 200241, China.; [2]School of Sports Science, Qufu Normal University, Jining 273165, China.

Anxiety symptoms are increasingly prevalent among college students and are closely associated with working memory impairments. Although previous studies have reported negative associations between physical activity and anxiety symptoms and positive associations between physical activity and working memory, evidence in college students with anxiety symptoms remains limited. This study examined the effects of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise on working memory and its neural mechanisms in this population. Eighty participants meeting the Beck Anxiety Inventory criterion (score ≥ 16) were randomly assigned to an experimental or control group. The experimental group completed a single 30-minute session of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise on a cycle ergometer, while the control group remained seated reading. All participants completed the posttest within 10 minutes to control for potential effects of the post-exercise interval on cognitive outcomes. Working memory was assessed before and after the intervention using an N-back task, with N2 and P3 components recorded concurrently. Repeated-measures analyses revealed significant group-by-time interactions for accuracy and N2 latency. Accuracy increased and N2 latency decreased in the experimental group, while no significant effects were observed for reaction time, P3 latency, or P3 amplitude. Anxiety symptoms were also reduced. Results suggest that moderate-intensity aerobic exercise mainly modulates the N2 component linked to early conflict monitoring, with little effect on the P3 component reflecting later-stage cognitive processing. This likely reflects the limited impact of single acute exercise on higher-order cognition. Moderate-intensity aerobic exercise effectively alleviates anxiety symptoms and enhances working memory, potentially through improved early conflict monitoring and cognitive processing efficiency.

ID: 203 / **Poster Session 4: 7**
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement
Keywords: Motor Representation, Artificial Intelligence, Imagery Scripting, Sport Technology

Digitising the SDA-M Approach: An AI-Enhanced Software for Motor Gesture Analysis and Imagery Scripting

Marina Gerin

Italian federation of sport psychologists FIPsiS, Italy

High-performance movements rely on complex mental representations called Basic Action Concepts (BACs). This software description and applied methodological report introduces the Psymedisport "Motor Gesture Analysis" module, designed exclusively for sport psychologists to digitize and streamline the Structural Dimensional Analysis-Motoric (SDA-M) developed by Thomas Schack, bridging cognitive theory with applied psychological practice. Applicable to competitive athletes across all sports, particularly closed-skill disciplines with standardized routines like artistic gymnastics, the software utilizes a Large Language Model (LLM)-based NLP architecture. The system automatically decomposes technical gestures into sequential phases. Athletes evaluate their technical self-efficacy per phase and identify specific BACs alongside emotional markers. Drawing from mindfulness best practices, these emotions are not quantitatively evaluated but are welcomed and integrated by the practitioner to deepen the athlete's self-awareness and mind-body connection. Processing this input, the system generates an immersive, first-person imagery script optimized for ideomotor training, effectively reinforcing the cognitive-motor link. While formal experimental validation is pending, extensive applied professional practice demonstrates that the tool significantly reduces practitioner preparation time while enhancing athlete imagery vividness, motor execution fluidity, and self-confidence. Current limitations include a reliance on subjective self-reports, a lack of kinematic data integration, and the need for expert review to correct technically inaccurate LLM phrasing, leaving ample room for future expansion. Ultimately, the sport psychologist retains full responsibility for psychological interpretation, script modification, and professional oversight, ensuring a scientifically grounded sport psychology intervention. "Mental Power" - Thomas Schack & Ludwig Vogel GbR is a cooperation partner.

ID: 212 / **Poster Session 4: 8**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Exercise psychology, Physical activity
Keywords: acculturation, foreigners, native Germans, physical activity

Cultural Differences and Acculturation Effects on Physical Activity Motives of Gym Users Among Foreigners and Native Germans

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This study examined differences in PA motives of fitness center users between foreigners and native Germans, and also explored whether acculturation duration was associated with their motivation. A cross-sectional sample of 605 university students (410 Germans, 195 non-Germans [other Europeans, Africans, Asians, South Americans) completed the revised Motives for Physical Activities Measure, assessing five PA motivation dimensions: interest/enjoyment, competence, appearance, fitness, and social motives. Among non-German students, acculturation was operationalized as years lived in Germany. Multivariate analyses of covariance (MANCOVA) were conducted to examine nationality differences and acculturation effects while controlling for age and gender. Follow-up univariate analyses were corrected for multiple testing using the false discovery rate (FDR) procedure. The multivariate effect of nationality on PA motives was not significant after controlling for age and gender. Gender and age emerged as significant multivariate predictors of motivation. Follow-up analyses revealed a small, trend-level effect indicating higher competence motivation among German students compared to non-German students. Among non-German students, acculturation duration showed a trend-level multivariate association with PA motivation, with

longer residence in Germany associated with lower social motivation. Overall, PA motivation profiles were largely similar between German and non-German university students. Small trends suggest that competence and social motives may vary with cultural background and acculturation, although effects were modest. These findings highlight the importance of considering age and gender in PA motivation research and suggest that culturally inclusive PA promotion strategies may benefit from addressing social integration processes among international students.

ID: 215 / Poster Session 4: 9
Poster presentation
Topics: Group dynamics, Motivation
Keywords: class environment, learning, self-determination theory, teaching interpersonal style

Let's Learn Together: A Multilevel Study of Teaching Behaviors, Class Cohesion, and Student Outcomes in Physical Education

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Numerous studies on groups have identified cohesion as a key element in achieving optimal collective functioning. Yet, in the educational context, the role of class cohesion (i.e., social and task) and its impact on students' learning processes has received less attention. Class cohesion may especially be crucial in Physical Education (PE) due to its inherently collaborative nature. Additionally, it is unclear which interpersonal teaching styles are related to class cohesion. Using a multilevel approach, this study had a threefold aim: first, how class cohesion is associated with different students' positives and negatives outcomes; second, to examine the relationship between need-supportive and need-thwarting teaching styles and class cohesion; and third, to test whether class cohesion accounts for the relationship between need-supportive and need-thwarting teaching style and the different students' outcomes. A total of 1,468 PE students 11–18 years (Mage = 14.01±1.49; 681 females) from 82 classes of secondary schools completed validated questionnaires at a single time point mid-academic year. Multilevel structural equation models showed task and social cohesion were positively related to autonomous motivation, self-efficacy, perceived learning, academic performance (but not task cohesion), and well-being, and negatively related to problematic relationships. Also, teachers' need support (but not teachers' need thwarting) was positively related to both task and social cohesion. Finally, class cohesion (especially task cohesion) showed an indirect effect between teachers' need support and almost all individual students' outcomes. These findings highlight class cohesion as a key mechanism through which supportive teaching fosters students' optimal functioning in PE.

ID: 217 / Poster Session 4: 10
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: self-regulated learning, metacognition, motivation, coach's behavior.

How Coaches' Leadership Behaviors are Related to Individual- and Team-sport Athletes' Ability to Self-regulate Their Learning?

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A greater commitment to self-regulated practice distinguishes the most elite group from less skilled athletes (Siekanska et al., 2023). Coach leadership style influences the proportion of time athletes spend on self- vs. coach-organized training. Therefore, it seems interesting to examine the relationship between coaches' leadership behaviors and the self-regulatory competencies of elite athletes representing individual vs. team sports. Forty-eight Polish elite athletes (Mage = 21.58, SD = 3.25), from track and field (T&F) (n=24) and soccer (n=24) groups, responded the Self-regulated Learning in Sport Practice survey (SRL-SP,) the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) and a demographic survey. The SRL-SP consist of two scales: Metacognition and Motivation. The LSS consists of five scales: Training and Instruction (TI), Democratic Behavior (DB), Autocratic Behavior (AB), Social Support (SS), Positive Feedback (PF). For the SRL-SP survey, results revealed no significant differences between groups for either Metacognition or Motivation. In T&F group Metacognition score was associated with four types of preferred coach behaviors (rhoTI=.44, rhoDB=.62, rhoSS=.41, rhoAB=-.52) and two types of perceived behaviors (rhoAB=-.53, rho`DB=.45). Motivation score was associated with one type of preferred behavior (rhoAB=-48) and two types of perceived behaviors (rhoAB=-.59, rho`DB=.58). In soccer group, Metacognition was associated with one preferred type of behavior (rho`PF=-.44) and Motivation was associated with one type of preferred behavior (rhoDB=.45). The results confirm that sport type may be a contextual variable of interest (cf. Young et al., 2023) and that metacognitive skills in individual-sport athletes are more closely related to greater expectations of instruction and support from coaches.

ID: 226 / Poster Session 4: 11
Poster presentation
Topics: Emotion, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19), Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: Emotion Dysregulation, Adolescent Athletes, Mental Health

Emotion Dysregulation: A Key Predictor of Adolescent Athletes' Mental Health

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Adolescence is a critical period for mental health, with elevated risk for anxiety, depression and low self-esteem (Compas et al., 2017). Emotion dysregulation is consistently associated with poorer mental health, and competitive pressures in sport may further increase it (Young et al., 2019); however, studies in adolescent athletes remain insufficient (c.f., Kim & Tamminen, 2022). This study examined which dimensions of emotion dysregulation predict mental health in this population. Six hundred and two adolescent athletes (56% boys, Mage = 15.09) completed the DERS-16 and the GHQ-12 via in-person team-based data collection. Data analyses consisted of multiple linear regression to identify the predictive role of emotion dysregulation in mental health. Regression analyses revealed differential associations. Most components showed negligible associations. In contrast, emotional confusion and limited access to strategies predicted social functioning with small but significant effects (β = -.167 to -.169, p = .002-.024), depression and anxiety with small-to-moderate effects (β = .191 to .385, p <.001), and confidence and self-esteem with moderate-to-large effects (β = .206 to .424, p < .001). Gender predicted depression/anxiety (p = .015) and loss of confidence/self-esteem (p = .001), with higher scores in girls, but not for social functioning (p = .756). Our findings identify specific components of emotion dysregulation (i.e., emotional confusion and limited access to strategies) as particularly relevant for mental health. Together with previous evidence in adolescents (Young et al., 2019) and sport-specific findings on emotional interference (McCarthy, 2013), these results emphasize the need for interventions to prioritize key components of emotion dysregulation in adolescent athletes.

ID: 227 / Poster Session 4: 12
Poster presentation
Topics: Exercise psychology, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Critical thinking, physical activity, psychological well-being

Relationship Between Physical Activity and Psychological Well-Being in Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Critical Thinking

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The aim of this study was to examine the mediating role of critical thinking in the relationship between physical activity level and psychological well-being among adolescents. 743 students, including 425 females (Mage=15,01 SD±0.79) and 315 (Mage=15,04 SD±0.77) males, voluntarily participated in this study. Five-Dimensional Well-Being Scale for Adolescents, the UF/EMI Critical Thinking Disposition Scale, and the Physical Activity Scale for Adolescents were administered to participants. The theoretical basis of critical thinking and psychological well-being are grounded on Facione and Seligman's PERMA model, respectively. The study tested the conceptual model in which physical activity consider as the independent variable, psychological well-being as the dependent variable, and critical thinking as the mediating variable. PROCESS Macro v3.5 was used to test this conceptual model. The analysis indicated that the physical activity had a positive direct effect on the subscales of critical thinking and psychological well-being, except the relatedness subscale (p< 0.01). The cognitive maturity and innovativeness subscales of critical thinking significantly predicted commitment, persistence, optimism, relatedness, and happiness subscales of psychological well-being (p< 0.01). In addition, the engagement subscale of critical thinking significantly predicted persistence, optimism, relatedness, and happiness subscales of psychological well-being (p< 0.01). In addition, the mediation analyses showed that physical activity has indirect effects on all subscales of psychological well-being through the subscales of critical thinking (p< 0.01). It can be said that physical activity is an important variable in increasing psychological well being directly and indirectly by enhancing critical thinking.

ID: 235 / Poster Session 4: 13
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Group dynamics, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Social cognition
Keywords: motor-decision making, joint action, object-transport task

Motor Decision-Making in Social Interaction: Investigating Joint Action Coordination in the Object-Transfer Task

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Joint action research investigates how individuals coordinate perception, movement, and cognition to achieve shared goals. We examine coordination efficiency in a real-world setting with two partners navigating through environmental constraints under varying physical loads. Forty participants (18 females; M = 22.5 years) transported a ball from one corner to the diagonally opposite corner of a 10 × 10 m square. A horizontal barrier with two gaps and a vertical barrier of equal or unequal length created five different path asymmetries. Partner A started and chose a gap to pass the ball to Partner B, determining the initial subpath. In congruent trials, shorter initial paths led to shorter total paths; in incongruent trials, the shorter initial path resulted in a longer total path; in neutral trials, both paths were equal. Partners completed the dyads under three physical load conditions: either none, one, or both partners wore a weighted vest. Results showed a strong preference for initial subpaths minimizing aggregate path length, especially when path asymmetry was high. Importantly, physical load influenced motor-decision making in a way that participants adjusted their initial path choices to reduce the effort for the more burdened partner. These findings

reveal flexible, cost-sensitive motor planning that integrates environmental structure, individual effort, and shared task demands. Coordination efficiency emerges through embodied, interactive processes that dynamically optimize collective outcomes. This study demonstrates that real-world joint actions are guided by adaptive, socially sensitive strategies aimed at minimizing shared costs, highlighting the role of embodied cognition in cooperative behavior.

ID: 247 / **Poster Session 4: 14**
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Health, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Perception & attention
Keywords: mental health, psychological flexibility, anxiety

Baseline Psychological Profiles from Pre-Season Assessment in an Elite Hungarian Sports Club

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Psychological flexibility is defined as the ability to remain present while adapting behaviour in line with personal values despite challenging internal experiences, which is a key factor in mental health and performance (Johles et al., 2020). In elite sport, athletes are exposed to high levels of stress, making this construct remarkably important (Coleman, 2025). However, baseline data on psychological flexibility among Hungarian elite athletes remain limited. Therefore, we would like to first explore the associations of their psychological flexibility, flow, mindfulness, anxiety, depression and emotion regulation so we could develop programs to enhance their sport performance. This study aimed to examine psychological flexibility and its relationship with mental health indicators prior to the competitive season of the professional elite athletes from a sport club, where only the top 10 ceded players could participate. Participants (N = 24) were recruited from an elite sport club in Hungary and included basketball players (n=12, mean age=25.5), judo (n=8, mean age=15.9), and kayak-canoe (n=4, mean age = 21.7). Using a cross-sectional design, athletes completed standardized measures assessing psychological flexibility, flow, anxiety, depression, mindfulness. Preliminary findings indicated variability in psychological flexibility and mental health across participants, with trends suggesting that higher flexibility is associated with more adaptive mental health outcomes with a correlation coefficient ranging between r = .30 and .46. These results provide an initial exploratory baseline result and highlight the need for further research with larger samples. The findings contributes to the development of culturally adapted psychological interventions targeting flexibility-related processes in elite sport contexts.

ID: 248 / **Poster Session 4: 15**
Poster presentation
Topics: Elderly, Health, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Physical performance, fall risk, physical and mental health.

The Effect of Resistance Training on Physical Performance and Mental Health in the Elderly

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Our study examined the effects of 3 months of resistance training on physical performance and mental health among older adults. This prospective cohort study involved 14 active older adults (12 women, 2 men; age 71.57 ± 5.23 years). Following a 10-minute warm-up, participants completed a 3-month resistance training (RT) program. Anthropometric measures (weight, height, body mass index [BMI]), physical and mental health (Short Form 12 [SF-12] questionnaire), physical performance (SPPB), and fall risk (Timed Up and Go [TUG]) were assessed. Statistical analysis included the Shapiro-Wilk test and the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test. The study group included participants with a mean age of 71.57 ± 5.23 years, a body weight of 74.07 ± 12.68 kg, and a BMI of 27.71 ± 4.42 kg/m^2. Following the 3-month resistance training (RT) program, a statistically significant improvement in physical performance was observed, with SPPB scores increasing from 9.00 ± 1.41 to 9.57 ± 1.09 (p=0.0384). In contrast, other evaluated parameters showed no significant changes: Physical Component Summary - SF-12 PCS (p=0.37) and Mental Component Summary- SF-12 MCS (p=0.35) scores, as well as TUG (p=0.19), remained relatively stable. Our results confirm that while the RT program effectively improved objective physical performance (SPPB), it did not significantly impact perceived quality of life (SF-12). This suggests that RT is a key tool for frailty prevention, even without immediate subjective changes. Furthermore, the insignificant improvement in TUG indicates that RT should be supplemented with specific coordination, agility, and dynamic balance exercises.

ID: 253 / **Poster Session 4: 16**
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical sport psychology
Keywords: mental health, elite athletes, high-performance sport, SMHAT-1

Prevalence of Mental Illness Symptoms in Spanish Elite Athletes

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According to Keyes’ dual-continuum model (Keyes, 2007), mental health goes beyond the absence of mental illness, with mental illness symptoms and positive mental health as related but distinct dimensions. Thus, low symptoms do not necessarily indicate high wellbeing. Prevalence data in officially recognised high-performance athletes remain limited. This study analysed the prevalence of mental illness symptoms in Spanish high-performance and elite athletes, focusing on the mental illness continuum.

A cross-sectional study was conducted with 292 Spanish elite athletes (M = 26.51 years; SD = 10.63) from multiple sport disciplines, with official consideration. Mental health symptoms were assessed using the International Olympic Committee Sports Mental Health Assessment Tool-1 (SMHAT-1), screening anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, alcohol misuse, drug misuse, and eating disorder symptoms. Prevalence rates above established risk thresholds were calculated.

Prevalence above risk thresholds was 27.7% for anxiety symptoms, 19.2% for depressive symptoms, and 26.7% for sleep disorder symptoms. For substance use, 19.5% exceeded the threshold for alcohol misuse and 6.2% for drug misuse, mainly related to caffeine and nicotine use. Eating disorder symptoms showed the highest prevalence (32.5%). Overall, a considerable proportion of athletes presented clinically relevant mental health symptoms.

A substantial number of Spanish elite athletes present mental illness symptoms despite their elite sporting status. These findings support the need for systematic screening, prevention, and early intervention strategies integrated into elite sport medical and performance services in high-performance sport.

ID: 254 / Poster Session 4: 17
Poster presentation
Topics: Decision making and judgement, Elite sports and expertise, Group dynamics, Organizational development and quality management
Keywords: performance crises, expectations, coach dismissal, data-driven indicators

When Numbers Tell the Story: Data-Driven Early Detection of Performance Crises in Professional Football

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Performance crises in professional football represent a major sport psychological and organizational challenge, impairing team cohesion, psychological stability, and decision-making, often culminating in costly coach dismissals. Theoretically, such crises can be understood as dynamic processes arising from repeated expectation violations, negative emotional development, and the loss of psychological momentum (Jekauc et al., 2024). Despite these insights, clearly defined quantitative indicators for the systematic, expectation-based identification of performance crises remain lacking. This study aimed to develop and validate three complementary indicators for analyzing team performance in professional football. Based on sport psychological expectation and momentum theories as well as analogies to motion models in physics, three indices were formulated (Jekauc et al., 2025). The Relative Position measures deviations between expected and actual league standings, representing structural expectation fulfillment. The Linear Rate of Change captures cumulative discrepancies between expected and achieved points across the season, indicating gradual and persistent performance declines. The Exponential Rate of Change assigns greater weight to recent results, sensitively reflecting short-term dynamics and operationalizing acute losses of psychological momentum. The indices were computed for all teams in the 2023–2024 Bundesliga season using expected values derived from squad market values, prior standings, and betting odds. Coach dismissals served as validation criteria. Results showed that all dismissals were preceded by sustained negative trends across the three indicators, with sharp declines in the Exponential Rate of Change shortly preceding dismissals. Together, the indicators demonstrate convergent validity and provide a data-driven framework for diagnosing performance crises and supporting evidence-based management decisions.

ID: 264 / Poster Session 4: 18
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Physical activity
Keywords: Feedback, Motor Learning, Artificial Intelligence

AI-Generated Feedback in Sport: A Scoping Review Protocol on Its Alignment With Motor Learning Principles

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This scoping review examines how markerless, i.e. non-intrusive vision-based artificial intelligence (AI) systems in sport and rehabilitation conceptualise and deliver feedback. The review explores whether AI-generated feedback solely based on video input meets the standards established in motor learning research and supports learning-related parameters such as attentional focus, motivation, and frequency (cf. Schmidt & Wrisberg, 2008; Schmidt et al., 2019). Following the PRISMA-ScR framework and the JBI guidelines (Peters et al., 2020; Tricco et al., 2018), major databases (PubMed, Web of Science, Scopus, IEEE Xplore and ACM Digital Library) were systematically searched for studies published between 2018 and 2026. After screening 1403 articles, 63 studies meet the inclusion criteria

so far (title & abstract screening (AS & SK): Cohen's kappa = 0.7; full text screening (AS & LE): ongoing). Data extraction and synthesis are ongoing and expected to be completed in April 2026. Data will be collected on AI techniques, feedback characteristics, motor learning alignment, and system evaluation. Preliminary results show a tendency of studies claiming to provide valuable feedback, yet these systems generate only binary output (right/wrong) without providing further actionable information (n=14, so far). Furthermore, the systems' usability remains largely unexamined (n=38 studies lacking expert/user evaluation, so far). Final results will showcase deficits and best practices of AI- based feedback systems and clarify to what extent these systems succeed in generating interpretable feedback outputs. By mapping their alignment with established motor learning principles, the study will identify existing gaps and inform design guidelines for didactically grounded AI feedback frameworks.

ID: 323 / **Poster Session 4: 19**
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Exercise psychology
Keywords: Adolescent Soccer Players, Smartphone Dependence, Flow

Smartphone Dependence and Flow in Adolescent Soccer Players: The Mediating Roles of Sleep Quality and Competitive State Anxiety

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This study examined the multiple mediating roles of sleep quality and competitive state anxiety in the relationship between smartphone dependence and flow among adolescent soccer players. Grounded in self-regulation and flow theories (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; DesClouds & Durand-Bush, 2023), we tested a serial mediation model in which digital habits may be indirectly associated with flow through sleep-related recovery and pre-competition anxiety. Participants were 229 adolescent middle- and high-school soccer players who completed validated self-report measures of smartphone dependence, sleep quality, competitive state anxiety, and flow. Serial mediation analyses were conducted to examine indirect pathways. Smartphone dependence was not directly associated with flow but was associated with poorer sleep quality and higher competitive state anxiety. Competitive state anxiety was a significant negative predictor of flow. Significant indirect effects were observed through competitive state anxiety alone and through the sequential pathway of sleep quality and competitive state anxiety, whereas the indirect effect through sleep quality alone was not significant. These findings suggest that smartphone dependence may be indirectly associated with athletes' flow experiences through impaired recovery and heightened competitive anxiety. From an applied perspective, interventions targeting digital habits, sleep hygiene, and anxiety regulation may support athletes' psychological readiness, and promoting self-regulated smartphone use may be beneficial for optimizing flow among adolescent athletes.

ID: 331 / **Poster Session 4: 20**
Poster presentation
Topics: Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.)
Keywords: nutritional supplement, doping, fair play

Athletes' Views and Practices Regarding Nutritional Supplement Use

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The use of nutritional supplements is widespread across all levels of sport, often reinforced by aggressive marketing practices and perceptions of performance enhancement. At the same time, doping violations and health risks associated with supplement use continue to rise, with up to 14% of positive doping cases linked to contaminated products. Under the lens of Risk Perception Attitude framework, the study examined athletes' views and practices about supplement use, focusing on consumption patterns, risk perceptions, industry practices, and regulatory shortcomings. A quantitative survey was conducted with 468 athletes aged 18–60 recruited through academic and social networks across four European countries.Participants completed a factual survey comprising items on nutritional supplement consumption and awareness of contamination risks. The descriptive analysis indicated high prevalence of supplement use, with more than 60% of athletes in Finland and Portugal reporting regular consumption, but only 45% in Greece. Protein-based products were predominantly used by strength and power athletes, while endurance athletes reported greater use of vitamins and minerals. Male athletes demonstrated a 23% higher usage rate than females, particularly for performance-oriented products. Despite these high usage levels, only 28% of respondents consistently verified supplement quality. Awareness of contamination risks ranged from 36% in Greece to 80% in Finland, while concerns regarding heavy metal contamination were especially pronounced in Portugal (58%). These findings highlight the urgent need for athlete-centred education programmes on supplement use focusing on risk perceptions attitudes and decision making processes that result in informed choices.

ID: 341 / **Poster Session 4: 21**
Poster presentation

Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Emotion, Human factors, Psychophysiology
Keywords: salivary cortisol, heart rate, nap, competition

Formula Racing Study: Practical Cortisol Estimation From Wearable Heart-Rate Monitoring and Sleep-Related Stress Adjustment

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Elite athletes compete in high-pressure environments where stress management is essential, yet practical on-site methods for timely assessment remain limited. This study examined whether wearable heart-rate monitoring can estimate same-day endocrine stress levels and whether simple, field-feasible routine adjustments can modulate endocrine stress. Using a single-case field design, one professional driver competing in Japan's top Formula racing series was followed over multiple seasons. On race days with morning and afternoon sessions, the driver wore a wearable ECG device during driving, and saliva was collected approximately 30 and 10 minutes before each session. Salivary cortisol served as the endocrine stress marker. Morning peak heart rate was extracted to test whether it could estimate the within-day change in pre-session cortisol from morning to afternoon. Subsequently, two routine interventions were introduced: earlier wake timing to attenuate awakening-related cortisol elevation before the morning session and a brief nap scheduled shortly before the afternoon session. Before the interventions, morning peak heart rate showed a significant positive association with the within-day change in cortisol. During the intervention phase, earlier wake timing coincided with lower pre-session cortisol before the morning session, and brief pre-performance naps were associated with smaller-than-expected afternoon cortisol changes. Although not conclusive, these adjustments were also accompanied by a trend toward improved performance, suggesting that suppression of cortisol elevation may help support competitive outcomes. This case study suggests that wearable heart-rate monitoring to estimate endocrine stress, together with sleep-related routine adjustments, may provide a feasible on-site stress-management strategy in high-pressure settings.

ID: 344 / Poster Session 4: 22
Poster presentation
Topics: Motivation, Pedagogical psychology
Keywords: Teachers' motivation, Physical Education, Motivational Antecedents, Basic Psychological Needs

Exploring the Antecedents of Physical Education Teachers' Basic Psychological Needs and Motivation

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Teachers play a fundamental role in shaping students' learning, motivation, and engagement. However, while previous research has predominantly focused on how teachers influence students' motivational processes, comparatively little attention has been paid to teachers' own motivation. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the present research examined key antecedents of Physical Education (PE) teachers' motivation and their associations with basic psychological need satisfaction and frustration. Study 1 (n = 66) aimed to identify positive and negative motivational antecedents perceived by PE teachers. A questionnaire composed of 27 items was administered to assess contextual factors, perceptions of others' behaviors, and personal factors influencing teachers' motivation. Participants rated the influence of each factor on their motivation for teaching, were given the opportunity to add additional antecedents, and subsequently selected and ranked the five most important factors. The results identified positive antecedents such as harmonious passion, job security, student engagement, students' autonomous motivation, and need satisfaction, as well as negative antecedents including obsessive passion, students' controlled motivation, amotivation, and need frustration. Building on these findings, Study 2 (n = 350) examined the relationships among these antecedents and teachers' motivational regulation through need satisfaction and frustration using structural equation modeling. Results showed harmonious passion, job security, and perceived student engagement positively predicted need satisfaction, whereas obsessive passion and perceived student amotivation positively predicted need frustration. In turn, need satisfaction was associated with autonomous motivation, while need frustration predicted controlled motivation and amotivation. These findings underscore the importance of teachers' antecedents in shaping motivational processes in PE.

ID: 352 / Poster Session 4: 23
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Talent identification/development, Youth
Keywords: Thrive, Talent, Qualitative Methods

Understanding Thriving in Elite Youth Athletes: An Arts-Based Narrative Inquiry

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Elite sport environments are often complex, demanding, and chaotic, with the potential to adversely affect athletes' performance and well-being (Arnold & Fletcher, 2021). Thriving, as a research area, seeks to explore the enhancement of both well-being and performance concurrently (Brown et al., 2018). Although research has advanced understanding of thriving in sport, this literature has often focused on adult elite athletes (e.g., Brown & Arnold, 2019; Passaportis et al., 2022). This raises questions regarding the applicability of this knowledge to elite youth athletes (EYA), whose experiential differences and sporting environments may uniquely influence their ability to thrive. The study intends to develop an understanding of thriving in EYA and inform the construction of a conceptual definition.

Twenty-three athletes aged 12–17, representing a range of sports and competing at a national level or above in their sport, participated in the present study. A narrative inquiry methodology was adopted where thriving was explored using stories. An arts-based method was used to explore participants' experiences of thriving, whilst supporting participant empowerment throughout the data collection process. Athletes were initially invited to draw an image depicting a positive experience in sport, followed by a conversational interview discussing the drawing. Data was analysed using narrative thematic analysis (Smith, 2016) identifying four narrative themes: 'beyond outcomes', 'the role of key relationships', 'social belonging', and 'negotiating the evolving demands'. Results from the present study will provide scholars and key stakeholders in elite youth sport with new empirical insights to support the promotion of thriving in EYA.

ID: 364 / Poster Session 4: 24
Poster presentation
Topics: Health
Keywords: resilience, burnout, commitment, performance failure

INSIST: The Role of Psychological Resilience in Accounting for Athletes' Burnout Through Performance Failure and Sport Commitment

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Grounded in a sport-specific framework, the present study examines a model hypothesizing that psychological resilience (PR) influences athletes' burnout (AB) through the intervening effects on performance failure (PF) and sport commitment (SC). A total of 386 Italian athletes (62,18% males; Mage=21.5, SD=5.08) participated to the study. Athletes filled out a self-report booklet containing the RESIST Scale (PR), Athlete Burnout (AB), Performance Failure Appraisal (PF) and two subscales of Sport-Commitment (CC for Constrained Commitment; EC for Enthusiastic Commitment). The cross-sectional, SEM confirmatory analysis showed acceptable model fit (CFI=.91, TLI=.89, SRMR=.08). The results showed that PR positively predicted EC positively (β=.54, p<.001) and PF negatively (β=-.40, p<.001). In addition, PF was associated with AB positively (β=.20, p<.001). There were no significant direct associations of PR with either AB (β=-.08, p=.203) or CC (β=.07, p=.261). Both CC and EC were associated with AB, although the direction of these latter relations was opposite (β=.38, p<.001 and β=-.43, p<.001, respectively). There also was evidence for indirect effects in the model. PR indirectly predicted AB by the intervening effects of PF (β=-.08, p<.003). Furthermore, PR influenced AB through the intervening negative effects of EC (β=-.23, p<.0011) and of the combination of PF which, in turn, affected CC (β=-.07, p<.001). Overall, the structural model findings support the general mediational hypothesis that PR may significantly and indirectly influence AB via the intervening effects of EC and PF. These findings warrant attention as the relation between resilience and the experience of burnout seems at least partly, accounted for by other relevant athletes' psychological experiences.

ID: 365 / Poster Session 4: 25
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Personality
Keywords: PRISMA guidelines, competition-related rumination, Response Styles Theory, Goal-Progress Theory

Rumination in Athletes: A Scoping Review

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Rumination, commonly defined as repetitive, negative thinking, and its consequences have attracted increasing theoretical and empirical interest in psychological research over the past three decades (Watkins & Roberts, 2020), but have only recently gained attention within the field of sport psychology (cf. Michel-Kröhler & Berti, 2025). This scoping review aimed to synthesize research on rumination in athletes by (1) examining how rumination has been conceptualized in the sport context to date, (2) identifying methodological characteristics and research gaps in the existing literature, and (3) providing a comprehensive overview of empirical studies examining rumination in sport to serve as a general introduction for researchers and practitioners new to the field. A total of 113 studies were identified by searching six different databases. Most studies employed quantitative research designs (88.49%), with the majority using cross-sectional approaches (76.00%). Half of the research was conducted in Western countries (50.44%; Canada, Germany, USA, and UK). In the identified studies, rumination was defined using a specific theory or model in approximately two thirds of cases, and 37 different rumination measures originating from various contexts were applied. Common research foci included for example, cognitive processes (e.g., coping strategies, metacognitive beliefs), mental health related outcomes (e.g., burnout, sleep), and emotion and affect related variables (e.g., anger, positive states). Longitudinal study designs and especially experimental studies are needed to examine causal relationships between rumination and objective performance as well as mental health in more naturalistic settings. We also address further gaps and provide suggestions for future studies.

ID: 381 / Poster Session 4: 26
Poster presentation
Topics: Leadership, Organizational development and quality management, Social psychology, Any other topic
Keywords: Leadership, gender, aspirations

Understanding the Women and Men Sport Aspiring Leaders' Experiences on Future Sustainable Work Life Through Dream Day Narratives

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Investigating the career aspirations of aspiring sport leaders is especially relevant, given their potential influence on career trajectories and access to professional development opportunities. This study therefore aims to explore the aspirations of aspiring sport leaders and to identify the sustainable factors that support their advancement into leadership positions in the sport sector. Initial professional experiences are structuring and pivotal in shaping the pursuit of one's career, particularly for women in sport domain. Five single-gender focus groups (n = 10 men and 15 women; age = 21 to 23 years) were conducted with Master's students in Sport Management. Prior to the interviews, participants were asked to create a visual representation of their "dream daily life" using any creative format. This visual depicted both their envisioned professional life as leaders and their personal life. In the semi-structured interviews, participants were invited to share motivation, support and ideas about their dream daily lives as leaders in sport organizations. Narrative analysis identified common thematic like high achievement professionally and privately, connection to others, balance between work and personal life, recognition and support, opportunities for growth and development. Already, young men and women leaders have commons aspirations, motivations but face to different barriers. Sport organizations must continue to challenge deep-rooted gender norms and leadership stereotypes, in fostering a culture of shared leadership and psychological safety and a support work life integration and role flexibility. This study will enable a first overview of the status of women and men aspiring leaders in France.

ID: 385 / Poster Session 4: 27
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Emotion, Exercise psychology, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: performance enhancement, exercice psychology, elite sport

Mind Over Muscle: Perceived Pain and Coping Strategies in Elite Athletes Under Physical Exertion

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Exercise induced pain is a profound experience for athletes, closely linked to performance. However, most existing research has examined pain in laboratory settings, limiting ecological validity. Studies of naturally occurring exercise induced pain among elite athletes remain scarce. The aim of this study was to investigate various dimensions of exercise induced pain (intensity, unpleasantness, and motivational aspects) and to identify psychological mechanisms associated with perceived pain endurance and pain regulation during training in natural conditions (endurance based training). Sixty Polish elite athletes from various disciplines—including running, skiing, track and field, and top league soccer—participated. A mixed methods approach was employed, combining qualitative and quantitative assessments conducted during regular training sessions to ensure ecological validity. Measures included individual characteristics such as general anxiety, pain related cognitive schemas, and coping strategies, all of which were systematically assessed and categorized. Based on prior research, we hypothesized that (1) adaptive cognitive strategies such as reappraisal and attentional distraction would be associated with greater pain tolerance and lower subjective unpleasantness, and (2) maladaptive strategies, including catastrophizing, would predict heightened pain intensity and reduced willingness to continue effort. Preliminary results indicated that adaptive strategies (e.g., cognitive reframing and distraction) were associated with greater pain tolerance, whereas maladaptive strategies (e.g., catastrophizing) were associated with higher pain perception and reduced performance motivation. Although preliminary, these findings contribute to understanding the psychological dynamics of exercise induced pain in elite sport and may inform the development of evidence based mental training protocols.

ID: 395 / Poster Session 4: 28
Poster presentation
Topics: Social psychology, Youth
Keywords: parent(s)-coach relationship, youth sport, intensive training centers

Characteristics of the Parent(s)–Coach Relationship: A Qualitative Study in Intensive Training Centers in Team Sports

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Within the context of adolescent athletes' dual careers, parents and coaches play a central role in the athletes' well-being and performance. While the importance of their respective relationships with the athlete well documented, the parent(s)-coach relationship (PCR) and notably the identification of its key characteristics, remains understudied. This study aimed to explore these characteristics within the context of intensive training centers. Fourteen parents (Mage = 48.29, SD = 4.12, 8 mothers), 14 coaches (Mage = 44.21, SD = 11.77, 12 men), and 14 adolescent athletes (Mage = 15, SD = 1.47, 8 boys) involved in intensive training centers in team sports participated in semi-structured interviews. To ensure data quality, processes such as inter-coder reliability, detailed documentation, and peer debriefing with reflexive practices were implemented. The interviews focused on the characteristics of current PCR, as well as participants' perceptions of relationships considered ideal and detrimental for adolescent athletes and their dual careers. Data were analyzed using an inductive and deductive thematic analysis approach. Seven themes characterizing the PCR were identified. Communication emerged as the characteristic mentioned by the largest

number of participants (i.e., athletes, parents, and coaches), followed by role management, emotional climate, relational stance, collaboration, trust, and closeness. Beyond communication, role management was frequently mentioned by parents and coaches, whereas emotional climate was frequently mentioned by athletes. This study highlights the central role of communication in the PCR and offers the first multi-perspective characterization capturing the views of all three stakeholders, providing an empirical basis for modeling the PCR.

ID: 419 / **Poster Session 4: 29**
Poster presentation
Topics: Pedagogical psychology, Professional development and mentoring, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: physical education, school, staff, well-being

Psychosocial, Health-Related, and Socio-Demographic Correlates of PE Teachers' Mental Health

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Handling physical education (PE) teachers' mental health involves preventing burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). Addressing burnout requires considering both personal and environmental factors associated with teachers' mental health. Previous research highlights the relevance of socio-demographic, psychosocial, and health-related determinants (Alsahe et al., 2020; Dreer, 2024; González-Valero et al., 2023). However, their interrelations remain insufficiently understood. This study investigates correlations among these determinants to inform future research on addressing PE teachers' burnout experiences. A total of 74 PE teachers (Mage = 42.06 years, SDage = 11.73; 53.4% female, 2 participants did not specify gender) responded to a cross-sectional online questionnaire using validated psychometric instruments. Socio-demographic (e.g., gender, primary or secondary school type, professional experience), psychosocial (e.g., positive and negative affect), and health-related determinants (physical activity frequency and duration, perceived importance of sport) were assessed. Job vitality and burnout served as dependent variables. One-way ANOVAs indicated significantly higher self-reported burnout in men ($F(2, 71) = 3.91$, $p = .025$, $\eta^2 = .10$), with no association between school type and burnout. Professional experience correlated with lower burnout ($\rho = -.218$, $p = .015$). Health-related determinants showed no significant associations with burnout, potentially due to ceiling effects. As a psychosocial determinant, a more positive affect ratio correlated with lower burnout ($\rho = -.420$, $p < .001$). These findings suggest that positive affect at work may represent a promising target for burnout-related interventions, particularly among male or less experienced PE teachers. However, the cross-sectional design limits practical recommendations, highlighting the need for future intervention studies.

ID: 433 / **Poster Session 4: 30**
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement, Neuroscience
Keywords: motor control, cognitive representation, movement kinematics, action segmentation

A Motor–Cognitive Signature of Skilled Object Manipulation: Linking Action Structure to Movement Efficiency

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Skilled action depends not only on movement quality but also on how complex behavior is organized into meaningful functional steps. For everyday goal-directed actions, kinematic measures capture execution but often miss this structure. We propose a motor-cognitive signature that integrates action organization and motor execution during a naturalistic object-manipulation task. Healthy adults performed a standardized pour-to-drink task while hand kinematics were recorded with motion capture. Each trial was represented as a sequence of 17 Basic Action Concepts (BACs), corresponding to functional action steps, and was labelled frame-by-frame using an automated classifier. From labelled trials, we derived a compact signature comprising organizational features (transition structure, deviation from a canonical BAC chain, dwell distribution) and execution features (movement versus idle time, BAC-specific durations, mean speed). Cognitive organization was assessed with Structural Dimensional Analysis of Motorics (SDA-M), yielding BAC clusters and cognitive distances between adjacent steps. Results showed a highly stable group sequence across trials, indicating robust action organization. In contrast, execution features varied systematically across BACs: movement time and mean speed differentiated major functional phases such as reaching/transport, pouring, and drinking. Transitions spanning larger cognitive distances were associated with clearer kinematic boundaries, reflected in temporal reorganization and speed changes at phase transitions, particularly around demanding steps such as drinking/swallowing. These findings suggest that skilled action preserves a stable cognitive structure while varying in its temporal and kinematic realization. The proposed signature may support interpretable profiling of motor control, assessment of functional impairment, and future comparisons across skill levels and between clinical populations.

ID: 442 / **Poster Session 4: 31**
Poster presentation

Topics: Cultural sport psychology, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Moral action, Self
Keywords: Martial Arts, Combat Sports, Phenomenology, Personal change

Becoming a Fighter: Phenomenological Dimensions of Personal Development in Beginner Martial Arts and Combat Sports Practitioners

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This study aimed to identify and understand how beginner practitioners of Martial Arts and Combat Sports (MA&CS) experience personal change through disruptive events (i.e., perceived loss or near loss of self-control during combat practice). The research followed an empirical-phenomenological approach grounded in international investigations on bodily combat (Barreira et al., 2025). Seventeen interviews with beginners were purposively selected from a database of 157 interviews conducted in Brazil and Spain. Data were collected through phenomenological interviews and analyzed using suspensive listening and intentional crossing, treating reports as experiential variations to identify structural characteristics of the phenomenon. Results were organized into three interdependent descriptive dimensions. The psychic dimension concerns the inherent pressure of facing resistance from an opponent. The moral-relational dimension refers to the emergence of a combative moral orientation, including respect, self-control, and responsibility toward the partner-opponent. The bodily-technical dimension involves the incorporation of techniques and the development of sensitive mastery of the body in action. Personal change was revealed as the progressive acquisition of the capacity to fight, in which the practitioner's experiential position—psychic, moral-relational, and bodily-technical—became increasingly oriented toward fighting. This approach allowed access to the intersubjective phenomenological profile of the fighter, highlighting how the relationship with the opponent and practice itself is mediated through corporeality. Competition emerged as an intensification of this tension, differentiating trajectories of practitioners engaged in tournaments from those practicing for leisure. Engagement in fighting reconfigured relational positioning, yielding embodied changes in how opposition was inhabited, with implications for practical training design and partner-opponent ethics.

ID: 458 / Poster Session 4: 32
Poster presentation
Topics: Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: Dual-career stress, Dual-career satisfaction, Well-being, Gender

Gender, Type of Sport, and Level of Competition Impact Dual-Career Satisfaction, Stress, and General Well-Being

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Dual career (DC) entails the combination of sport with education or work. Engaging in a DC has considerable benefits for student-athletes. Nevertheless, evidence suggests that DC can be highly demanding and challenging for student-athletes' well-being and in some cases enhances stress. This study aims to analyse the differences by gender, type of sport, and level of competition on DC satisfaction, DC stress, and general well-being of Italian student-athletes. A sample of 399 Italian student-athletes (women=196; men=203; Mage=21.92, SD=3.41) practicing individual (n=198) and team sports (n=201) at amateur (n=124), sub-elite (n=122) and elite (n=153) level completed an online survey that assessed DC satisfaction, DC motivation, DC competencies, and well-being. ANCOVA was run to determine the effects of gender, type of sport and level of competition on DC satisfaction, DC stress, and well-being using sport experience as covariate. Women student-athletes reported higher levels of stress (academic, sport, and general) if compared with men counterparts ($p < .01$). ANCOVA results showed that women student-athletes practicing individual sports at elite level reported the higher level of DC satisfaction ($p < .05$) and the higher level of well-being ($p < .01$) while women student-athletes practicing team sports at elite level reported the higher level of DC stress ($p < .01$) and lowest of well-being ($p < .01$). This study confirms that gender is worth to be considered as a key variable when studying DC satisfaction, DC stress, and general well-being of student-athletes, indicating in particular that being woman represents a condition of greater challenge. To foster DC satisfaction and well-being and to reduce DC stress a tailored and holistic approach is needed.

ID: 462 / Poster Session 4: 33
Poster presentation
Topics: Elite sports and expertise
Keywords: Mental Workload, NASA-TLX, Athletes, Sport Qualification

Mental Workload, Perfectionism, and Burnout in Sport

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Mental workload in sport can generally be defined as a dynamic construct arising from the interaction between task complexity and individual resources. Despite its significant role in athletes' preparation and performance, it remains a relatively underexplored area of research, both theoretically and empirically. The present study examined mental workload among athletes of different competitive levels and its relationship with perfectionism and burnout. Participants were 156 athletes divided into three groups: international-level, national-level, and recreational athletes.

All participants provided informed consent. The methodology utilized the NASA Task Load Index (NASA-TLX; Hart & Staveland, 1988), the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (Frost-MPS; Frost et al., 1990), and the Athlete Burnout Questionnaire (ABQ; Raedeke & Smith, 2001). Results revealed differences in the expression of workload components depending on qualification level and sport type. Significant correlations were found between mental workload, perfectionism, and burnout. Emotional exhaustion emerged as a strong predictor of mental workload. Elite athletes demonstrated higher levels of adaptive perfectionism and lower levels of burnout components and maladaptive perfectionism. A significant influence of parental factors on competitive behavior was also identified, particularly regarding parental criticism and expectations. These findings highlight the need for a further differentiated approach to the analysis and management of mental workload, considering both sport-specific demands and the athlete's developmental stage.

ID: 492 / **Poster Session 4: 34**
Poster presentation
Topics: Emotion, Esports, Health, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: tilt, toxic behaviour, internet gaming disorder, esports

Tilt and Toxic Behaviour in Esports: Associations With Internet Gaming Disorder

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The rapid expansion of esports has introduced unique psychological challenges, such as 'tilt' and toxic behaviors, which have become normalized within the gaming culture (Beres et al., 2021, 2023). Within Person-Affect-Cognition-Execution (I-PACE) model (Brand et al., 2016, 2019), tilt can be conceptualized as a loss of emotional and cognitive control that may trigger toxic behaviours during gameplay and, thus, influencing the development of Internet Gaming Disorder (IGD) (Donner, 2024; Türkay et al., 2020). Despite the prevalence of these behaviors, their specific role as precursors or correlates of IGD is poorly understood, hindering the development of targeted prevention strategies. A total of 756 esports players (67.5% men; Mean age = 28.84, SD = 8.84; Average gaming hours per day = 3.55, SD = 2.40) completed an online survey including the TILT Questionnaire (Bonilla et al., 2024), the Gaming Toxicity Scale (Díaz-Moreno et al., 2025), and the IGD Scale-Short Form. A logistic regression analysis was conducted to identify predictors of IGD risk. Logistic regression indicated that consequences of tilt (OR = 1.056; 95% CI: 1.017–1.097) and perpetration of toxic behaviors (OR = 1.080; 95% CI: 1.044–1.117) significantly increased the likelihood of IGD. Conversely, identifying the causes of tilt emerged as a protective factor (OR = 0.928; 95% CI: 0.880–0.978). The direct link between emotional dysregulation (tilt) and IGD risk underscore the need for the development of psychoeducational interventions. These programs should train players in metacognitive awareness and adaptive coping to prevent the escalation from competitive frustration to disordered gaming habits and toxic behaviours towards other players.

ID: 501 / **Poster Session 4: 35**
Poster presentation
Topics: Group dynamics, Youth
Keywords: coach–athlete relationship quality, athlete satisfaction, youth sport, longitudinal SEM

Temporal Stability and Predictive Validity of the Romanian CART-Q in Youth Sport: Links to Athlete Satisfaction and Engagement

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Coach–athlete relationship quality is a key interpersonal resource in youth sport and may shape athletes' satisfaction and engagement. Guided by the integrated model of the coach–athlete relationship (closeness, commitment, complementarity; Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007), the present study (Sub-study 2 of a larger doctoral project) examines (a) short-term stability of the Romanian Coach–Athlete Relationship Questionnaire (CART-Q; direct and meta-perspective; Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2003), (b) direct–meta agreement, and (c) prospective associations between relationship quality, athlete satisfaction, and athlete engagement. Youth athletes aged 13–18 years from team and individual sports will be assessed during the competitive period at two time points (~ 4 weeks apart; anticipated N at T2 ≥ 180, ensuring adequate statistical power for the planned analyses). Participants will complete the Romanian CART-Q, the ASQ (Riemer & Chelladurai, 1998), the Athlete Engagement Questionnaire (AEQ), and a single-item measure of perceived performance. Longitudinal analyses will estimate reliability, mean-level stability, test–retest associations, direct–meta correspondence, and concurrent correlations. Prospective relations will be examined via cross-lagged panel modeling within SEM, accounting for autoregressive effects. We expect good internal consistency ($\omega > .80$), moderate-to-strong short-term stability ($r \approx .55–.75$, $p < .05$), and substantial direct–meta correspondence, especially for commitment and overall relationship quality. We anticipate small-to-moderate prospective effects from T1 relationship quality to T2 satisfaction and engagement ($\beta \approx .15–.30$, $p < .05$). If supported, findings will provide initial longitudinal evidence for the temporal robustness and predictive utility of the Romanian CART-Q in youth sport and support relationship-focused monitoring and interventions to enhance athlete satisfaction and engagement.

ID: 521 / **Poster Session 4: 36**
Poster presentation

Topics: Motivation, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: psychological intervention, motivation, Canton Giraffe, physical condition

Motivational Psychological Intervention With "The Giraffe of Canton" to Increase Physical Fitness (Flexibility)

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A single case study is presented, using the motivational psychological intervention method established in the "Canton Giraffe" model, developed from a coaching approach and applied to a 21-year-old female student whose goal was to improve her physical condition, especially her flexibility. She had been considering this for some time but was unable to put it into practice. The program in this model is metaphorically structured in four parts, with content based on scientific evidence in psychology: "Head" or objective; "Neck" or expectations/value; To quantitatively assess the changes in the pre-post period, the Ryff Psychological Well-being Questionnaire (adapted version from Diaz et al., 2006) and the Bassler and Schwarzer General Self-Efficacy Scale (adapted version from Sanjuan et al., 2000) were used. For the qualitative evaluation, the subject's verbalizations and a pre- and post-intervention table were used to gather data on the different parts of the model. The main objective of increasing self-confidence, self-image, and the ability to act autonomously was reinforced, in addition to the progress made toward that goal. These results are consistent with previous work using the "Canton Giraffe" model.

ID: 549 / Poster Session 4: 37
Poster presentation
Topics: Emotion, Mental skills training
Keywords: Coping Skills, Fencing, Anxiety, Emotional Regulation

Coping Skills and Emotional Regulation of Elite Level Young Fencers

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Fencing requires not only technical and physical skills, but also high levels of coping and psychological skills (Maurin et al., 2024; Roi & Bianchedi, 2008). This study aimed to examine the relationship between young fencers' coping skills, emotional regulation and anxiety levels. The sample included 147 female and male athletes, with average age, 16.8±4.96 years and average training experience of 7.16±4.89 years. Athletes' demographics, coping skills, and anxiety were assessed. Emotional regulation was assessed using the Emotional Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) (Gross & John, 2003), resilience with the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) (Connor & Davidson, 2003), coping with adversity, peaking under pressure, goalsetting ability and mental preparation, concentration, freedom from worry, confidence, and coachability with the Athlete Coping Skills Inventory-28 (ACSI-28) (Smith et al., 1995), flow with the Flow State Scale (FSS) (Jackson & Marsh, 1996), and anxiety with the Self-rating Anxiety Scale (SAS) (Zung, 1971). Coping skills included emotional regulation (M=46±8.51), resilience (M=67.3±11.4), flow ability (M=14.1±3.27), coping with adversity (M=10.4±2.06), peaking under pressure (M=9.26±2.73), goalsetting ability (M=11.1±2.25), concentration (M=11.4±2.47), freedom from worry (M=8.88±1.68), confidence (M=9.96±1.90), and coachability (M=12.9±2.08). Anxiety levels were measured (M=30.9±7.9). Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant negative relationship between anxiety and all coping skills ($p<0.001$), except emotional regulation ($p=0.481$) and confidence ($p=0.549$). Lower anxiety levels were associated with more developed coping skills, suggesting that psychological skills may act as a protective factor against anxiety and highlighting the importance of psychological skills training in fencing.

ID: 562 / Poster Session 4: 38
Poster presentation
Topics: Cognition, Exercise psychology, Physical activity, Youth
Keywords: Adolescents, Working memory, Cognitive load, fNIRS

The Effect of Acute Exercise with Different Cognitive Levels on Working Memory and Cerebral Blood Flow in Adolescents

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Cognitively engaging exercise facilitates working memory (WM) in adolescents (Fabian Herold et al., 2018), yet research often lacks precise intensity control and neurophysiological responses for cognitive load (Lauenroth et al., 2016). Grounded in Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), this study investigated the acute effects of exercise with varying cognitive levels on WM and prefrontal hemodynamics. Nineteen typical seventh-grade adolescents from the junior high school participated in a within-subject design consisting of three conditions: control (CON, sedentary video viewing), exercise (EX, 8 km/h moderate-intensity treadmill running; RPE 3–5 on the Borg CR10 scale), and CPCT (running while performing a visuospatial memory task). WM was assessed via the Corsi Block-Tapping Test pre- and post-intervention, while functional near-infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS) monitored prefrontal regions (FPA, DLPFC, VLPFC). Trend analysis revealed a significant linear improvement in WM accuracy change scores (CON< EX < CPCT, $p = .030$), suggesting that acute motor-cognitive challenges effectively prime the executive network rather than inducing premature fatigue. Hemodynamically, oxyhemoglobin (HbO) in the right FPA decreased linearly with increasing load. deoxyhemoglobin (HbR) in the right VLPFC was significantly lower in CPCT than in EX ($p < .05$), indicating increased local oxygen utilization reflecting specialized metabolic demands for inhibitory control and attention during dual-task processing. Results suggested that CPCT yields greater advantages in WM performance.

Moreover, these benefits are supported by reduced resource consumption in non-essential regions (FPA) and focused allocation of metabolic resources to key areas associated with inhibitory control (r-VLPFC).

ID: 567 / **Poster Session 4: 39**
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Group dynamics, Leadership, Social psychology
Keywords: training and instruction, democratic behavior, authoritarian behavior

Influence of External Factors on the Leadership Style of Football Coaches

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The coach's leadership style results from the continuous interaction between personal characteristics and the external environment. The objective of this study was to examine the characteristics of external factors and leadership styles among football coaches, based on age, professional experience, and qualifications, and to analyze the interdependencies among these variables. The research was conducted among 117 male football coaches aged 27 to 63 years (M age = 46.1). The instruments used were the Leadership Scale for Sport (LSS) and a Questionnaire developed specifically to examine the influence of external factors on coaching activity: family and personal life; athletes' families and inner circles; media and social media; club management; fans and spectators; player and coach agents; coaching community. Results indicated that younger coaches reported a stronger influence from all examined external factors compared to older coaches. The coaching community emerged as the most significant influence across all groups, regardless of age, experience, or qualifications. Regression analysis demonstrated that greater reliance on athletes' families and relatives was associated with a democratic leadership style ($\beta = .437$, $p < .01$). In contrast, the coach's family and personal life ($\beta = .599$, $p < .01$) and club management ($\beta = .373$, $p < .01$) were positively associated with authoritarian behavior. Additionally, athletes' families and relatives showed a negative association with the authoritarian style ($\beta = -.325$, $p < .01$). The findings confirm that external factors significantly influence coaches' preferred leadership styles, which are crucial for effective team building and athletic performance.

ID: 568 / **Poster Session 4: 40**
Poster presentation
Topics: Personality
Keywords: combat sports, gender, personality, aggression

Sex-Related Differences in Aggressiveness Among Competitive Judo Athletes and Age-Matched Untrained Persons

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This study examined differences in aggressiveness between adult women and men who practice judo and those who do not. The aim was descriptive, focusing on group comparisons rather than causal inference. The sample included 280 adults, with 70 participants in each of four groups: judo-training men, judo-training women, non-training control men, and non-training control women. Aggressiveness was assessed using seven subscales of the Polish adaptation of the Buss–Durkee Aggression Questionnaire (1972). Because several variables did not meet normality assumptions, differences between groups and aggression components were analyzed using ANOVA followed by the Newman–Keuls post-hoc test. Relationships between variables within groups were examined using Spearman's rho. Effect sizes were not reported in the original analyses and should be incorporated in future work. Men in both the judo and control groups demonstrated higher aggressiveness scores than women from the corresponding groups. Significant sex differences were found in Physical Aggressiveness (PA)—Control Male > Control Female; Judo Male > Judo Female; Judo Female > Control Female—and in Indirect Aggressiveness (IA)—Judo Male < Judo Female; Judo Female > Control Female. No significant differences between groups were observed for Verbal Aggressiveness (VA), Negativism (Ng), Suspiciousness (Su), or Resentment (Re). Across both training and non-training conditions, men exhibited higher aggressiveness than women. Female judo practitioners showed higher aggressiveness than non-practitioners; however, this pattern should not be interpreted causally. It may reflect characteristics associated with judo training or pre-existing traits that lead more aggressive women to choose this sport. Given the cross-sectional and correlational design, causal conclusions cannot be drawn.

ID: 595 / **Poster Session 4: 41**
Poster presentation
Topics: Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Performance enhancement (doping, neuro-enhancement etc.), Psychotherapeutic approaches (e.g. psychodinamic, systemic)
Keywords: head-mounted display, virtual reality, mental fatigue, recovery

Immersive Virtual Nature Exposure and Recovery of Decision-Making Performance in Mentally Fatigued Soccer Players

Yujiro Kawata[1,2,3], Kyohei Mikajiri[2], Takeshi Hibi[1], Miyuki Nakamura[1], Kazusa Oki[4], Haruka Kadoya[5], Yuka Murofushi[1,2], Tsuneyoshi Ota[1,2,3]

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Soccer players are required to sustain high levels of attention and make rapid, accurate decisions over extended periods of play. Mental fatigue, which accumulates under such cognitive demands, can impair decision-making performance, highlighting the need for effective recovery strategies. This study aimed to examine whether immersive nature exposure delivered via a head-mounted display (HMD) improves decision-making performance in mentally fatigued soccer players. Forty male collegiate soccer players were randomly assigned to one of three groups: a VR-based nature exposure group, a monitor-based nature exposure group, or a seated rest control group. Mental fatigue was induced using a 30-minute Stroop task, followed by a 12-minute and 30-second intervention corresponding to each condition. Before and after the intervention, accuracy and reaction times for the decision-making task predicting dribble direction, subjective fatigue levels, emotional states, and heart rate variability (HRV) were measured. Decision-making accuracy significantly decreased following the Stroop task in all groups, confirming successful induction of mental fatigue. Following the intervention, a significant improvement in decision-making accuracy was observed only in the VR-based nature exposure group. This group also exhibited reduced subjective fatigue, increased positive affect, decreased negative affect, and a lower LF/HF ratio of HRV, indicating a shift toward parasympathetic autonomic dominance. Immersive VR-based nature exposure delivered via an HMD effectively improved decision-making performance impaired by mental fatigue in soccer players. These findings suggest that VR-based nature exposure may serve as a practical and time-efficient recovery strategy for attenuating mental fatigue-related decrements in cognitive performance in soccer.

ID: 612 / Poster Session 4: 42
Poster presentation
Topics: Best practice, Health, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: physical activity intervention; Self Determination theory, trauma-informed practices; gender-sensitive approach

Implementing Sport and Exercise Programmes for Female Asylum Seekers in a Refugee Camp

Konstantinia Filippou[1], Florian Knappe[2], Antonis Hatzigeorgiadis[1], Ioannis D. Morres[3], Markus Gerber[2], Yannis Theodorakis[1]

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Asylum-seeking women display a high prevalence of mental disorders compared to the typical population and asylum-seeking men. Physical activity has been globally recognized as an effective treatment to improve mental health; yet, access and motivation for asylum-seeking women are limited. This presentation describes the implementation of a physical activity programme for asylum-seeking women. The intervention took place in a camp in Greece. Thirty-eight women participated in sport and exercise activities, offered 5 days per week for 10 weeks. Activities were exclusive for women who were advised to attend the session as frequently as possible and at least twice per week. Attendance was recorded over the 10-week period. The implementation of the programme was based on the tenets of Self-Determination Theory, for the satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In parallel, trauma-informed and gender-sensitive practices were considered to avoid participants' re-traumatization and account for gender-cultural particularities. Attendance recordings showed comparable participation and mental health outcomes for women and men (who participated in a parallel programme). Women participating in the activities at least twice per week on average showed considerable improvement in post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms and acknowledged their comfort and satisfaction from their participation. Investment in physical activity programs is a relatively low-cost mental health service and may reduce the long-term burden of mental health. Policymakers and humanitarian organizations should formally recognize structured physical activity as part of mental health and psychosocial support frameworks in refugee camps upon the arrival of the individuals.

ID: 618 / Poster Session 4: 43
Poster presentation
Topics: Coaching, Leadership, Motivation
Keywords: Perfectionistic climate, coach, motivation, emotion

Effect of Perfectionistic Climate on Athletes' Emotion and Motivation Outcomes: Mediating Role of Irrational Performance Beliefs

Sergen Yücel[1], İhsan Sarı[2]

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Perfectionistic climate in sport created by coach is a relatively new concept (Grugan et al., 2021) and its impact as an external factor on athletes remains largely unknown (Meng et al., 2024). Therefore, this study aims to investigate the predictive role of perfectionistic climate on athletes' motivation, emotions and intentions to continue sport participation and to determine the mediating effect of athletes' irrational performance beliefs. The sample consisted of 404 athletes from a variety of team and individual sports. Data were collected using Perfectionistic Climate

Questionnaire-Sport (Grugan et al., 2021), Irrational Performance Beliefs Inventory (Turner et al., 2016), Sport Motivation Scale II (Pelletier et al., 2013), Sport Emotion Questionnaire (Jones et al., 2015) and items measuring the intention to continue sport (Alvarez et al., 2012). Descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis, reliability analysis and path analysis were conducted using SPSS 27 and R statistical software. Model fit was evaluated using CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR indices. Findings regarding direct relationships revealed that perfectionistic climate significantly predicted irrational performance beliefs (β=0.30, p<0.01) while irrational performance beliefs were significantly associated with controlled motivation (β=0.48, p<0.01) positive emotions (β=-0.14, p<0.01) and negative emotions (β=0.40, p<0.01). Mediation analyses indicated that perfectionistic climate indirectly influenced controlled motivation (β=0.15, p<0.05), negative emotions (β=0.12, p<0.05) and positive emotions (β=-0.04, p<0.05) through irrational performance beliefs. The results highlight the significant role of the coach-created perfectionistic climate in shaping athletes' motivation and emotions and emphasize the mediating role of athletes' irrational performance beliefs in these relationships.

ID: 680 / **Poster Session 4: 44**
Poster presentation
Topics: Mental skills training, Neuroscience, Perception & attention, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19)
Keywords: Soccer, Technology, Interoception, Neurofeedback

Impact of Individual Differences on Receptiveness to Neurofeedback Related to Motor Imagery

Arfa Mubeen[1], Johanna Glaaser[1], Michael Avola[1], Allison Cox[1], Anjali Kapadia[1], Edgar Mora[1], Elita Odartei[1], Keanu Parsa[1], Yoax Zamir[2], Konstantin Sonkin[2], Brady S. DeCouto[1]
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Neurofeedback is used in sport to facilitate regulation of brain activity to improve mental performance. Since neurofeedback requires self-regulation of brain activity, individual differences in self-regulation may influence the effectiveness of neurofeedback interventions. In this pilot study, we examined how technological dispositions and interoception impact performance in a neurofeedback platform. Participants (N = 19, M Age = 21.26 +_2.42) with soccer experience completed the Technology Readiness Index, Multidimensional Assessment of Interoceptive Awareness, and Locus of Control Scale. Participants performed in a soccer brain-computer interface (i-BrainTech) that measures sensorimotor activity related to motor imagery, which is linked with an avatar's kicking performance. Alpha power was extracted from central electrodes, since alpha desynchronization (i.e., increased motor activation) is related to motor imagery and the avatar's kick power. Kendall's tau correlations were conducted between alpha power/avatar performance and individual differences. Alpha power was significantly correlated with innovativeness (r = .414, p = .029) and bodily trust (r = -0.379, p = 0.049). Participants who perceive that they keep up with technological advances showed less motor activation, and those who experience interoceptive signals as trustworthy had increased motor activation. Locus of Control and avatar performance yielded no significant correlations. Results suggest technology-savvy individuals might struggle with motor activation due to more engagement with the novel system features than self-regulation, whereas those with high interoceptive awareness might be more receptive to neurofeedback for self-regulation. Data on other brain regions could help understand attentional mechanisms according to individual differences.

ID: 695 / **Poster Session 4: 45**
Poster presentation
Topics: Leadership, Personality
Keywords: Football Players, Leadership Power Perception, Big-Five Personality Traits, Level of Football

Sport Leadership Power Perceptions of Football Players in Relation to Big-Five Personality Traits

Erkut Konter
İstanbul Gelişim University, Turkey (Türkiye)

There is a limited knowledge about Sport Leadership Power Perceptions of football players in relation to their Big-Five Personality Traits. Therefore, purpose of this study was to research Sport Leadership Power Perceptions (Reward Power, Coercive Power, Legitimate Power, Expert Power, and Referent Power) of football players in relation to their Big-Five Personality Traits (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness). Data will be collected from professional and amateur soccer players. Participants will be administered Sport Leadership Power Perceptions Scale/SLPPS (Konter, 2017; Konter & Aksoy, 2012) and the Turkish Adjective Based Personality Test measuring the Big-five Personality (Bacanlı, İlhan & Aslan, 2009) with the personal information form. Collected data will be analyzed by mix methods including qualitative and quantitative analyses including descriptive data. Results, discussions and related future suggestions will be given based on findings, literature.

ID: 473 / **Poster Session 4: 46**
Poster presentation
Topics: Clinical sport psychology, Personality, Psychotherapeutic approaches (e.g. psychodinamic, systemic)

Keywords: Athletic Apperception Technique, projective method, applied sport psychology, psychodynamic approach

Exploring a Sport-Focused Projective Assessment Tool: A Pilot Study of the Athlete Apperception Technique (AAT)

Noémi Gyömbér, Hajnalka Eszter Selmeci
Hungarian University of Sport Sciences, Hungary

Projective methods provide insight into athletes' subconscious conflicts and motivations, offering a depth often unreachable by self-report scales. This study represents the first application of the Athletic Apperception Technique (AAT; Gibbs et al., 2016) within the Hungarian sport science context and aims to evaluate its potential for psychodiagnostics and counseling. A pilot study was conducted using the ten core AAT images with eleven Hungarian athletes (six female, five male) representing team sports (e.g., ice hockey, handball, basketball) at the national competitive level. Narratives were analyzed via theory-driven content analysis grounded in Murray's Need-Press Theory to identify manifest and latent thematic elements. While all images elicited at least two manifest themes, five images failed to trigger expected themes, suggesting potential cultural or contextual misalignments. However, two images prompted narratives more closely aligned with latent than manifest content, indicating the tool's capacity for deep interpretive engagement. A notable strength of the AAT is its ability to bypass social desirability, although a limitation is the lack of standardized Hungarian norms for the specific themes identified. Although the absence of expected themes in half of the images suggests a need for further cultural adaptation, the AAT shows potential for use in applied sport psychology. Its projective nature may facilitate a nuanced understanding of internal conflicts, provided practitioners account for individual and cultural variations, and it may serve as a supplement to traditional assessments in developing more targeted psychological support frameworks.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Exercise Behavior vs. Sport Decisions: An Adversarial Collaboration and Open Discussion on Dual and System Process Models

Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 690 / Panel 6: 1
Panel discussion

Exercise Behavior vs. Sport Decisions: An Adversarial Collaboration and Open Discussion on Dual and System Process Models

Amanda Rebar[1], Markus Raab[2], Arne Nieuwenhuys[3], Pier-Eric Chamberland[4]
[1]University of South Carolina, United States of America; [2]Institute of Psychology, German Sport University Cologne; [3]University of Auckland: Auckland, NZ; [4]Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

Debates surrounding dual process models and their alternatives have persisted for decades and are increasingly relevant for exercise and sport contexts - so why stop now? This session advances that debate by directly contrasting leading frameworks within exercise behavior change and sport performance decision making to clarify where they converge, diverge, and generate distinct predictions. Amanda Rebar will open the session by outlining dual process frameworks in the context of exercise behavior change and habit maintenance. These models conceptualize behavior as emerging from interactions between reflective (deliberative, intention-based) and automatic (habitual, affect-driven) processes, often assuming that contextual cues trigger decision points by activating competing action tendencies. Markus Raab will present conceptual and empirical specifications of performance model processes in tactical decision making. Unlike classic two-systems accounts that posit qualitatively distinct and competing systems, this framework emphasizes dynamic interaction: the influence of top-down and bottom-up processes varies as a function of expertise, situational constraints, time pressure, and task complexity. As discussants, Arne Nieuwenhuys and Pier-Eric Chamberland will take up the key ideas presented by Rebar and Raab and address current theoretical and methodological challenges in both areas. They will consider whether interaction-based accounts represent a refinement of dual-process theories or a clear break from them, and discuss how different assumptions about what triggers behavior and how mental processes work together influence explanations of motivated action. In doing so, they will outline key open questions and future directions for advancing research in the field. The goal is to sharpen theoretical distinctions and generate testable predictions regarding exercise behavioral initiation and maintenance, as well as conditions under which performance is optimized in sport. There will be no official scoring system, so we reserve the right to each quietly declare victory, regardless of the outcome, in the name of scientific progress.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Enhancing Athletic Performance: An Integrated Framework for Mastering Breath, Muscle Tension, and Mental Imagery

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 715 / Workshop 41: 1
Workshop
Topics: Mental skills training
Keywords: breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, PETTLEP imagery

Enhancing Athletic Performance: An Integrated Framework for Mastering Breath, Muscle Tension, and Mental Imagery

Nektarios Stavrou
National & Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

In elite athletic performance, the ability to modulate an athlete's mental state under high-demanding conditions is a hallmark of performance mastery. The workshop, grounded in the latest developments in sport psychology, aims to present a holistic approach and intervention strategy designed to optimize an athlete's emotional state. The first part of the workshop focuses on breathing techniques, presenting the different types of diaphragmatic breathing ratios (e.g., 4-4, 4-8, 4-7-8), and when (before or during competition), how, and for what reason (relaxation, arousal

regulation) athletes should use them. The second part deals with progressive muscle relaxation (PMR). Through PMR, the athlete can “isolate” and release muscle tension, fostering heightened somatic awareness. This enables them to identify and eliminate "bracing", muscular tension that disrupts fluid movement and increases unnecessary energy expenditure and fatigue subsequently. The last part will include mental training, specifically focusing on the PETTLEP model of motor imagery. Participants will learn how to facilitate functional equivalence, in which mental rehearsal activates the same neural substrates as physical execution. Participants will learn to integrate environmental, sensory, and timing elements to create more vivid scripts. By integrating these three pillars, coaches and practitioners can create a robust psychological periodization plan that supports both peak performance and long-term athletic well-being.

Learning outcomes

• Emotional regulation: Ability to utilize specific breathing protocols during high-arousal competitive environments.

• Management of somatic anxiety symptoms: Implement PMR to reduce muscular tension and improve movement efficiency.

• Develop imagery ability: Use of mental training interventions

11:30am - 1:00pm

Oral Presentations 49: Elderly

Location: **A01**
Session Chair: **Selenia Di Fronso**

ID: 413 / Oral Presentations 49: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Elderly, Exercise psychology, Health, Physical activity
Keywords: working memory, cognitive challenge exercise, older adults, n-back task

The Effects of Chronic Cognitive Challenges Exercise on Working Memory in Older Adults

Yu-Ting Lo, Chang-Jing Liao, Yuan-Jun Deng, Chen Chang, Tsung-Min Hung
National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei, Taiwan

With global population aging, declines in working memory (WM) pose challenges to daily functioning of older adults (Diamond, 2013). Although cognitively challenging exercise has been proposed to mitigate such decline, evidence regarding the impact of exercise with different levels of cognitive demand remains limited. This study examined whether an 8-week exercise program with varying cognitive challenge levels would differentially influence WM performance in the elderly. Thirty-eight community-dwelling older adults (M = 79.2 ± 9.0 years) were assigned to either a high cognitive challenge exercise group (N = 12), low cognitive challenge exercise group (N = 11), or a control group (N = 15). Participants completed 16 exercise sessions over 8 weeks at light-to-moderate intensity. WM performance was assessed before and after the intervention using 1-back and 2-back tasks, with reaction time (RT), accuracy (ACC), and d prime (d’) as outcome measures. Contrary to our expectation, no significant differences were observed across three groups in RT, ACC, and d’ (all ps > .05) in either 1-back or 2-back tasks. One possible explanation is that the sample was relatively old, and WM decline may have limited training effects. Based on the present findings, future studies could benefit from precisely controlling exercise intensity at moderate-to-vigorous levels using heart rate monitor, in order to optimize the effects of exercise training on cognition. In addition, it remains necessary to determine whether the implemented intervention tasks elicited the intended level of cognitive demand during actual practice.

ID: 108 / Oral Presentations 49: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Elderly
Keywords: affect, exercise, older adults, training

Longitudinal Effects of Light Exercise in Older Adults: Affective Changes Based on the Circumplex Model

Attila Szabo[1], Róbert Járai[1], Eliza Tóth[2], Ferenc Ihász[1]
[1]Széchenyi István University, Győr, Hungary; [2]Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

Regular physical activity supports healthy aging. However, changes in responses to a prolonged, specifically designed light exercise program for older adults remain insufficiently understood. Drawing on the circumplex model of affect, which defines core affect as the intersection of the momentary feeling state and felt arousal, this study investigated how group-based light exercise influences affective valence and activation (arousal) in older adults living in nursing homes. We studied 24 older adults aged 66–89 who participated in a 16-week, thrice weekly, light-intensity exercise program. Affective valence, assessed with the Feeling Scale, and felt arousal, measured with the Felt Arousal Scale, as well as heart rate, were measured immediately before and after each session; perceived exertion was assessed with the Borg scale after each exercise session. Acute and longitudinal changes were analyzed using linear mixed-effects models and affective vector analyses. The results indicated that all the exercise sessions produced significant acute improvements in both valence ($b = 0.575$, $p < .001$) and arousal ($b = 0.594$, $p < .001$). Vector analyses revealed consistent shifts toward more pleasant and moderately activated affective states. Over the 16 weeks, heart rate and perceived exertion decreased, indicating physiological adaptation, while affective gains remained stable. We conclude that a regular light physical exercise program boosted affective well-being and improved physiological efficiency among nursing home residents. Therefore, this study supports an associative relationship, but not a causal one, between valence, felt arousal (reflecting core affect in the circumplex model), and their directional changes from pre- to post-exercise.

ID: 389 / Oral Presentations 49: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Elderly, Exercise psychology, Health, Physical activity
Keywords: sustained attention, older adult, physical fitness, ex-Gaussian

The Association between Physical Fitness and Sustained Attention in Older Adults- An Ex-Gaussian Approach

Chen Chang, Yuan-Jun Deng, Chiung-Ling Chu, Chang-Jing Liao, Tsung-Min Hung
Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan

Sustained attention and physical fitness (PF) both play foundational roles in supporting cognition and daily functioning in older adults. However, the relationship between these two constructs remain inconsistent (Gongora-Meza et al., 2025). Moreover, the reaction time distribution is characterized by a Gaussian component with a exponential tail. Therefore, the present study applied ex-Gaussian parameters, mu (μ), sigma (σ) and tau (τ), to examine the associations between PF and distributional characteristics of reaction times. A preliminary sample of 42 older adults (Mage = 69.6 ± 9.8 years) participated in the study. Physical activity levels were assessed using International Physical Activity Questionnaire, and PF was evaluated with Senior Fitness Test (chair stand, arm curl, sit and reach, back scratch, 8-foot up and go, 2-minute step in place, grip strength). All participants completed a two-choice psychomotor vigilance task consisting of 225 trials prior to the fitness assessment. After controlling for age, physical activity level and years of education, no significant associations were observed between traditional metrics (mean RT, SD RT, ACC) and PF measures (all ps>.05). In contrast, the ex-Gaussian variability parameter (σ) was negatively associated with performance on 2-minute step in place ($\rho = -0.14$, $p = .03$), indicating that higher aerobic fitness was related to less variable sustained attentional performance. These findings highlight the importance of aerobic capacity in relation to the stability of sustained attention in older adults. Importantly, this association was evident when attentional performance was characterized using distributional measures of reaction time.

ID: 639 / Oral Presentations 49: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Elderly, Health, Physical activity, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Health, Active aging, Physical activity, Orienteering

Orienteering as a Sport for Healthy Aging

Peter Gröpel
University of Vienna, Austria

Orienteering is an endurance-based sport that integrates sustained physical exertion with substantial cognitive demands. The aim is to complete a predefined course by navigating between specific control points using a map and compass. This combination of physical and cognitive engagement may make orienteering particularly well suited to promoting healthy aging (Östlund-Lagerström et al., 2015). We thus tested whether older aged orienteers (>50 years) exhibit better overall health status than their peers from the general population. 496 orienteers from 18 European countries completed a survey on mental and physical health. The items were adapted from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE; https://share-eric.eu) to enable comparison with data from the general European population (n > 50,000). To ensure meaningful comparability between groups, we applied stratified random sampling to the SHARE dataset, matching participants on gender, age, and physical activity level. Orienteers in our sample reported higher life satisfaction and well-being, and a lower prevalence of depressive symptoms, compared with their peers from the general population. They also showed a significantly lower prevalence of 13 of the 18 chronic diseases assessed, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and osteoporosis. After adjusting for overall physical activity levels, the differences remained significant for 10 chronic conditions. These findings show that the health benefits associated with orienteering extend beyond those attributable to physical activity alone, indicating that orienteering may represent a particularly health-promoting sport.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Navigating the Professional Careers of Women in Sports

Location: **A02**

ID: 422 / Symposium 31: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Transitions in and out of sport/dual career, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: women, gender equality, career development, transitions

Navigating the Professional Careers of Women in Sports

Marta Borrueco[1,2], Cristina López de Subijana[3], Marta Perarnau[4], Alessia Pecchini[5], Milla Saarinen[6]
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Despite reaching historical milestones in participation (IOC, 2024), the sporting context persists as a gendered landscape where professional structures and cultural expectations are predominantly modelled after men experiences. This hegemony establishes an androcentric “universal” standard (Coakley, 2017), which can create

systemic barriers for the sustainable career development of women in sport. To address these complexities, this symposium integrates four diverse research projects from three countries with the purpose of highlighting women's experiences within the sports context and how they might influence their career development and mental health. The first presentation examines whether perceived support, life skills developed through sport, and athletic identity explain sport career satisfaction and well-being. The second presentation provides insights into the prevalence of mental health symptoms in professional women football players in Spain. The third presentation focuses on the role of the technical staff and analyses the consequences of the transition to professionalism in women's Italian rugby. The last presentation explores how young aspiring women leaders in Norway and France envision their future careers through "dream day" narratives. The symposium will finish with a discussion on how the sports environment can support the development of women's healthy and sustainable professional careers (e.g., as athletes, as leaders).

11:30am - 1:00pm

Oral Presentations 48: Violence, Safeguarding

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Tanja Kajtna**

ID: 403 / Oral Presentations 48: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Violence
Keywords: Maltreatment, Abuse, High performance coaching, Psychological Safety

Coaches' Lived Experiences of Psychological Safety as they Support Safeguarding in a High Performance Environment

Anya Guinzbourg, Ashley Stirling
University of Toronto, Canada

Research on maltreatment in sport has predominantly centred on athletes' experiences, with coaches frequently implicated as primary perpetrators of harm (Willson et al., 2021). Consequently, safeguarding initiatives targeting coach behaviour have positioned coaches in a dual role as both potential sources of harm and key agents responsible for protecting athletes (Bennett et al., 2023; Tam et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2014). Given that a coach's psychological state influences their ability to foster safe environments for athletes (Stebbings et al., 2012), this study explored coaches' lived experiences of psychological safety within their work environments and how these experiences shape their capacity to support safeguarding. Situated within a constructivist paradigm, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was employed to examine how coaches make sense of supporting safeguarding within high-performance sport through the lens of psychological safety (Smith et al., 2022). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six nationally certified figure skating coaches. The coaches ranged from 32 to 61 years of age, and consisted of three women, and three men. Findings are interpreted to suggest four interrelated themes: (1) shifting perceptions of acceptable coaching behaviour generated apprehension; (2) heightened vigilance and compliance with safeguarding guidelines were adopted to protect professional reputations; (3) opaque safeguarding investigations fostered fear and inhibited open dialogue; and (4) coaches experienced psychological safety when discussing safeguarding concerns within trusted relationships. Collectively, these findings highlight opportunities to strengthen safeguarding initiatives in ways that better support coach engagement and positive behavioural change in advancing safer sport.

ID: 220 / Oral Presentations 48: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Elite sports and expertise, Violence, Youth
Keywords: Safe Sport, Youth Voice, Children's Rights, Creative Methods

Representing and Elevating Child (Athlete) Voice in the Safe Sport Discourse

Ellie Gennings[1], Emma Kavanagh[2]
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Safe sport is grounded in the principle that everyone involved in sport has the right to participate in environments that are safe, inclusive, and enjoyable (Mountjoy et al., 2022). Definitions and models of safe sport provide an important foundation for this work by offering conceptual clarity, establishing a shared language, and informing policy and practice. To date, contributions to the field (e.g. Gurgis et al., 2023; Tuakli-Wosornu et al., 2024) are almost exclusively informed by adult perspectives and thus reflect adult-defined priorities. Despite children's recognised participatory rights (UNCRC 1989), the perspectives of athletes under 18 years old remain absent from understandings of safe sport. A Community of Philosophical Enquiry was used to understand the experiences of 44 participants aged 15-18 in relation to feeling safe in sport. This novel approach included democratic, participant-led group discussion, with the researcher acting as a facilitator, in response to questions generated by the young athletes themselves (Love & Randall, 2023). Participants articulated clear understandings of when and how they feel safe in sport. Findings emphasise the role of relational factors, alongside a persistent sense of insecurity generated by elite sport systems. This insecurity reflects the dynamic and temporal nature of safety in sporting environments, which is often contingent upon unstable conditions such as selection status and freedom from injury. The findings underscore the importance of creative and participatory methodologies for centring young people's perspectives in the development of safe sport environments, while recognising the temporally contingent nature of safety within high-performance sport.

ID: 596 / **Oral Presentations 48: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Violence, Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: Interpersonal violence, Safeguarding

Building Safer Environments in Combat Sports and Martial Arts: a tailored Safeguarding Code

Helena Verhelle, Renata Soares Ramos Falcão, Cleo Schyvinck
Thomas More, Belgium

Interpersonal violence remains a central focus of safeguarding discussions in sport. Combat sports and martial arts (CS&MA) presents unique safeguarding challenges and require a broader context-specific conceptualization of safeguarding. The Erasmus+ co-funded SAFE COMBAT project aims to develop Safeguarding Code tailored to the realities of CS&MA.

CS&MA is characterized by close physical contact, normalized aggression, structurally embedded weight management practices, and hierarchical structures (Avelar Rosa & Nery, 2021). While CS&MA may contribute to performance, discipline, and health benefits, they may lead to specific safeguarding vulnerabilities (Bu et al., 2010; Vertonghen & Theeboom, 2010).

A multi-method approach was applied to gain insights on the safeguarding context of CS&MA: 1) a literature review examining existing research and conceptual frameworks on safeguarding, 2) stakeholder focus groups (n=36) with athletes, coaches, parents and managers exploring perceptions of safeguarding and national frameworks and, 3) an online questionnaire among safeguarding officers (n=328) to mapping current practices.

Findings were translated into five core principles underpinning the Safeguarding Code: 1) fostering psychologically and physically safe sport environments, 2) identifying and responding to interpersonal violence, 3) embedding health and safety standards, incl. safe weight management practices and injury and concussion management, 4) systematic injury monitoring to support prevention and safe return to play, and 5) installing reporting mechanisms.

Strengthening the CS&MA context demands education of all members, alongside accessible support structures and reporting mechanisms. A subsequent step is to develop and implement a massive open online course based on the Safeguarding Code to support capacity building within CS&MA communities.

ID: 583 / **Oral Presentations 48: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Self, Sports psychology and World events (e.g. Covid-19)
Keywords: athletic identity, career development, wartime experiences, university athletes

Sport as Identity and Psychological Anchor: University Athletes' Experiences of Training and Career Development During War

Mariya Yukhymenko-Lescroart[1], Olena Voiedilova[2]
[1]California State University, Fresno, United States of America; [2]T. H. Shevchenko National University "Chernihiv Collehium," Ukraine

War disrupts not only national infrastructures but also athletes' training environments and future professional trajectories. Limited research examines how athletes make sense of sport participation and career development while living and training under wartime conditions. This gap is particularly salient for athletes whose future professions (e.g., coaching, teaching, sport-related fields) are directly grounded in continued sport engagement. This study examined how university athletes in Ukraine conceptualized sport participation and sport-related career development during ongoing war. Participants were 81 university athletes enrolled in physical education. Athletes submitted written responses to five narrative prompts administered across five weeks, reflecting on the meaning and evolution of their sports career, challenges and coping during wartime training, the role of sport in war, losses and supports for perseverance, and current opportunities for sport and professional development. Data were analyzed using reflective thematic analysis. Sport was consistently described as central to identity, discipline, and self-development, providing structure, direction, and continuity amid disrupted daily life. War-related constraints-including damaged infrastructure, limited facility access, canceled competitions, safety concerns, financial strain, and psychological burden-complicated training and long-term career planning. Sport functioned as a source of psychological stabilization, emotional regulation, and preservation of self. Despite losses, participants identified opportunities through education, skill diversification, online platforms, mentoring relationships, and engagement in coaching roles. Findings position sport as an integrated system through which athletic identity and career development are sustained despite structural disruption. Supporting adaptive pathways, relational networks, and continuity of meaning is critical for athletes' well-being and career development under prolonged instability.

ID: 481 / **Oral Presentations 48: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military), Violence
Keywords: psychological harm, dance instruction, safe dance

Dancers' Experiences of Psychological Harm: Understanding the Dancer-Instructor Relationship

Jenna Magrath, Ashley Stirling
University of Toronto, Canada

Recent studies have highlighted the psychological harm dancers have experienced from their dance instructors, including issues such as racial microaggressions, belittlement, humiliation, degradation, threats, intimidation, and shaming (Milne et al., 2023; Wensel et al., 2023). Dance instructors play a central role in shaping dancers' experiences and are pivotal in creating safe dance environments free from psychological harm (Moola & Krahn, 2018; Milne et al., 2023). Despite the significant impact of teaching practices on dancers' wellbeing, limited research has examined harmful dance teaching practices and their impact on dancers. The purpose of this study was to explore dancers' experiences of psychologically harmful teaching practices. Ethical approval was granted prior to study commencement, and participants provided informed consent. A qualitative approach within a constructivist paradigm was used. Seven university students self-identifying as women and currently participating in Western dance styles participated in semi-structured interviews (mean age: 22.1). Interview transcripts were analyzed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Smith et al., 2022). Findings highlight the critical relationship between dancers and their instructors, and their influence on overall self-perceptions and relationships with peers. Additionally, dancers discussed experiences with their teachers that can be described as psychological abuse, as well as behaviours that cause harm more generally. This research deepens our understanding of psychologically harmful teaching practices in dance, an area that has been overlooked in safe dance research. Study limitations, as well as practical recommendations for safeguarding dancers and suggestions for dance instructors that prioritize dancers' wellbeing to prevent future harm will be discussed.

11:30am - 1:00pm

From Performance Blocks to Personal Patterns: the Model of Sport-Psychotherapy by Sport and Soul Sport-Psychotherapy Association

Location: **A10**

ID: 664 / Workshop 38: 1
Workshop
Topics: Best practice, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Psychotherapeutic approaches (e.g. psychodinamic, systemic), Well-being and quality of life
Keywords: sport-psychotherapy, psychodynamic approach, therapeutic potential of sports

From Performance Blocks to Personal Patterns: the Model of Sport-Psychotherapy by Sport and Soul Sport-Psychotherapy Association

Krisztina Bóna[1], Dominik Sárkány[1,2]
[1]Sport and Soul Sport-Psychotherapy Association, Hungary; [2]Matthias Corvinus Collegium, Hungary

Applied sport psychology has traditionally emphasised evidence-based, skill-oriented interventions (self-talk, imagery, relaxation) to enhance performance (Weinberg & Gould, 2007). However, athletes often present with persistent performance blocks that do not respond fully to these techniques (Lochbaum et al., 2022), suggesting the influence of enduring relational and psychological patterns operating partly outside conscious awareness (Ferraro, 1999). Although psychodynamic approaches have had limited impact in mainstream sport psychology, broader psychological models recognise their value in understanding internal determinants of behaviour beyond observable skill deficits affecting performance (Conroy & Benjamin, 2001). Psychodynamic therapy provides a conceptual lens for formulating such patterns. The Sport and Soul Sport-Psychotherapy Association of Hungary was founded in response to the growing need for a more holistic, psychodynamically informed approach to human performance in sport systems (Goschi & Pálvölgyi, 2022; Goschi et al., 2024). The workshop presents a practice-based, psychodynamic-informed framework of sport-psychotherapy. Participants will learn to recognise when performance difficulties reflect deeper personal patterns, formulate these functionally, and translate insight into behavioural change within sport contexts. Objectives include identifying sport behaviours reflecting broader patterns, tracing developmental and relational underpinnings, supporting adaptive change, reintegrating new functioning into daily performance, and recognising the therapeutic potential of more conscious sport engagement. Methods include case demonstration, small-group work, and guided reflection. Participants will leave with a structured, ethically grounded process for integrating deeper case formulation into applied practice, demonstrating how psychodynamic insight complements traditional techniques and supports enduring behavioural change through reflective sport activity. A handout will be shared to aid reflection.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Oral Presentations 47: Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation

Location: **A11**
Session Chair: **John Coumbe-Lilley**

ID: 255 / Oral Presentations 47: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: longitudinal analysis, linear mixed models, knee surgery, injury rehabilitation

Coping With Post-Surgical Pain in ACL Rehab: A Daily Diary Approach to Understanding Strategy Use, Flexibility, and Pain Dynamics

Tabea Werner[1], Michèle Wessa[1,2,3], Britton W. Brewer[4], Allen E. Cornelius[5], Judy L. van Raalte[4]
[1]Central Institute of Mental Health, Department of Neuropsychology and Psychological Resilience Research, Mannheim, Germany; [2]DKFZ Hector Cancer Institute at the University Medical Center Mannheim, Germany; [3]German Cancer Research Center, Division of Cancer Survivorship and Psychological Resilience (C160), Heidelberg, Germany; [4]Springfield College, Department of Psychology, Springfield, Massachusetts, USA; [5]Fielding Graduate University, School of Psychology, Santa Barbara, California, USA

Anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) ruptures are one of the most common and debilitating sport-related knee injuries and are often treated with surgical reconstruction (Evans et al., 2025). Insight into the day-to-day coping dynamics of how individuals manage pain after ACL surgery remain scarce (Williams et al., 2020). Therefore, in a six-week daily diary study following ACL reconstruction, 91 participants rated their average pain level (Numerical Rating Scale;

0 - 10) and indicated which of eight different coping strategies they used each day. Although accepting pain emerged as the most frequently used coping strategy, participants varied considerably in the number of strategies they reported using, with an average usage of around three strategies per day and around six different strategies over the course of the study. As pain decreased, coping strategy usage declined as well. 26% of strategy combinations were unique. Participants changed around 20% of their strategies from one day to the next and deviated from their usual strategies about one-third of the time by using fewer usual strategies. Specific strategies (i.e., seeking emotional support, expressing emotions, and doing something else), usage of more coping strategies, and greater day-to-usual variability at the within-person level were significantly related to higher same day average pain reporting. Acceptance was the only predictor related to lower pain ratings. Lagged effects were not statistically significant. The results may reflect reactive coping attempts to manage increased distress due to pain, rather than protective effects or mechanisms that provide pain relief. Future studies examining causality are needed.

ID: 607 / Oral Presentations 47: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: Environments, Youth Athletes, Injuries

Demonstrating a Holistic Ecological Approach to Injury Prevention and Management in Youth Sport – A Single Case Study

Nicklas Balle Venzel[1], Merete Møller[1,2], Kristoffer Henriksen[1], Louise Kamuk Storm[1]
[1]University of Southern Denmark, Denmark; [2]Norwegian School of Sports Sciences, Norway

Traditionally, sport injuries have been studied at individual component level, with newer trends suggesting injuries as an outcome of complex interplays between the individual, physical surroundings, and social relation (Hulme & Finch, 2015; McLean et al., 2024). Thus, a complementary focus is needed (Truong et al., 2020). Based on a holistic ecological approach (Henriksen & Stambulova, 2023), the objectives if this study were to present a holistic ecological description of prevention and management of injuries in a Danish youth sport environment and examine factors that influence the environment's success in preventing and managing injuries. Designed as a single case study, we examined a Danish youth sport environment, were we observed activities related to injury prevention and management for 77 hours, interviewed key persons in the environment, and analyzed relevant documents. The analysis was based on a reflexive thematic analysis. The environment was characterized by coaches being the primary responsible for injury prevention and management. They coordinated with health care providers, and were in charge of sport specific training, strength training and load monitoring. The organizational culture of the environment was influenced by the sporting ethos, which influenced the environment's effectiveness in preventing and managing injuries. Injury prevention and management in youth sport is influenced by the environment. This study contributes to the existing literature in sports injuries, by giving a contextualized description of how the environment as a whole influence injury prevention and management in youth sport.

ID: 667 / Oral Presentations 47: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation
Keywords: sport injury, dyads, social support

The Storied Experiences of Tensions and Sacrifices within the Injured Athlete-Support Person Dyad

Francesca Principe, Gretchen Kerr
University of Toronto, Canada

Previous research has largely focused on the experiences of the individual injured athlete and has not fully considered how injuries impact the support networks of the injured athlete or explored the injured athlete-support person dyad (Arvinen-Barrow & Visek, 2024). The Multi-level Model of Sport Injury (Wadey et al., 2018) situates this study, as it includes the interpersonal level surrounding an injured athlete and the situational factors that affect them. The purpose of this study is to explore the injured athlete-support person dyad, the effects of injury on the support person, and the challenges support persons face in providing support to injured athletes. This study employs narrative inquiry and is situated in the constructivist paradigm. Ten university-level athletes (7 women, 3 men) from Canada and the United States who sustained a severe sport injury and returned to play (n=5), did not return to play (n=2), or are in the rehabilitation process (n=3) and their identified support person (teammate, roommate, friend, parent) engaged in separate narrative interviews via Zoom. Using thematic narrative analysis, multiple themes captured the tensions, sacrifices, support, and feelings of helplessness in the injured athlete-support person dyad. This presentation will focus on the unique contributions of the study, namely, stories of tensions and sacrifices, and the effects of the injury on the support person, which are largely understudied topics. These findings expand our understanding of the relationship between injured athletes and their support persons, as well as the resources they need to function better.

ID: 232 / Oral Presentations 47: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Meditation (e.g. mindfulness), Mental skills training, Sports injury, prevention and

rehabilitation
Keywords: Visualisation, Injury, Mental skills, Elite Athletes

A Phase-Based Imagery Intervention to Facilitate Return to Training in Injured Elite Wrestlers

Denisa Loes
Olympic Training Center Freiburg, Germany

This presentation describes an applied mental skills intervention using mental imagery to support elite female wrestlers returning to training after injury. The project is presented as a structured case study with two athletes from the Olympic Training Center Freiburg, Germany. The intervention aimed to provide a structured tool enabling athletes to continue meaningful mental training during an eight-month period of reduced physical activity while supporting psychological and technical readiness for return to sport. Following an initial instruction phase, athletes developed individualized imagery routines based on realistic and sport-specific scenarios. They completed 20-minute sessions 4–5 times per week, largely independently, and documented their practice and reflections. The program followed a systematic six-phase approach over a 24-week core period, progressing from emotional stabilization and injury acceptance through rebuilding body confidence and movement awareness, technique-specific imagery, emotional regulation under stress, preparation for controlled contact, and full performance readiness. At the time of reporting, athletes had reached the final phase of return to competition. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Athletes self-rated injury-related anxiety, confidence, and readiness to train using 1–10 scales before and after the intervention. Pre–post comparisons indicated reduced anxiety and increased confidence and readiness. Coaches reported improved movement confidence and smoother reintegration into full training. This phase-based, athlete-led imagery approach provides novel applied insights for combat sports and supports effective mental training during rehabilitation.

ID: 679 / Oral Presentations 47: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Mental skills training, Sports injury, prevention and rehabilitation, Any other topic
Keywords: Mirror therapy, mental training, Supracondylar humerus fractures

Motor-Cognitive Therapy Approaches in Pediatric Upper Extremity Fractures: A Single-Case Pilot Study

Marie Frenkel, Carolin Brod, Inga Gonzales-Blum
Hochschule Furtwangen University, Germany

Supracondylar humerus fractures (SCHF) are among the most common elbow injuries in children and often lead to functional limitations. Motor-cognitive therapy approaches such as mental training (MT) and mirror therapy have shown promising effects in neurological and individual orthopedic contexts but are scarcely studied in upper extremity fractures. This study aimed to describe the rehabilitation of a 12-year-old female patient after conservative treatment for SCHF and to explore the influence of a combined intervention. In addition to conventional physiotherapy, the patient received a 6-week combined intervention consisting of mental training (e.g., motor imagery of elbow movements) and mirror therapy (e.g., 15-minute daily sessions using a mirror box). Mobility, stiffness, surface sensitivity, pain, and function were assessed at seven measurement points using standardized instruments and questionnaires. Data were analyzed descriptively, and effect sizes were calculated. Surface sensitivity normalized completely during the observation period, whereas mobility, pain, and functional recovery remained incomplete until subsequent arthroscopic arthrolysis. Severe pain in the early phase limited the extent of the intervention. The results do not allow definitive conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the combined MT and mirror therapy on rehabilitation outcomes after SCHF. Nevertheless, the intervention proved feasible, well accepted, and easily integrated into therapy. Observed improvements are likely multifactorial and cannot be clearly separated from spontaneous healing, conventional physiotherapy, or surgical interventions. This single-case analysis provides valuable information on the feasibility, limitations, and potential application of motor-cognitive therapy in pediatric orthopedic patients and highlights the need for further controlled studies.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Expressive Art Therapy Practices in Applied Sport Psychology

Location: **A12**

ID: 249 / Symposium 30: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Best practice, Consulting/ counseling, Elite sports and expertise, Youth
Keywords: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Expressive Art Therapy

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Expressive Art Therapy Practices in Applied Sport Psychology

Stefano Mastino[1,2], Matteo Chies[1,2], Karin Moesch[3,4], Ho Kiu Fang[5]
[1]University of Trento; [2]University of Verona; [3]Swedish Sports Confederation; [4]Malmö University; [5]Hong Kong Sports Institute

In applied sport psychology, there is growing interest in interventions that go beyond technique-based performance enhancement, and emotional processes. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is a third-wave psychological approach that aims to increase psychological flexibility, defined as the ability to be fully present and to persist in or change behavior in the service of chosen values (Harris, 2009; Hayes et al., 2006); while Expressive Art Therapy (EAT) can foster person awareness, encourage emotional growth, and enhance relationships with art, music, dance/movement, drama and poetry/ writing (Lesley College, 1995; Malchiodi, 2005; McNiff, 2009). This symposium

brings three ACT contributions and one EAT practice together, to illustrate how experiential and practice approaches can be implemented. The ACT presentations address complementary applied domains: an idiographic, DNA-V–based mental training program for adolescent swimmers, highlighting individual developmental pathways in psychological flexibility; a qualitative exploration of athletes' goal-directed self-talk from a psychological flexibility perspective, examining how ACT-consistent and control-oriented strategies naturally emerge in emotionally and performance-relevant situations; and an applied framework for developing team-level values and committed actions in elite team sports, illustrating how shared behavioral guidelines can support performance under pressure and across a season. The EAT practice introduces art-based individual and group interventions designed to enhance emotional awareness, self-reflection, and emotion regulation among athletes through drawing and interactive tools in field settings. Together, these contributions demonstrate how experiential, values-based, and creative methods can be flexibly adapted to address the complex psychological demands of athletes, supporting both performance and well-being in applied sport contexts.

11:30am - 1:00pm

Mental Health in Youth Elite Sport: A Multilevel Perspective From Athlete Monitoring to System Change

Location: **A13**

ID: 598 / Symposium 29: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Elite sports and expertise, Talent identification/development, Well-being and quality of life, Youth
Keywords: well-being, high-performance sport, ecological approach

Mental Health in Youth Elite Sport: A Multilevel Perspective From Athlete Monitoring to System Change

Merlin Örencik[1], Josephine Kroll[2], Cecilia Åkesdotter[3], Maximiliano Devoto[4]
[1]Swiss Federal Institute of Sport Magglingen, Switzerland; [2]University of Leipzig, Germany; [3]The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences Stockholm, Sweden; [4]Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain

Mental health in youth elite sport is shaped by the interaction of individual characteristics and resources, interpersonal relationships, and organizational conditions within talent pathways. Reviews indicate that youth elite athletes are not protected from common mental health symptoms compared with peers, while sport-specific demands (e.g., selection pressure, injuries, dual careers) can amplify risk and constrain help-seeking (Reardon et al., 2019; Rice et al., 2016; Gwyther et al., 2024). Accordingly, developmentally sensitive prevention requires coordinated action across system levels, supporting athletes' coping, equipping coaches to respond to distress, and aligning organizational practices with well-being as a prerequisite for sustainable performance. This symposium integrates four contributions organized by a multi-level framework. First at the individual level, a Swiss cohort of youth elite athletes examines whether psychological safety relates to well-being via authenticity, testing a mechanism through which safer climates may reduce self-silencing and support flourishing. Second, an intervention at the individual level, the 2Steps4Health prevention program is presented as an evidence-informed workshop series designed to strengthen coping competencies and holistic well-being in youth elite athletes. Third at the interpersonal level, coach education is addressed through poetic representations of athletes' eating-disorder experiences to foster empathy and psychologically safe learning conversation. Fourth at the organizational level, an interpretative phenomenological analysis explores how senior managers make sense of youth mental health and what structures and policies may enable upstream responsibility for well-being across pathways.Together, the symposium offers an integrated scientist–practitioner agenda for designing talent development systems that better support youth athletes' mental health.

11:30am - 1:00pm

When High Athletic Identity and an Eating Disorder Become Intertwined

Location: **048**

ID: 563 / Workshop 39: 1
Workshop
Topics: Clinical issues in sport and physical activity, Consulting/ counseling, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Self
Keywords: athletic identity, eating disorders, foreclosure

When High Athletic Identity and an Eating Disorder Become Intertwined

Christine Selby
University of Massachusetts Amherst, United States of America

Athletes with a high, non-exclusive athletic identity are more likely to experience improved performance and more enjoyment in sport (Edison & Rizzone, 2023). However, when an athlete forecloses on this identity they are more likely to experience psychological difficulty and are more prone to injury and illness (Brewer & Petitpas, 2017; Menke & Germany, 2019). Any threat to a high athletic identity leaves athletes vulnerable to developing an eating disorder (Jones et al., 2005), and concerns about the athlete's body can lead to the development of an eating disorder and become entangled with athletic identity (Gapin & Petruzzello, 2011; Lochbaum et al., 2022). Eating disorders, found in upwards of 45% of athletes (Bratland-Sanda & Sundgot-Borgen, 2013), can consume one's identity leaving one not knowing who they are without it (Corning & Heibel, 2016), and can become an essential part of one's identity leading to identity-related concerns (Verschueren et al., 2017). Having an eating disorder and a high, exclusive athletic identity leaves athletes vulnerable. Helping athletes develop an identity beyond sport and eating disorder is essential. Attendees will analyze the interaction between athletic identity and eating disorders via a case study and discussion questions to process in small groups. Via small group discussion and role play, attendees will understand how to use and apply a values card sort tool to help athletes understand their identity. Links to values card sort tasks

and worksheets, and brief questionnaires related to athletic identity, athletic identity foreclosure, and eating disorders in athletes will be provided.

11:30am - 1:00pm **Revisiting Context Transferability in Applied Sport Psychology: A Social Assemblage Perspective**

Location: **130**

ID: 630 / Workshop 40: 1
Workshop
Topics: Best practice, Built environment, Social psychology
Keywords: Social assemblage theory, context transferability, applied sport psychology

Revisiting Context Transferability in Applied Sport Psychology: A Social Assemblage Perspective

Pei-Ling Kuo
PSE Alumni Club, Germany

In applied sport psychology, interventions are often discussed as transferable techniques, assuming that core components can be implemented across contexts with relatively stable effects. However, applied practice demonstrates that intervention outcomes are shaped by dynamic interactions among athletes, practitioners, organizational structures, material conditions, and sociocultural dynamics. Recent work in social psychology similarly argues for moving beyond decontextualized categories toward theories that treat context as constitutive of action (Cikara et al., 2022). Social Assemblage Theory (SAT; DeLanda, 2006, 2016) offers a complementary framework for understanding interventions not as transferable units, but as emergent outcomes of relational configurations between human and non-human elements.

From this perspective, context is an active set of relations that perturbs, constrains, and enables practice. Applications of assemblage thinking in sport research illustrate how attention to relational configurations enhances sensitivity to power, difference, and situated action (Camiré, 2023a), while the proposed shift from intervention to intravention emphasizes practice as ongoing attunement and reconfiguration (Camiré, 2023b).

This applied workshop aims to support practitioners and researchers in developing a context-sensitive understanding of transferability. Learning objectives are to enable participants to recognize interventions as relational and emergent processes, understand how context dependency arises through interaction, and develop strategies for flexible, evidence-informed practice. These objectives are addressed through interactive, hands-on methods, including theory-guided simulations, role-based experiential exercises, and structured group discussions. A theory-guided worksheet introducing key SAT concepts will support mapping and reassembling assemblage relations encountered during the workshop.

1:00pm - 2:30pm **Lunch break**

Midday Mindfulness

Location: **A10**

2:15pm - 2:35pm Back-to-back sessions, new people, new ideas, a brain that won't slow down. This is a small pause in the middle of it all to replenish for the second half of the day. Every day after lunch, Gábor Barta and Gergő Gacs will guide you through 20 minutes of mindfulness: a gentle mix of breathing-based meditation, body scan, visualization, and a mindful walk. Nothing intense, nothing complicated. Just a chance to actually land in your body for a bit before the afternoon kicks off. We'll help you connect with yourself and be fully present so you can experience the conference to the fullest! No previous experience with meditation needed, you just have to show up and be present!

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Parasport in Winter Sports – Health, Performance, and Decision-Making**

Location: **Aula Magna**

ID: 705 / Panel 7: 1
Panel discussion

Parasport in Winter Sports – Health, Performance, and Decision-Making

Marie Frenkel, Véronique Boudreault, Anna-Lena Forster, Zsuzsanna Zimanyi, Jürgen Willrett
Hochschule Furtwangen University, Germany

The aim of this panel discussion is to explore decision-making and self-regulation processes in elite parasport from multiple perspectives, with a particular focus on health, well-being, and performance. The discussion will examine psychological, physiological, structural, and personal factors influencing training, competition, and long-term athlete development, while also highlighting the broader societal recognition of parasport.

At the center of the panel is Anna-Lena Forster, multiple Paralympic medalist in alpine skiing and one of the most successful German winter parasport athletes. She will provide insights into her daily training and competition routines, her motivation, and her decision-making processes under performance pressure and uncertainty. At the Paralympic Games in Italy in March 2026, Anna-Lena Forster is scheduled to compete in all five alpine skiing events: Downhill, Super-G, Super Combined, Giant Slalom, and Slalom. Her perspective will be complemented by other winter parasport athletes from different countries, including an athlete with visual impairment and their guide, and potentially a junior para-athlete with hearing impairment. Their recruitment is planned during the 2026 Winter Paralympics in Italy.

The psychological perspective will be represented by Véronique Boudreault, PhD, Associate Professor of Sport Psychology at the Université de Sherbrooke, Canada, and holder of the Aléo Research Chair focused on

psychosocial support for elite athletes. Her applied work includes supporting Canadian Paralympic athletes and research on mental performance, emotional regulation, and athlete well-being in high-performance contexts.

The body/physiological perspective will ideally be represented by a sports physiotherapist (confirmation pending), who will contribute expertise on health, load management, and injury prevention in elite parasport, drawing on experience supporting Paralympic teams in preparation for the 2026 Winter Games.

The structural perspective will be represented by Jürgen Willrett, Director of the Olympic Training Center (Olympiastützpunkt) Freiburg–Schwarzwald, Germany, who oversees athlete development, support services, and systemic structures that facilitate long-term health, performance, and career pathways in elite parasport.

The panel will be moderated by Marie Ottilie Frenkel, PhD, Professor of Psychology in Healthcare at Furtwangen University. Her research focuses on stress, self-regulation, and decision-making under extreme conditions, bridging sport psychology theory and applied practice in high-performance settings.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Integrating Systemic-Solution-Focused Therapy in applied Sport Psychology: Self-Care for Practitioners**

Location: **Aula Biblio**

ID: 414 / Workshop 43: 1

Workshop

Topics: Best practice, Psychotherapeutic approaches (e.g. psychodinamic, systemic), Self, Well-being and quality of life

Keywords: Systemic-Solution-Focused Therapy, Self-Care for Practitioners, burnout prevention

Integrating Systemic-Solution-Focused Therapy in applied Sport Psychology: Self-Care for Practitioners

Erika Ruchti

EHSM, BASPO, Switzerland

Self-management and self-care involve the ability to regulate thoughts, emotions, and behaviors to maintain balance and promote wellbeing—key foundations for mental health and resilience. This workshop explores the integration of therapeutic approaches in applied sport psychology, emphasizing systemic-solution-focused, and cognitive-behavioral methods that support practitioners. It examines how these approaches enhance resilience, wellbeing, and self-regulation in sport contexts. The integration of these theoretical models facilitates a coherent understanding of how processes interact in self-regulation. The cognitive-behavioral perspective (Beck, 1970) provides a structured model for identifying and modifying self-defeating beliefs, while systemic-solution-focused approaches (Levold & Wirsching, 2014) expand this view by emphasizing contextual dynamics, resource activation, and relational balance. Combined with principles of positive psychology (Seligman, 2005) and Internal Family Systems theory (Schwartz, 1997), this integrative framework supports reflective awareness, emotional flexibility, and sustainable self-care practices in professionals. Drawing on an 18-week case study with an elite athlete (Ruchti, 2020), participants will experience these tools through guided exercises and peer reflection to strengthen self-management competencies and self-care practices. Learning objectives are to: Understand the theoretical integration of cognitive-behavioral and systemic approaches in sport psychology consulting; Apply selected systemic tools (reframing, Internal Family Systems, time-line technique) for self-reflection; Recognize self-care and self-awareness as key factors in preventing and managing distress in practitioners. Intended for sport psychologists and/or psychotherapists in applied settings, the workshop combines theoretical input, live demonstrations, and small-group experiential exercises (e.g., symbolic self-parts work) with reflective dialogue and debriefs linking experience to theory.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Oral Presentations 52: Decision making and judgement**

Location: **A01**

Session Chair: **Simon Knöbel**

ID: 292 / Oral Presentations 52: 1

Oral presentations

Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Emotion

Keywords: affect, emotions, judgment and decision making

The Influence of Affect and Emotions on Judgment and Decision Making in Applied Performance Contexts – A Scoping Review

Simon Knöbel, Olga Imogen Twelbeck, Franziska Lautenbach

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Germany

Decision making in sport often unfolds under time pressure, uncertainty, and high stakes, with emotional activation shaping judgments and actions (Raab et al., 2019). Yet, much research on judgment and decision making (JDM) relies on highly controlled laboratory tasks or decontextualized scenarios (e.g., computerized gambling or probabilistic choice paradigms) that capture only limited aspects of dynamic, situationally relevant environments. In applied performance settings more broadly, affect may stem directly from the task or situation (integral affect) or originate from unrelated sources (incidental affect). These influences can co-occur and interact; the distinction is therefore used as a conceptual lens rather than a strict separation. This scoping review examines how affect has been conceptualized and studied in relation to JDM in applied performance research, defined as decision making in ecologically valid contexts such as sport, organizational, and operational environments. While links between affect and decision making are well established in fields such as cognitive neuroscience, these processes are less systematically examined in applied settings (Lerner et al., 2015). Following established guidelines (Page et al., 2021), a systematic search (since 2015) was conducted across PubMed, Scopus, PsycInfo, ERIC, and SPORTDiscus. Nine studies met the inclusion criteria, spanning organizational (n = 4), operational and safety-critical (n = 3), as well as judicial decision making and sport (n = 2). Most studies adopt dimensional models of affect, while distinctions

between integral and incidental affect remain rare. The review highlights conceptual and methodological gaps in emotion–cognition research in applied performance settings, outlining key challenges and future directions.

ID: 512 / **Oral Presentations 52: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Decision making and judgement
Keywords: perceptual–cognitive expertise, temporal occlusion, tactical decision-making, situational difficulty

Tactical Decision-Making in Soccer: Differences Between Coaches and Players Across Scenario Difficulty

Gabriele Russo[1], Andrea Ceciliani[2], Gabriele Verghini[1], Aldrovandi Maurizio[2], A. Mark Williams[3], Marcelo Bigliassi[4]

[1]University of Tuscia, Italy; [2]University of Bologna; [3]Loughborough University; [4]Florida International University

Building on perceptual–cognitive expertise research in invasion sports, we tested whether soccer coaches differ from amateur players in a video-based tactical decision-making task and whether any differences vary by situational difficulty and action type, with moderation by general on-field role (defensive vs. attacking). Players and coaches completed a temporal-occlusion task with 28 animated match scenarios (10 offensive and 4 defensive base situations, spatially mirrored; Farrow et al., 2005), presented from a raised posterior view aligned with the defending team. Scenarios were classified a priori as easy vs. difficult. After each clip, participants selected 1 of 4 options rated by expert coaches for tactical appropriateness (1–4). Decision scores were analysed with mixed-effects models including Stroop interference (Stroop, 1935) and CRT (Frederick, 2005) as covariates. Coaches selected higher-rated options than players ($p=.007$, $\eta p^2=.09$), but this advantage depended on situational demands (Difficulty × Group: $p<.001$, $\eta p^2=.15$); coaches outperformed players in easy scenarios ($p<.0001$) but not in difficult scenarios ($p>.05$). Decision scores also differed by action type ($p<.001$, $\eta p^2=.14$), with coaches scoring higher ($p<.001$, $\eta p^2=.10$). Additionally, defensive-role participants scored slightly higher ($p=.039$, $\eta p^2=.05$) and role moderated the offensive–defensive contrast ($p=.031$, $\eta p^2=.06$). Stroop and CRT were not associated with decision scores ($ps>.05$). Measurement precision for this heterogeneous clip bank was modest (Cronbach's $\alpha=.36$), supporting group-level inference and motivating broader sampling of defensive situations. Coaches' advantage was evident in less ambiguous scenarios; higher complexity reduced discriminability. Easier clips may better differentiate expertise, whereas harder clips may better train decisions under uncertainty.

ID: 167 / **Oral Presentations 52: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Emotion
Keywords: shame, perceptual decision making

The Impact of Shame on Perceptual Decision Making

Judit Boda-Ujlaky[1], Lilla Török[2], Róbert Járai[1]

[1]Széchenyi István University, Hungary; [2]Hungarian University of Sport Science, Hungary

Invesitgating performance-related emotions has a long term history in sport psychology. Lately, Pekrun (2006) introduced the term 'achievement emotions' that „relate to activities and outcomes that are typically judged according to competence-based standards of quality" (Pekrun & Stehpens, 2010). In his Control-Value Theory (2006) he argues that outcome emotions like shame and pride are related to success and failure, while activity emotions like boredom and enjoyment are experienced in achievement situations. Our aim is to investigate wether outcome emotions have an impact on subsequent performance in perceptual decision making. Reaction times of N=477 athletes and non-athletes were assessed by Random Dot Kinematogram under diverse emotional induction (using retrospective life narratives). Analysis of post-induction visual analogue scale scores revealed no significant differences in self-reported 'state' emotion between the experimental groups and the Neutral control group (Shame group and Neutral group ($p = .49$)). Nevertheless, analysis of reaction times revealed a specific and significant slowing effect for the Shame condition (using MLR) ($b = 44.19$, $SE = 22.10$, $t(462) = 2.00$, $p = .046$). This effect was specific to Shame; no other emotional conditions—including Anger ($p = .18$), Guilt ($p = .38$), or Pride ($p = .37$)—differed significantly from the Neutral baseline. Athlete, non-athlete and competitive athlete, non-competitive athlete differences are to be discussed. Taken together, the induction of Shame appears to have impaired cognitive efficiency, as suggested in VCT, consumes cognitive resources, creating a processing cost that persisted even in the absence of consciously reported emotional distress.

ID: 628 / **Oral Presentations 52: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Elite sports and expertise, Talent identification/development
Keywords: sport specific test, test criteria, laptop-based diagnostic tool

Read and React in Flag Football – Development of a Quarterback-Specific Decision-Making Assessment Tool

Thomas Finkenzeller, Andreas Hofer, Günter Amesberger, Jannic Wälde, Simon Haller, Björn Pannicke
University of Salzburg, Austria

Quarterback (QB) performance requires rapid information processing, effective inhibition, and precisely timed decision-making. To assess these skills, we created a laptop-based, sport-specific diagnostic tool simulating complex game situations (Read and React). Athletes view coach selected plays and identify the correct receiver by pressing the corresponding key at the appropriate moment. This study examined the task's test–retest reliability and its validity. Seventy three QBs (Mage = 21.36 ± 6.47 years; 10 females), ranging from national team to regional level, completed the novel task. To explore associations between QB-specific cognitive performance and basic cognitive abilities, participants performed an Eriksen flanker task, a 2 back task, and a complex span task. A subsample of 20 QBs completed a retest after an average interval of 17.48 ± 13.24 days. Test–retest reliability of the Read and React task (correct decisions) was ICC = .72, with no significant change from t1 to t2, $t(19) = -1.15$, $p = .263$. A multiple regression including congruent flanker reaction time, 2 back and complex span performance, and age predicted Read and React performance, $R^2 = .29$, $F(5, 59) = 4.92$, $p < .001$. Processing speed (congruent flanker reaction time) emerged as the only significant predictor ($\beta = -0.43$, $p < .001$; partial $R^2 = .16$). The Read and React task demonstrates acceptable reliability and evidence of validity, although conclusions regarding its diagnostic or talent development utility should be drawn cautiously. The significant influence of processing speed, consistent with previous findings (Li et al., 2024), highlights its central contribution to higher order cognitive performance in athletes.

ID: 685 / Oral Presentations 52: 5
Oral presentations
Topics: Decision making and judgement, Exercise psychology, Personality, Psychophysiology
Keywords: Sport climbing, Bouldering, Risk perception, Sport psychology

The Psychology of Rock Climbing: A Systematic Review

Kevin Mangan, Kathryn Andrews, Brad Miles, Nick Draper
University of Canterbury, New Zealand

Psychology plays a key role in rock climbing performance and safety. Many studies have examined the psychology of rock climbing, which has grown in popularity and status over the past few decades. This systematic review aimed to summarize published research on the psychology of rock climbing, find commonalities and disagreements within the current research and illuminate future research areas. A systematic literature search was conducted following PRISMA guidelines in Scopus, PsycINFO and SPORTDiscus in July 2023. Key search terms such as 'sport climbing' and 'psychology' were included and combined using the operators "AND", "OR". Inclusion criteria included being published, peer-reviewed, using human subjects, focused solely on rock climbing and the measurement of psychological variables. Of the initially identified 504 records, 83 studies met inclusion criteria after abstract and full-text screening. A thematic synthesis was used to extract data to make connections across individual studies for both psychological and rock climbing variables. Findings suggest rock climbers are more conscientious, but not otherwise different in personality than other athletes. Flow is brought on by novel, challenging climbing situations and increases enjoyment and performance. Self-confidence, decision-making and problem-solving ability, tactile and spatial perception, movement memory and anxiety facilitation are associated with increased climbing ability. Improved self-efficacy leads to greater comfort for riskier climbing styles. Existing literature is limited by conflating ability with experience, a lack of outdoor climbing studies and limited links to psychological theory. Future research should clarify the optimal levels of psychological variables and investigate interventions tailored to different climbing disciplines.

2:45pm - 4:15pm Oral Presentations 50: Cognition

Location: **A02**
Session Chair: **Radu Predoiu**

ID: 143 / Oral Presentations 50: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: Implicit Associations Test, indirect aggression, sports coaches, sports performance.

Latency-Based Measures of Aggression in Sports Coaches

Radu Predoiu[1], Andrzej Piotrowski[2], Monica Stănescu[1], Germina Cosma[3]
[1]National University of Physical Education and Sport, Bucharest, Romania; [2]University of Gdańsk, Institute of Psychology, Gdańsk, Poland; [3]University of Craiova, Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, Craiova, Romania

According to the dual processing model (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2006), aggression can be measured implicitly and explicitly (Gollwitzer et al., 2007). Latency-based (implicit) measures of aggression suppose the absence of the individual's conscious control, this automatic processing defining the aggressive behavior (Richetin & Richardson, 2008). The aim of the research was twofold: we wanted to explore the implicit aggression of successful sports coaches and, also, the automatic aggression of novice coaches in relation to their involvement in their own professional growth. 109 sports coaches (29 coaches having international and/or national performances, and 80 novice coaches) took part in the study. An Implicit Associations Test (IAT) was created for assessing indirect aggression (using the free-to-use platform PsyToolkit, Stoet, 2010, 2017), using the classic 7-block version (Greenwald et al., 1998) and the 20+40 trials subdivision (Schnabel et al., 2008). The current IAT was previously used with athletes from individual and team sports (Predoiu et al., 2024a; Predoiu et al., 2024b). It was found that higher IAT results (D-scores – D4, see Greenwald et al., 2003) are specific to successful coaches (coaches associated Aggression with Others, not with Self). A binomial logistic regression procedure predicted the likelihood of top performances in coaches based on D-scores. Also, Kendall Tau-B was used to check if there is a significant association between IAT scores and novice coaches' level of involvement in their own professional growth. A higher level of implicit aggression was linked with more time (per week) dedicated by novice coaches for their professional development.

ID: 289 / **Oral Presentations 50: 2**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Movement
Keywords: head fake, visual-motor processing, dynamic measures, displacements of the center of pressure

Rapid chase or continuous flow of information? Visual-motor processing of head fakes in basketball

Iris Güldenpenning, Lars Schulze Frielinghaus, Nils Tobias Böer, Matthias Weigelt
Paderborn University, Germany

Deceptive actions such as basketball head fakes can elicit erroneous response tendencies. We tested whether early postural responses (center-of-pressure; CoP) follow a strictly sequential rapid-chase account (Schmidt et al., 2006) or a continuous flow model of overlapping perceptual–motor processing (Eriksen & Schultz, 1979). A key rapid-chase prediction is that the initial CoP deflection should be determined solely by head orientation and remain unaffected by pass-direction information. Twenty participants (Mage = 22.4) viewed video clips of passes with or without head fakes and were instructed to make whole-body response movements to the left/right side. Reaction times (RTs), movement times (MTs), and medio-lateral CoP displacements were analyzed. Onset latencies of lateral CoP shifts were estimated at the group level using a leave-one-out jackknife procedure (Ulrich & Miller, 2001). CoP divergence was quantified as a difference wave (head-fake minus no-head-fake) and tested using a sustained threshold-crossing procedure. Head fakes increased RTs, $t(19) = 13.03$, $p < .001$, $d = 2.91$, and also prolonged MTs, $t(19) = 2.58$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.58$. In no-head-fake trials, the initial CoP shift emerged at 214 ms; in head-fake trials, an erroneous initial shift emerged at 226 ms. The CoP difference wave (head-fake − no-head-fake) showed an early sustained deviation from zero at 216 ms. The very early difference-wave divergence suggests that early postural dynamics are already modulated by stimulus information beyond head orientation, which is difficult to reconcile with a strictly feedforward, sequential rapid-chase account. This finding is more consistent with continuous information flow.

ID: 431 / **Oral Presentations 50: 3**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Emotion
Keywords: Imagery, State Anxiety, Selective Attention

Relationships Between Motor Imagery, State Anxiety, Selective Attention and Tennis Skill in University Students

Gokce Akin, İlhan Odabas, Billur Yarsuvat, Alper Asci
Halic University, Turkey (Türkiye)

The aim of this study was to examine the relationships between tennis skill, motor imagery ability, state anxiety, and selective attention in undergraduate sport sciences students. From an attentional control perspective, higher anxiety was expected to be associated with poorer attentional efficiency and performance, while greater motor imagery ability was expected to relate to enhanced cognitive control. Thirty male students ($M = 21.10 \pm 1.88$) participated. Tennis skill, imagery ability, state anxiety, and selective attention (Flanker task) were assessed. Results showed that somatic anxiety was negatively associated with tennis skill and positively related to incongruent reaction time. Internal and external imagery abilities were associated with faster reaction times across conditions. Interference scores and regression analysis were not significant. Overall, findings suggest that anxiety and motor imagery are linked to attentional processes and tennis performance.

ID: 703 / **Oral Presentations 50: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Exercise psychology
Keywords: The Daily Mile, cognitive engagement, executive functions

Acute Effects of Adding Cognitively Engaging Tasks to the Daily Mile on Subsequent Cognition and Enjoyment in Young People

Anna Dunn
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

Cognitively engaging physical activity may yield greater post-activity cognitive improvements (Mao et al.,2024). Implementing such tasks within The Daily Mile could enhance cognition while adding initiative variety. This study examined whether adding cognitively engaging tasks within The Daily Mile influences subsequent cognition and enjoyment. Ninety-nine participants (10.2±1.1y) completed three trials (Daily Mile Normal, Daily Mile Cognitive Engagement, and resting), using a within-subject, order-balanced, crossover design. The Daily Mile Cognitive Engagement involved participants completing tasks requiring cognitive engagement for 30s every 2 min within The Daily Mile. Cognitive tests (Stroop test, Sternberg paradigm, Visual Search test) were administered before, immediately following and 45 min following all trials. During the trials, distance covered (m), average heart rate (beats·min-1) and physical activity enjoyment were measured. Focus groups explored enjoyment factors during The Daily Mile trials. Following the addition of the cognitively engaging tasks, mixed effects models (trial*time) revealed response times improved for working memory (p=.027), but accuracy in inhibitory control (p=.045) and perception

(p=.016) declined immediately after activity, compared to The Daily Mile Normal. Thematic analysis revealed some preferred The Daily Mile Normal for simplicity and control, and others favoured The Daily Mile Cognitive Engagement due to the variety and cognitive challenge. Incorporating cognitively engaging tasks into The Daily Mile led to improvements in working memory, but reduced accuracy in inhibitory control and perception, alongside mixed enjoyment. Findings indicate such adaptations may not benefit all children equally. Aligning physical activity with individual preferences and cognitive needs may enhance engagement and cognitive outcomes.

ID: 166 / **Oral Presentations 50: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement
Keywords: Skilled Performance, Automatization, Cognitive Model

The Multilayer Model of Automatization: A Predictive, Adaptive Framework for the Development of Skilled Performance

Hermann Müller[1], Rouwen Canal-Bruland[2], Stefan Künzell[3], Torsten Schubert[4]
[1]Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Germany; [2]Friedrich-Schiller-University Jena, Germany; [3]University of Augsburg, Germany; [4]Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany

Existing accounts of automatization often emphasize the replacement of controlled processing by stored memory traces, but they provide limited mechanisms for how control shifts, how routines become encapsulated, or how systems regain flexibility when task demands change.The Multilayer Model of Automatization (MMA) (Müller et al., 2026) offers a new theoretical framework for understanding how skilled performance becomes fast, reliable, and flexible through practice. MMA addresses these gaps through a hierarchical, prediction-based architecture composed of multiple adaptive control layers. Each layer generates predictions about upcoming states and actions; learning occurs locally as prediction errors adjust connection strengths and dynamically redistribute control. This structure yields two central principles. First, automatization is layer-specific: control migrates downward only when lower layers achieve sufficiently accurate predictions, allowing routines to stabilize where contingencies are strongest. As a consequence, practice frees superordinate layers from low-level control, reducing multitasking costs and supporting efficient performance even under complex or dual-task conditions. Second, automatization is reversible: when environmental changes increase prediction error, higher layers automatically reassert influence, enabling updated adaptation without overwriting learned routines. The MMA therefore provides a mechanistic account of how prediction reliability drives the emergence, stabilization, and modulation of automatic behavior. Its emphasis on dynamic control allocation, local learning, and hierarchical prediction makes it suitable for modeling both discrete and continuous control domains. By integrating adaptability and encapsulation within a single architecture, MMA offers a versatile platform for explaining the development of skilled action across cognitive and motor tasks. Various approaches to empirical validation are presented.

2:45pm - 4:15pm

Oral Presentations 53: Psychophysiology

Location: **A03**
Session Chair: **Recep Görgülü**

ID: 636 / **Oral Presentations 53: 1**
Oral presentations
Topics: Best practice, Mental skills training, Perception & attention, Psychophysiology
Keywords: PETTLEP Imagery, Heart Rate Variability Biofeedback, Ironic Process Theory, Basketball Free-Throw Performance

Mitigating Ironic Errors Under Pressure: Effects of PETTLEP Imagery and HRV Biofeedback on Free-Throw Performance

Recep Görgülü[1], İlayda Sezan[2]
[1]Bursa Uludag University, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Psychology of Elite Performance Laboratory, Türkiye; [2]Bursa Uludağ University, Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Türkiye

Free-throw performance in basketball requires integrating technical skill with effective attentional control and autonomic regulation under pressure. According to Wegner's Ironic Process Theory, attempts to suppress unwanted thoughts or actions can paradoxically increase their likelihood, particularly under stress. Interventions targeting both cognitive and physiological regulation may therefore reduce ironic errors. PETTLEP imagery enhances task-relevant focus and motor representation, whereas heart rate variability biofeedback (HRV-BF) improves autonomic flexibility and stress regulation. Their combined use may strengthen attentional control while stabilising physiological arousal, thereby reducing susceptibility to ironic performance errors. This study examined whether a combined PETTLEP imagery and HRV-BF intervention improves free-throw accuracy, enhances autonomic regulation, and reduces ironic error frequency. Sixty male basketball players (Mage = 17.53) with at least five years of competitive experience were randomly assigned to four groups (n = 15): (1) HRV-BF + PETTLEP, (2) HRV-BF only, (3) PETTLEP only, and (4) control. Free-throw accuracy and HRV (HFnu) were assessed at pre-, mid-, and post-intervention. Performance was evaluated using systematic video analysis, and HRV was continuously recorded. The combined intervention group showed significant improvements in free-throw accuracy ($F(2, 6) = 2.90$, $p = .010$, $\eta p^2 = .135$) and HRV, alongside a reduction in ironic errors. Single-modality groups showed moderate improvements, whereas the control group showed no significant changes ($p < .05$). These findings indicate that integrating cognitive and physiological regulation strategies enhances performance and reduces ironic errors under pressure, supporting the effectiveness of multimodal interventions in sport.

ID: 311 / Oral Presentations 53: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Motivation, Psychophysiology
Keywords: Strength, Performance, Self-Control, Athletes

The Impact of Physiology, Motivation and Pain on Self-Control Strength Performance

Richard Steel, Cassandra Supple, Ruth Boat
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom

The exertion of self-control is associated with impaired performance on subsequent physical tasks, including endurance tasks. Motivation and pain tolerance are mechanisms that explain self-control failure on physical tasks. Conflicting research has suggested that athletes appear to be less vulnerable to self-control failure than non-athletes. However, it is unknown if pain and motivation mediate self-control failure differently in athletes, or whether other potential differences (e.g., cardiovascular, physical) are important. This study will investigate these propositions. Sixty participants (44 female, 16 male; 26 athletes, 34 non-athletes) completed a wall sit task on two occasions. Prior to each wall-sit, participants completed a congruent Stroop (non-self-control) or incongruent Stroop (self-control). Perceptions of pain and motivation were recorded using visual analogue scales during the wall sit. Between visits, participants wore a smartwatch to record physical activity and cardiovascular function as potential mechanisms. A Mixed ANOVA revealed non-athletes had lower wall sit endurance following self-control exertion ($p = .035$). An athlete×pain-slope interaction ($p < .001$) demonstrated wall sit endurance was predicted by higher motivation/lower pain intercepts and slopes (ps ≤.007). Moreover, a stroop×athlete×pain-slope interaction ($p < .001$) revealed that following self-control exertion, non-athletes quit the wall sit early irrespective of pain accumulation. Analysis of smartwatch data revealed significant between-group differences in cardiovascular markers; however, when modelled, these mechanisms were not significant. In conclusion, self-control exertion predicted reduced wall-sit endurance in non-athletes. Moreover, non-athletes quit early irrespective of pain accumulation following self-control exertion. This highlights pain as a context sensitive mechanism and potential target for interventions.

ID: 274 / Oral Presentations 53: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Mental skills training, Psychophysiology
Keywords: Tactical decision-making, Biofeedback training, Youth athlete development

Enhancing Emotional Regulation and Decision-Making in a Youth Soccer Player Using HRV Biofeedback and a Go/No-Go Intervention

Royi Yablochnik[1], Asaf Blatt[2,3], Lael Gershgoren[2]
[1]Reichman University, Israel; [2]The College of Management Academic Studies, israel; [3]Ono Academic College, israel

This applied single-case study presents a combined heart rate variability (HRV) biofeedback and Go/No-Go task-based intervention designed to support emotional regulation and decision-making in a 14-year-old male central midfielder from a professional soccer academy. The player demonstrated difficulties with post-error rumination and confidence regulation, consistent with models linking stress, emotion regulation, and sport performance (e.g., Gross, 2015). Thus, the objectives were to enhance autonomic flexibility, indexed by HRV, strengthen inhibitory control, and examine whether these changes were reflected in more adaptive on-field behaviors. Using a scientific-practitioner approach, the intervention was informed by evidence supporting (a) HRV biofeedback as a method for training cardiac vagal control and stress recovery (e.g., Lehrer et al., 2014), and (b) Go/No-Go paradigms for engaging inhibitory control in sport contexts (e.g., Verburgh et al., 2014). The program comprised 12 weekly 40-minute sessions, combining HRV biofeedback breathing at approximately six breaths per minute with progressively structured Go/No-Go tasks implemented via BlazePod lights. Outcome measures included the Self-Regulation of Learning in Practice scale, the TacticUP Video Test for Soccer , and coach reports of behavioral regulation and playing time (e.g., Moreno et al., 2021). Program evaluation followed a single-case pre-to-post design. Results indicated meaningful increases in self-regulation and tactical decision-making scores, reduced observable rumination, and more positive body language. These findings demonstrate the applied potential of integrating psychophysiological regulation strategies with executive-control-oriented tasks in sport psychology practice, while acknowledging the exploratory nature and methodological limitations of single-case interventions.

ID: 603 / Oral Presentations 53: 4
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Emotion, Psychophysiology
Keywords: anxiety, fatigue, executive control

Response Inhibition Under Physical and Emotional Stress

Arne Nieuwenhuys, Martin Page, Sam Nash
The University of Auckland, New Zealand

The ability to withhold inappropriate action ('response inhibition') is crucial for adaptive responding but may be compromised under high physical and emotional stress. Neurocognitive models of stress and task performance (Nieuwenhuys & Oudejans, 2012; 2017) suggest that different stressors may either cancel each other out or lead to additive effects. The present study investigated effects of physical and emotional stress on response inhibition in a

bimanual 'selective' stopping context. 32 healthy participants performed a bimanual stop-signal task with and without threat-of-shock (performance-contingent electrical stimulation at individualized intensity, each time participants made a task error; 'emotional stress'), whilst concurrently cycling for 2x30mins at light vs. vigorous intensity on a stationary bicycle ergometer (60% vs 86% HRmax; 'physical stress'). Performance measures included response time and accuracy on Go trials, Stop-Signal Reaction Time (SSRT), and stopping interference. Manipulation checks (heartrate; perceived exertion; subjective anxiety) indicated successful manipulation of physical and emotional stress (all p's < .001). Go accuracy was significantly greater during vigorous compared to light exercise (p = .010). Go accuracy was significantly greater (p = .004), response times significantly slower (p = .014), and stopping interference significantly less (p = .032), under threat compared to no-threat conditions. SSRT was not significantly impacted by physical or emotional stress. No significant interaction effects were observed. Response inhibition in selective stopping contexts can be maintained under physical and emotional stress owing to strategic slowing and decoupling of bimanual responses. Absence of interaction effects between physical and emotional stress points to independent mechanisms. Implications for sport performance are discussed.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Dynamic Neurocognitive Imagery in Dance and Sport: An Applied Workshop for Performance Enhancement**

Location: **A10**

ID: 233 / Workshop 42: 1
Workshop
Topics: Mental skills training, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement, Perception & attention
Keywords: Mental imagery, Motor control, Perception–action coupling, Performance enhancement

Dynamic Neurocognitive Imagery in Dance and Sport: An Applied Workshop for Performance Enhancement

Eric Franklin, Amit Abraham PHD
Institute for Franklin Method, Switzerland

Mental imagery (MI) is increasingly recommended as an effective psychological skill for sports training and high-level performance. One evidence-based approach is Dynamic Neuro-Cognitive Imagery (DNI), which integrates imagery with movement to support both motor and non-motor aspects of dance and sport performance. This workshop aims to introduce participants to applied DNI strategies for enhancing attentional focus, motivation, emotional regulation, and movement efficiency. Participants will actively practice DNI-based techniques targeting focus of attention, mood regulation, motivation, and movement efficiency within dance and sport-relevant movement tasks. Experiential exercises will be combined with guided reflection and interactive discussion. Relevant scientific literature, including research conducted by the authors' research group, will be discussed to contextualize the applied methods. First, participants will acquire a practical set of mental imagery tools that can be applied to support performance under pressure in dance and sport contexts. Second, participants will develop a clearer understanding of the scientific mechanisms underpinning the effectiveness of MI for performance enhancement. Participants will also receive a digital handout summarizing the workshop content and access to selected online resources, including a DNI webinar. This practical workshop provides both theoretical grounding and applied tools for integrating mental imagery into dance and sport performance. Attendees will expand their professional toolkit for supporting athletes and performers in optimizing performance, particularly in high-pressure situations.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Educating Master's Students in Sport and Exercise Psychology – The joys of three European degree programs**

Location: **A11**

ID: 410 / Symposium 33: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Professional development and mentoring
Keywords: Education, master's degree, career

Educating Master's Students in Sport and Exercise Psychology – The joys and challenges of three European degree programs

Anne-Marie Elbe[1], Nadja Walter[1], Markus Raab[2], Miguel Reuss[2], Athanasios Papaioannou[3], Antonis Hatzigeorgiadis[3], Nikos Comoutos[3], Alex Iscru[3], Joleen Meißner[1]
[1]Leipzig University, Germany; [2]German Sport University Cologne; [3]University of Thessaly

This symposium will focus on the education of master's students in sport and exercise psychology enrolled at three different European universities. The programs at the University of Thessaly in Greece, the German Sport University Cologne as well as Leipzig University in Germany are unique due to their English-language, international perspective. The three program leaders will present the specificities of their programs, how they prepare their students for work in the applied and research settings as well as outline where their graduates find employment. Furthermore, challenges as well as future perspectives will be presented. The three presentations will be complemented by two student perspectives. One graduate from Leipzig and one from Thessaly will present on how the programs prepared them for their future careers in research and the applied setting as well as a potential accreditation as an applied sport psychologist.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Conflict in Sport: Regaining Momentum in Research to Drive Practice**

Location: **A12**

ID: 353 / Symposium 34: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Group dynamics, Social psychology
Keywords: conflict, team, group dynamics

Conflict in Sport: Regaining Momentum in Research to Drive Practice

Jonas Lüdemann[1], Svenja Wachsmuth[2], Kyle Paradis[3], Miguel A. López-Gajardoa[4], Matt Boulter[5]
[1]German Sport University Cologne, Germany; [2]Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, Germany; [3]Ulster University, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom; [4]University of Extremadura, Spain; [5]University of the West of Scotland, Scotland, United Kingdom

Background and objectives: While interpersonal conflict is typically perceived as an unpleasant experience which many desire to escape, it also forms a natural part of any social relationship – those in sports form no exception (Mellalieu et al., 2013). Despite this, research in sport psychology investigating the nature, determinants and consequences of conflict remains scarce and scattered. Thus, barely a decade passed since the first concerted research programs on group (e.g., Paradis et al., 2014) and dyadic (e.g., Wachsmuth et al., 2017) conflicts were initiated. This symposium therefore aims to (a) provide an overview about the status quo of conflict research in sports, (b) exemplarily showcase current studies in the field using various research approaches, and to (c) introduce some initial reflections on knowledge transfer (e.g., coach education, sport psychology training); thereby seeking to reintroduce some momentum promoting new conflict research within the sport psychology community. Process and conclusion: Within the symposium, four individual presentations will be delivered and are going to be framed by a topical introduction and a science-practice outlook delivered by the chairs of the session. The first presentation will focus on the historical roots and recent developments of conflict research in sport psychology. The next two presentations then illustrate current examples of longitudinal research investigating the predictive value of team goal commitment and sport performance on perceptions of team conflict. Thereafter, a newly developed scale measuring conflict management in sport teams will be introduced. Finally, the session is closed with a number of practical reflections and a plenary discussion.

2:45pm - 4:15pm Finding the Best Practices to Organize Athlete Education: Insights from the Nordic Model

Location: **A13**

ID: 697 / Symposium 32: 1
Symposium 90 minutes
Topics: Best practice, Developmental/ lifespan perspectives, Talent identification/development, Transitions in and out of sport/dual career
Keywords: sport schools, youth wellbeing, DCDE, athlete development

Finding the Best Practices to Organize Athlete Education: Insights from the Nordic Model

Milla Saarinen[1,3], Lukas Linnér[2], Thomas Mangor Jørgensen[3], Stein Robin Syse Waldenstrøm[3], Joni Kuokkanen[4], Louise Kamuk Storm[5]
[1]University of Stavanger, Norway; [2]Halmstad University, Sweden; [3]Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Norway; [4]Åbo Akademi University, Finland; [5]University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

How can Nordic sport systems organize athlete education in ways that promote both performance and long-term wellbeing? Are there lessons from Nordic athlete education that may also inform the wellbeing of students in ordinary schools? Bringing together four complementary studies, this symposium examines how different educational and sport structures shape young people's development across the Nordic region. By integrating policy-level frameworks, national survey data, and school-based research, the symposium highlights how institutional contexts, environmental quality, and social relationships influence developmental outcomes (Storm et al., 2021). The opening presentation outlines the Swedish national approach to Dual Career Development Environments (DCDE), illustrating how research-based guidelines translate into coordinated policies, stakeholder education, and relational infrastructures that support holistic athlete development. The second presentation examines sport and academic pressure among more than 32,000 Norwegian adolescents attending regular lower secondary schools, identifying demographic and gender differences in perceived pressure and coping difficulties within broader performance cultures. The third presentation introduces the G.R.E.E.N. framework and presents longitudinal data from Norwegian youth football academies and classical ballet schools, linking perceived environmental quality to stress, wellbeing, performance, and injury prevalence. The fourth presentation draws on longitudinal mixed-methods research from Finnish lower secondary sport schools to explore how coordinated support from peers, parents, teachers, and coaches shapes motivation, belonging, and balance during key transitions. An experienced discussant will synthesize these contributions and draw attention to the structural features and best practices associated with athlete education, offering reflections on how Nordic systems can be organized to promote sustainable development.

2:45pm - 4:15pm Oral Presentations 51: Motor control and learning

Location: **048**
Session Chair: **Fabrizio Sors**

ID: 320 / Oral Presentations 51: 1
Oral presentations
Topics: Emotion, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Movement, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative)
Keywords: Anxiety, Motor Learning, Motor Control, Risk

Measuring Anxiety in the Learning of High-Risk Motor Skills: A Methodological Discussion

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Anxiety plays an adaptive role for forecasting threats to safety (Eysenck et al., 2007); however, anxious thoughts and feelings can interfere with how individuals learn 'high-risk' motor skills, which involve perceived risks to physical safety (e.g., gymnastics, climbing, rehabilitation, military). Learning intrinsically requires individuals to approach states of instability in the process of motor exploration (Dhwale et al., 2027), potentially evoking anxiety related to perceived physical risk. There is relatively less published literature about role of anxiety in skill acquisition contexts in which 'approaching risk' is necessary for learning. In this methodological proposal, we discuss research on learning of high-risk motor skills, including how anxiety can be elicited or measured in such conditions. High-risk motor skills may inherently require learners experience feelings of worry to achieve positive learning outcomes given unstable (variable) states. Experimenters should consider measuring individuals' risk-taking propensity and/or allowing participants to self-select when they approach riskier conditions (e.g., backflip on soft versus hard surface). High-risk motor skills can also involve dynamic whole-body coordination (e.g., unicycling) that increases physiological activation, requiring disentanglement of arousal-based signals related to physical activity versus anxiety. Thus, multimodal approaches integrating measures such as perceived anxiety, 3D motion capture, and physiological monitoring (e.g., heart rate, electrodermal data, eye-tracking) can better contextualize subjective and objective evaluations of learning within anxiety-inducing settings (Crowe et al., 2020). We further discuss implications for best practices and strategies in coaching and rehabilitation to enhance self-efficacy and confidence during the learning process.

ID: 540 / Oral Presentations 51: 2
Oral presentations
Topics: Coaching, Elite sports and expertise, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Perception & attention
Keywords: Expertise, visual percpetion, coaching, athlete development

Eyes don't lie? Qualitative Insights into Scanning Behaviour in Ice Hockey

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This study aimed to examine the visual scanning strategies and developmental activities of elite junior ice hockey players. Specifically, we sought to bridge the gap in in-situ research by providing a first-person perspective on how players visually explore the ice during live gameplay. Sixteen players from USA Hockey's National Team Development Program participated in the study. Data collection involved participants wearing mobile eye-tracking glasses during live scrimmages. Gaze-based videos were used during the interivew to stimulate discussion. Transcripts were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. Analysis generated three higher-order themes: functionality of scanning, innovation meets reality, and learning in development. Scanning was characterised as an anticipatory mechanism for game-phase transitions, reading intentions of teammates/opponents, deception, and injury mitigation. The participants acknowledged that their visual search predominantly anticipatory to prepare them for the next play. When it comes to the development of this perceptual expertise, participants indicated they developed scanning naturally through unstructured play and modelling of their siblings. Explicit guidance from coaches was minimal and often the development of these skills were taken for granted. Furthremore, many participants recognized this video-review through reflective discussion as a learning opportunity to enhance their self-awareness and make the often implicit behaviours more explicit. By integrating first-person gaze video with subjective player reports, this work contributes to our understnading of scanning in dynamic environments. The data provides valuable insights for informing current pedagogical approaches and for guiding future research aimed at designing and evaluating training design and video feedback interventions.

ID: 170 / Oral Presentations 51: 3
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Decision making and judgement, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Perception & attention
Keywords: unconscious processes, consciousness, motor control, kinematic analysis

Illusory Awareness in Professional Table Tennis Players: A Kinematic Analysis of Consciously Reproduced Stroke Parameters

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The present study tested the hypothesis that fast interceptive movements may be guided primarily by unconscious cognitive processes. We tested 10 professional table tennis players in a simple hit–reproduce paradigm designed to test their awareness of racket position at ball contact. In each trial (60 hit-reprod pairs), a confederate served a ball, and the player hit it to a cued location on the last third of the table using either forehand or backhand strokes. Immediately after a hit, the player reproduced the position of the racket at the moment of contact with the ball and rated confidence in its reproduction on a three-point scale. An IMU motion sensor (MetaMotionS+, Mbient Lab USA) mounted on the racket recorded 3D orientation, from which we derived inclination (tilt), heading (horizontal direction), and twist (rotation around the face). We compared the reproduction with the original hit, computed absolute angular error on each dimension, and used linear mixed models and Bayesian analyses to relate error to confidence. Across

trials, reproductions were systematically inaccurate: collapsing across confidence and stroke type, mean inclination error was 13.73°, heading error 31.62°, and twist error 37.58° (all ps < .001; Bayes factors >100). Confidence did not reliably predict error for any angle (all ps ≥ .05), with Bayesian evidence for the null (Bayes factors < 0.08). The present findings provide evidence that professional table tennis players have reduced conscious access to key parameters of their strokes, as assessed by an objective hit–reproduction comparison and by a subjective one (confidence–accuracy relation).

ID: 594 / **Oral Presentations 51: 4**
Oral presentations
Topics: Movement, Research methods (qualitative & quantitative), Youth
Keywords: motor creativity, assessment, children, task duration

Creativity Requires Time: A Preliminary Study on the Effect of Task Duration on Motor Creativity Assessment in Children

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The current pilot study aimed to examine whether children engaged in a divergent motor task produce more original (ORIG) motor solutions when given a longer execution time (i.e., 6-minutes) compared to the traditionally duration (i.e., 3-min). Since ORIG emerges from the divergent production process, time-related changes in fluency (FLU), which represents the number of movements performed, were also examined to support the interpretation of originality outcomes. Twenty-eight children aged 6–15 years (10.36 ± 2.56 yrs) participated in the study. Motor creativity was assessed using the Agility-ladder Divergent Movement Ability test. Changes over time (first 3-min, last-3 min, total 6-min) in ORIG and FLU were examined using RM-ANOVA. ORIG (statistical rarity) was assessed using the inverse occurrence frequency of each action within the reference group, expressed as a percentage. Preliminary analysis omitted inter-rater reliability. ORIG and FLU were compared across different time intervals to assess the effect of task duration. Originality significantly improved over time, with better scores during the last 3-min compared to both the first 3-min and the total test duration ($p < .001$). Fluency also changed over time ($p<.001$), with higher values observed in the first 3-min interval. In a 6-minute task, children produced fewer but more original motor solutions, suggesting a shift toward creative responses. A 3-minute duration seems sufficient to assess FLU, whereas longer tasks are needed to adequately assess ORIG, the core component of motor creativity. Limitations include small sample size, heterogeneous age, and unmeasured factors such as enjoyment and frustration.

ID: 325 / **Oral Presentations 51: 5**
Oral presentations
Topics: Cognition, Mental skills training, Motor control and learning (incl. ecological and dynamic approaches), Non-traditional applications (e.g. music, dance and performing arts, military)
Keywords: Mental skills training, Mental imagery, Music Interventions, Cognitive strategies in sport

Does Combining Music and Mental Imagery Improve Motor Skill Performance in Sports?

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The literature suggests that both music and mental imagery have beneficial effects on motor skill performance in sport (Terry et al., 2020; Simonsmeier et al., 2021), and that music may further enhance the efficacy of imagery (Herff et al., 2021). However, evidence of their combined use in sports remains scarce. This study synthesized and critically appraised studies that reported interventions that combined music and imagery (MIMUS) on motor skill learning and improvement in healthy individuals, and compared their effects with other experimental conditions. A systematic review was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines (Page et al., 2021). Relevant databases were searched to identify studies that reported at least one MIMUS intervention that focused on motor skills performance (e.g., accuracy, pace, speed). Data were extracted and appraised, and Bayesian Mixed-Effects models were used to quantify the efficacy of MIMUS interventions. A total of 16,045 records were screened, with 10 reports (8 articles) comprising 302 participants (110 women; Mean age = 20.66 years, SD = 3.72) included in the final review. Overall, MIMUS improved pre- to post-intervention motor skill performance (Evidence Ratio; ER > 999*, median d = 0.58) and was more effective than imagery-only interventions (ER = 45.24*, median d = 0.40). The findings indicate that MIMUS provides additional benefits over music-only or imagery-only interventions for motor skill acquisition and improvement, supporting its applicability as an effective mental practice strategy in sport. Musical selection and protocol recommendations to optimize MIMUS efficacy based on the reviewed literature are provided.

2:45pm - 4:15pm **Leading with Cultural Intelligence in Sport**
Location: **130**

ID: 635 / Workshop 44: 1
Workshop
Topics: Coaching, Cultural sport psychology, Social and cultural diversity (e.g. migration, ethnicity), Youth
Keywords: cultural diversity, cultural awareness, cross-cultural communication, cultural training

Leading with Cultural Intelligence in Sport

Deniz Urgun, Rita de Oliveira, Mario Borges, Eleni Vangeli
London South Bank University, United Kingdom

As international mobility increases in sport, coaches, athletes, and other stakeholders are increasingly required to operate effectively in multicultural environments. If not managed appropriately, cultural differences may lead to adaptation challenges, misunderstandings, and communication difficulties, ultimately affecting well-being, relationships, and team cohesion. Cultural Intelligence (CQ), defined as the capability to function effectively across cultures, is therefore essential and can be developed through structured cross-cultural training. This evidence-based workshop presents a component of a cross-cultural training programme developed as part of a PhD research project through a narrative systematic literature review, needs analysis with coaches and coach educators, and expert consultation using a Delphi approach. Feasibility testing with coaches across sports and countries demonstrated practical relevance and reported improvements in CQ and cross-cultural leadership. The workshop has three key learning objectives: (1) to develop awareness of cultural differences influencing interactions in sport, (2) to build an understanding of CQ and its application in sport, and (3) to apply practical strategies to enhance cross-cultural communication and leadership. The workshop uses interactive methods, including group discussions, case studies, video clips, and role-play. Participants will engage with structured materials, including cultural values cards to explore cultural differences and reflect on their own values, CQ cards to analyse real-life examples from intercultural sport contexts, role-play scripts illustrating cultural differences in communication and leadership, and reflective tools to support ongoing learning. The workshop aims to enhance culturally responsive practice by equipping participants with the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to work effectively in multicultural sport environments.

4:30pm - 5:00pm **Coffee break**
Location: **Convention Center**

5:00pm - 6:00pm **Navigating emerging tensions and contradiction within the coach-athlete relationship (Keynote Speaker: Sophia Jowett)**
Location: **Convention Center**
Session Chair: **Alexandru Boncu**

ID: 728 / 6th Keynote Speaker: 1
Keynote talks

Navigating emerging tensions and contradiction within the coach-athlete relationship

Sophia Jowett
Tandem Performance, United Kingdom

The coach–athlete relationship has long been recognized as central to effective coaching, athletic performance, holistic development, and overall well-being. However, as our understanding of this unique partnership continues to evolve, new tensions, systemic contradictions, and interpersonal complexities are beginning to emerge. Drawing on nearly 30 years of research and applied practice, this keynote maps out the challenges, opportunities, and unanswered questions that lie ahead for researchers, practitioners, coaches, and athletes alike. By integrating empirical insights with real-life interpersonal dynamics, the presentation aims to stimulate vital discussion, challenge existing frameworks, and foster collaborative debate. Ultimately, attendees will be invited to look forward and co-create future research pathways in this fascinating and rapidly evolving arena of sport psychology.

6:00pm - 7:00pm **Closing Ceremony**
Location: **Convention Center**

8:00pm **Conference Dinner**
Location: **Congress Hall**