



UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING



CRiC 2026

8th International Cluster for Research into Coaching Conference



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University Wi-Fi access through Eduroam or BT UoS Guest Wi-Fi.

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Welcome

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to Scotland's University of Sporting Excellence and to the University of Stirling for the 8th International Coaching Conference of the Cluster for Research into Coaching (CRiC).

Our campus is set at the foot of Dumyat in the Ochil Hills and surrounded by 330 acres of parkland, loch, and open green space. This inspiring setting in which to walk, think, and connect is the perfect place for conversations and reflection, an ideal home for an international gathering of coaching scholars and practitioners.

This year's conference theme, *Echoes of Entanglement: Whose Stories Shape Our Understanding(s) of Sport Coaching?* invites us to consider the relationships, histories, and perspectives that shape coaching knowledge and practice. We are delighted to welcome delegates from eleven countries, representing a rich diversity of academic and applied expertise within and beyond the CRiC community.

We hope that your time at the University of Stirling provides stimulating discussion, new collaborations, and opportunities to connect with colleagues and friends, old and new.

Haste ye back.



Stephen Macdonald

University of Stirling Conference Organiser



Dr Edward Hall

CRiC Conference Officer

Conference Theme

Echoes of Entanglement: Whose Stories Shape our Understanding of Sports Coaching?

This conference invites us to (re)think sport coaching as being shaped by the connections between people, place, history, and a series of (un)seen forces. Coaching, and our knowledge of it, is never simply the transmission of knowledge or ideas. Rather, it is developed through our relationships, shared experiences, and the environments in which we live, train, and work.

The themes of this year's conference are,

- ***Landscapes of Learning and for Storytelling***: How place, history, tradition, and culture shape coaching practice(s) and identities.
- ***Voices from the Margins***: Surfacing overlooked or silenced experiences in coaching, coach education, and coach development (including gender, disability, ethnicity, indigenous, global-south, and socio-economic perspectives).
- ***Entanglement Practice(s)***: Examining the generative relations between human and non-human actors in the (re)production of coaching knowledge.
- ***Power, Representation and Authorship***: Interrogating who gets to tell stories of and about sport coaching, and their influence on practice, policy, coach education, and coach development.
- ***Ethicality***: Reflecting on the ethical implications for coaches and researchers working within complex systems of people, place, culture, and technology.

About CRiC

The Cluster for Research into Coaching aims to promote and support research for the benefit of sport coaches, National Governing Bodies, non-Governmental Organisations, sport coaching scholars, students and other related practitioners.

- CRiC welcomes work utilising qualitative, quantitative and/or mixed methodologies, in addition to discussions of conceptual issues related to sport coaching research.
- CRiC believes research must be informed by a theoretical perspective, whilst written in such a way as to be accessible to the broad community of sport coaching scholars.
- A principal objective of CRiC is to promote and support interrogative research which engender debate on issues related to sport coaching theory and practice - for example, the power relations, the learning context[s], the psychological and social complexity, and the discourse, interactions and exchanges evident in coaching relations and networks.

CRiC Values and Beliefs

CRiC is committed to research grounded in clear theoretical perspectives and communicated in ways that are accessible to the wider sport coaching community. It values work that interrogates and challenges taken-for-granted assumptions, fostering critical debate on the complexities of coaching practice. CRiC supports research that explores power, learning, social and psychological dynamics, and the relational processes that underpin coaching, with the aim of deepening understanding and advancing the field.

Information and membership: www.cricsportcoaching.com

If you are posting about the conference on social media, please use #CRiC2026.

Sponsors

The University of Stirling would like to thank the Cluster for Research into Coaching for the opportunity to host the 2026 CRiC Conference. We would like to acknowledge and thank colleagues across the University and the CRiC Executive Committee for their invaluable support in all aspects of the conference's planning and management. We also extend our thanks to our sponsors.



SportScotland is the national agency for sport in Scotland, dedicated to developing and supporting participation at all levels, from grassroots to elite

performance. It works in partnership with schools, clubs, local authorities, and governing bodies to create opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to take part in sport and physical activity. The organisation invests in facilities, coaching, and athlete development, while also promoting inclusion, health, and wellbeing through sport. By nurturing talent and strengthening community sport, sportScotland plays a key role in building a more active, healthier nation.



Coach Logic is a sports technology company founded in Edinburgh in 2012 by coaches Andy Muir and Mark Cairns and we are thrilled

to be involved in this year's CRiC conference. Built by coaches, for coaches, Coach Logic develops tools that help sporting organisations deliver better coaching at every level. Their flagship innovation, SAM (Session Analysis Model), is an AI-powered coach development platform that captures and analyses coaching sessions to provide objective, evidence-based insights. SAM helps coaches reflect more deeply, receive timely feedback, and grow their practice, while enabling governing bodies to scale high-quality coach development consistently and efficiently, without increasing costs or workload. Coach Logic works with some of the world's leading sporting organisations, as well as partnerships with higher education institutions.



UK Sport is the UK's high-performance sports agency, focused on enabling British athletes to succeed on the world stage. It invests National Lottery and government funding into Olympic and Paralympic sports, supporting athletes, coaches, and support staff in pursuit of international success. UK Sport provides world-class

training environments, research, innovation, and performance pathways to help athletes achieve their full potential. Alongside medal success, it is committed to creating a positive sporting culture that prioritises integrity, wellbeing, and long-term development, ensuring sustainable excellence across the UK's elite sporting system.

Conference Programme at a Glance

Pre Conference **Monday 8th June (PM)**

Time		Speaker/facilitator	Location
From 13:00	Registration	Campus Central (next to SUP café) What 3 Words - ///crusadors.harsh.lectures	
14.00-16.30	Critical Café: AI and coach development.	Dr Edward Hall	Campus Central Level 3
	OR Drawing Attention: Using creating methods to think differently with the world of sports coaching	Dr Alex Lascu	(above registration desk)
17.30	Social prog: Dumyat hill walk	Meet at Registration Desk	

Tuesday 9th June (AM)

Time		Speaker/facilitator	Location
07:30-10:00	Observing Otherwise: Future Possibilities for Coaching Research	Dr Edward Hall & Derek O'Riordan	Sports Centre Main Entrance
09:00-11:30	OR		OR
	Design Thinking in Sport Coaching: A Human-Centred Approach for Innovative Practice	Sydney Graper	Campus Central Level 3
12:00	Lunch	Campus Central Level 3	

Main Conference **Tuesday 9th June (PM)**

Time		Speaker/facilitator	Location
11:30-13:00	Registration – explore campus	Campus Central (next to SUP café) What 3 Words - ///crusadors.harsh.lectures	
13:00	Conference opening	Lecture Theatre A3 (LTA3)	
13:20	Beyond Boundaries Keynote: <i>Fae the Raploch to Elland Road</i>	Prof. Richard Haynes	LTA3
14:15	Break – Tea and coffee	Campus Central Level 3	
15:00	Parallel Session 1 (PS1)		
	- PS1A: Coach Learning and Development 1		Room: 2A43
	- PS1B: Ethics and Care in Coaching 1		Room: 2A54
	- PS1SY: Coaching as Lived, Relational, and Political Practice (Symposium)		Room: 2A73
16:30	Break	Campus Central Level 3	
17:00-18:00	CRiC general assembly meeting	Room: 2A43	
	Social prog: Walk to Wallace Monument	Meet at Registration Desk	

Wednesday 10th June

Time		Speaker/facilitator	Location
09:30	Parallel Session 2 (PS2)		
	- PS2A: Ecological Coaching: Ethics, and Pedagogical Identity		Room: 2A43
	- PS2B: Youth and Athlete Development 1		Room: 2A54
	- PS2C: Coaching as Lived, Relational, and Political Practice 1		Room: 2A73
	- PS2SY: Ethics and Care in Coaching 1 (Symposium)		Room: 2A19
11:00	Break (tea and coffee)	Campus Central Level 3	
11:30	Beyond Boundaries Keynote (inc. Q&A)	Prof. Kitrina Douglas	LTA3
12:45	Lunch	Restaurant (below Registration Desk)	
13:30	Quick fire presentations session (PP)	Campus Central Level 3	
15:00	Break (tea and coffee)	Campus Central Level 3	
15:30	Parallel Session 3 (PS3)		
	- PS3A: Exploring Gendered Experiences in Contemporary Coaching Contexts 1		Room: 2A43
	- PS3B: Ethics and Care in Coaching 2		Room: 2A54
	- PS3C: Coach Learning and Development 2		Room: 2A73
	- PS3SD: Pedagogy in Coaching		Room: 2A19
17:30	Social prog: Sculpture Trail / Walk round loch		
18:30-19:15	Pre-Gala Dinner: Commonwealth Games Exhibition and artefacts from Team Scotland archive		University of Stirling Library
19:15	Pre-dinner gathering for a piper led procession to gala dinner		Registration Desk
19:30	Gala Dinner	Dr. Lesley Mckenna	Stirling Court Hotel

Thursday 11th June

Time		Speaker/facilitator	Location
09:00	Coach Logic (Coach developer software): Opportunity to find out more	Andy Muir and Mark Cairns	Campus Central, Level 3
09:45	Parallel Session 4 (PS4)		
	- PS4A: Coaching as Lived, Relational, and Political Practice		Room: 2A43
	- PS4B: Youth and Athlete Development 2		Room: 2A54
	- PS4SY1: Youth and Athlete Development 3 (Symposium)		Room: 2A73
	- PS4SY2: Ethics and Care in Coaching 2 (Symposium)		Room: 2A19

11:15	Break (tea and coffee)		Campus Central level 3
11:45	Bill Taylor Memorial Keynote (inc. Q&A)	Prof. Don Vinson	LTA3
13:00	Lunch		Campus Central Level 3
13:45	Parallel Session 5 (PS5) - PS5A: Coach Learning and Development 3 - PS5B: Youth and Athlete Development 4 - PS5C: Coaching as Lived Relational, and Political Practice 3 - PS5D: Entangled Ethnographies: Reflexivity, Relations, and Ethics		Room: 2A43 Room: 2A54 Room: 2A73 Room: 2A19
15:15	Break (tea and coffee)		Campus Central Level 3
15:45	Professionalisation of the Coach Developer Workforce (UK Sport Sponsored)	Laurie Marsden, Dr. Jamie Taylor Dr. Andrew Gillott	LTA3
17:30	Social Prog: Optional Whisky Tasting	Meet at Reception Desk	

Friday 12th June (morning)

Time		Speaker/facilitator	Location
09:00	Rising Star Keynote (inc. Q&A)	Dr. Adam Nichol	LTA3
10:15	Break (tea and coffee)		Level 3, CC
09:45	Parallel Session 6 (PS6) - PS6A: Coach Learning and Development 4 - PS6B: Youth and Athlete Development 5 - PS6C: Exploring Gendered Experiences in Contemporary Coaching Contexts 2		Room: 2A43 Room: 2A54 Room: 2A73
11:45	Conference Prizes Introducing: eCRiC		LTA3
12:15	Conference Closing		LTA3
12:30	Lunch		Restaurant

Keynote Speakers

Introductory Keynote Address

Tuesday 9th June

As the host institution of the 8th CRiC International Conference, we were keen to bring the conference into the Stirling context. To this end we have invited Professor Richard Haynes to kick off the 2026 conference with a Keynote entitled: *Fae Raploch to Elland Road: The Making of Billy Bremner*

He was labelled by John Arnott in the Sunday Times as “Ten stones of barbed wire”, but one of Scotland’s greatest players Billy Bremner began his footballing life as a kid on the streets of Raploch, a deprived housing estate in the shadow of Stirling Castle. Based on oral testimony from his peers and archival research this keynote reflects on Bremner’s sporting journey as a young boy from ‘The Raploch’ in the immediate post-war years to a professional football career with Leeds United in the early-1960s. It explores how Bremner’s environment, hours of dedicated street football and opportunities to play football against older and physically tougher opponents helped forge his natural athletic ability into one of the greatest Scottish players of his generation.



Richard Haynes is Professor of Media Sport in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Stirling. His principal research interests focus on the inter-relationships between sport, the media and popular culture. His latest book is *Streaming the Formula One Rivalry: Sport in the Platform Age* written with Raymond Boyle (Peter Lang, 2024) and is currently series editor for *Communication, Sport and Society* for publisher Peter Lang. Richard also works closely with sport and heritage organisations on sporting heritage projects. These include Commonwealth Games Scotland; the Scottish Football Museum; the Bill McLaren Foundation; the Scottish Football Supporters Association; the British Library; National Library of Scotland; and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. He

leads the Sport and Culture Research Group a peer support network of postgraduate research students, early-career researchers and sport heritage practitioners in Scotland. He is an Associate Member of the Leverhulme Centre for the Sciences of Place and Memory based at the University of Stirling and currently leads on an intergenerational research project on golf, place and memory.

Beyond Boundaries Keynote Address

Wednesday 10th June

At CRiC, we look both within and beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries in research and practice to advance our understanding. This keynote address is intended to challenge the conventional or 'taken-for-granted' in coaching. It does so by giving a platform to distinguished critical friends who engage with methods, theory and practice with potential enriching relevance for the CRiC community. This is not to ignore or disregard existing work, but to redirect, reconstruct, redefine or conceptually adapt what we already know. As we seek to develop novel horizons for critical sports coaching research and ensure that its contributions 'live' meaningfully in the wider world, this thought-provoking keynote helps to ensure that differing perspectives shape the future and move us to action.

Since 2025, we have invited distinguished critical thought leaders from beyond and beside sports coaching research to reflect upon and further develop CRiC's commitment to cutting-edge scholarship.

Alumni:

2025 Professor Håkan Larsson

2026 Beyond Boundaries Keynote

For 2026, we are delighted to welcome **Prof. Kitrina Douglas**



Introducing herself, she writes: My research spans the arts, humanities and social sciences coalescing around identity, transitions and mental health. With David Carless I have carried out research for organisations including the Department of Health, Addiction Recovery Agency, Royal British Legion, Women's Sports Foundation, UK Sport, and NHS Primary Mental Health Care Trusts. Our research practice includes video/ethnography, storytelling, song-writing, performance, narrative methodologies

and narrative. My best thinking occurs when I'm baking, running, walking by the ocean or sitting on a surfboard waiting for a wave. I hold a professorship in Narrative and Performative Research in the School of Social and Human science at the University of West London.

[Professor Kitrina Douglas | University of West London](#)

[Kitrina Douglas - YouTube](#)

Bill Taylor Memorial Keynote Address

Thursday 11th June

Dr. William (Bill) Taylor died in 2023 leaving an exemplary legacy as an author, pedagogue and practitioner. As a founding member of the Cluster for Research into Coaching (CRiC), Bill was a driving force behind the critical coaching agenda. He made significant contributions to our community not only through his writing, programme leadership and his editorial role with Sports Coaching Review, but also by championing those who, like him, sought to interrogate coaching as a dynamic, social and complex enterprise. Bill is remembered as a popular and deeply respected colleague, friend and mentor.

Since 2023, we have honoured Bill Taylor in this Memorial Keynote Address by inviting our most distinguished critical thought leaders in sports coaching research to reflect upon and further ‘set the tone’ for CRiC’s commitment to interrogative coaching scholarship. Thus, the address is not only meant to honour Bill, but to consider what his thoughts would be in relation to current day coaching research and scholarship.

Alumni

2023 Professor Chris Cushion

2024 Professor Lars Tore Ronglan

2025 Professor Kenneth Aggerholm

2026 Bill Taylor Memorial Keynote

This year, we have invited **Professor Don Vinson** to bring the 4th Bill Taylor Memorial Keynote

Don writes of his keynote: This lecture argues that critical sport coaching research can resonate more profoundly with coaches and coach developers — if only we had a little more faith in what we are doing. In honour of Dr Bill Taylor, I will be sceptical about scepticism and argue that the insights of Michael Polanyi and post-critical perspectives can challenge the underpinnings of our research, demand and animate value creation stories in coach development, and (re)position coaching as kinesio-cultural practice. Building from Polanyi’s provocation that all knowledge rests on a fiduciary framework — a prior commitment without which no understanding is possible — I will argue that this applies not only to epistemological questions, but also to the empirically supported yet under-examined role of faith and spirituality in sport coaching research. Illustrations drawn from longitudinal research in high-performance coach development and from my role as a junior international field hockey coach ground the argument in practice.



Don is Professor of Sport Coaching at the University of Worcester, leading the Coach Developer and Performance Analyst Research Group. His expertise spans sport coaching, pedagogic theory, and coach developer learning, with recent research exploring Landscapes of Practice. Don is Head Coach of England U16 girls' hockey and has coached within the National Premier League. He consults for UK Sport and numerous NGBs on Olympic and Paralympic coach development programmes. A Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Don serves on international research committees and editorial boards. Passionate about sport, he also plays squash and golf and is active in his local church.

Rising Star Keynote Address

Friday 12th June

The Cluster for Research into Coaching (CRiC) is a global community for critical and insightful sports coaching research and practice. This keynote showcases the important and progressive contributions of members to such scholarship.

Intended to support notable 'champions' of what CRiC stands for, this keynote address gives those at the core of our community a platform from which to reflect upon their studies in sport coaching. To borrow from ethnomethodology, this is as opposed to 'studies for' or 'studies about' the activity. Such leaders thus, are invited to share their journeys and immersions in coaching scholarship, their latest thinking, in addition to future trajectories and new frontiers.

We hope that this energising keynote will raise the profile of current and future leaders in our field, whilst stimulating others to pursue innovations to drive CRiC forward.

Alumni

2024 Dr. Anna Stodter

2025 Dr. Zoë Avner

2026 Rising Star Keynote

This year we are delighted that **Dr. Adam Nichol** will deliver this keynote.

Towards Emergent and Diffractive Forms of Learning, Development and Influence in Sport Coaching

Synopsis: This talk will critically examine conceptualisations of learning, development and social influence in sport coaching. After discussing findings from a large-scale systematic review of literature, the keynote will propose philosophical, methodological and theoretical perspectives with the aim of stimulating new ways of thinking, researching and practicing. Drawing on research conducted with – and developing impact for – a number of organisations, including Professional Game Match Officials (PGMO), UK Coaching, New Zealand Football, The FA, Northumberland Cricket Board Limited, the Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA), The Premier League, and Manchester City (City in the Community), consideration will be given to how and why the same social environment or practice can bring about vastly different forms of learning and influence for a range of individuals.



Adam is an Assistant Professor of sport coaching in the School of Sport, Exercise and Rehabilitation at the University of Northumbria at Newcastle, UK. His research interests principally focus on the sociological study of (non)influence in and through sport using normative and educational theory. He has conducted internationally funded research shaping policy and practice in various sporting organisations. He holds an external examiner position at Buckinghamshire New University and is also a currently active coach and coach developer in cricket and an assistant referee in football.

Pre-Conference Workshops Detail

For CRiC 2026, we are excited to be presenting 4 separate workshops spread across Monday 8th afternoon and Tuesday 9th morning (ahead of the main conference, which begins Tuesday after lunch). The following workshops will be presented:

Monday 8th June

13:30 Campus Central (next to SUP café) What 3 Words - [///crusadors.harsh.lectures](#)

14:00-16:30 Campus Central Level 3

Choose either 'Drawing Attention' **OR** Critical Café: AI and 'Coach Development'

Drawing Attention: Using creative methods to think differently about the world of sports coaching.

Dr Alex Lascu

Sports coaching research has seen a recent shift towards new/different ways of knowing and being to capture the relational task, with growing calls for a more critical lens on the phenomena of coaching and/with the ways we research it. In an attempt to answer this call, diverse methodologies that move beyond reductionist and restrictive classifications of what constitutes 'data' are (re)emerging, including the use of creative and artistic methods of capturing, presenting, and (co)creating artefacts of research. As written word (in the policed and pre-determined form of journal articles) is often privileged in science communication, this workshop aims to expose participants to alternative ways of storytelling and play with tools that may help them think/do/be differently. In this workshop, participants will be (re)acquainted with creative methods such as drawing, photography and poetry through guided prompts centred on sports coaching and coach development before wandering through the Stirling University campus to practice noticing the intricacy of a mundane scene. Participants will be asked to draw and/or photograph their adventure, with particular attention to interesting details and non/human interactions along their journey. Upon their return, the workshop will continue to explore creative expression through written word, guiding participants through poetry and prose to detail their adventure. Such guided exposure through creative methods is a rare opportunity in the sport and coaching sciences, so this workshop will be facilitated by 'experienced others' – scholars who have also been exploring their own use of creative methods through sports coaching research. We hope that this creative inspiration carries on, so we can diversify who/what/how we tell the stories of sport coaching.

Alex Lascu (she/they) is a Sport Scientist in Learning Design, specialising in how talent and skill development practices can inspire a lifelong love of sport and physical activity, and foster elite performance. With a PhD in Sport Science, Alex consults directly with state and national sporting organisations, professional and amateur sporting teams, within Australia and overseas to help create more engaging learning environments and support holistic athlete and coach development. In particular, they specialise in generating knowledge together, fostering athlete and coach curiosity and building evidence-informed practice.

Critical Café: AI and Coach Development

Dr Edward Hall

Responding to fast-paced advancements in and adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies and tools, the purpose of this interactive workshop is to critically debate AI's constructive and ethical use in coach development. The facilitation team will help to guide participants through activities in small groups, bringing together diverse experiences and perspectives, promoting collaboration, unpacking our collective insights as a CRiC community, and mapping potential courses of action to take forward. Initial stimulus will come from a showcase of AI in coach observation and development by Coach Logic.

Driven by key questions relating to AI's strengths and limitations, we aim to connect people through conversation who share an interest in (or curiosity about) AI and its responsible applications across coach development inclusive of research and teaching within and beyond Higher Education and sport organisations. Our intended outcome is not necessarily to arrive at a definitive consensus or position, but to raise critical attention towards AI in coach development, to reveal common concerns, existing problems and future possibilities, and to consider how we, the CRiC community, may seek to shape the development of ethical and impactful AI that maximises benefits and mitigates risks.

Time will be protected at end of this workshop to ensure people can break out into more informal discussions, simply digest what they have heard or review source material that we reference, or to connect with others in pursuit of desirable next steps and concerted action. This workshop is open to those with some or no existing experience with AI – all are welcome.

Edward is an Assistant Professor of the Sociology of Sport as well as a consulting expert advisor, coach developer and mentor. His sociological research examines the relational, (micro)political and emotional complexities of sports work. As an ethnographer, and drawing extensively from situated interviewing approaches and participatory forms of fieldwork, his work critically examines the opportunities and challenges associated with professional practice to inform and beneficially impact workforce development to the benefit of those leading, working and participating in sport and exercise (across public, private, and voluntary sectors).

Tuesday 9th June

07:30- 10:00 – meet at the Sports Centre Main Entrance

09:00-11:30 Level 3, Campus Central (above Conference Registration)

Choose either 'Observing Otherwise: Future Possibilities for Coaching Research' **OR** 'Design Thinking in Sport Coaching'

Note: Observing Otherwise is an earlier start time to allow for the High Performance Swim Programme. Participants should note that suitable, indoor-only footwear must be worn for this session. Air temperature in the venue may be 27-29 degrees centigrade and participants should dress appropriately and carry a water bottle.

Observing Otherwise: Future Possibilities for Coaching Research

Dr. Edward T. Hall, Mr. Derek O’Riordan, and Dr. Andrew Mark Gillott,

Led by Dr. Edward T. Hall, Mr. Derek O’Riordan, and Dr. Andrew Mark Gillott, this participatory session invites delegates poolside to observe the 'HP1' training group live at the University of Stirling high-performance swimming programme as they prepare for the Commonwealth Games and European Championships. Rather than positioning observation as a neutral act of watching, the session asks what becomes possible when we attend differently to coaching. The rhythms of the pool, the interactions and exchanges between coaches and athletes, the material conditions of performance, the histories of the programme and the often less visible work through which coaching is shaped.

Following the session, delegates will be invited to work with a set of observational concepts to consider how coaching is produced at both a sessional and programmatic level, and how live performance environments might open up new questions for coaching research, coach development and the future study of high-performance sport.

In keeping with the conference theme, the session treats poolside as more than a site of and for practice. It becomes a space in which we ask whose stories are heard, whose knowledge counts, what remains hidden in conventional accounts of coaching and how closer, more relational forms of observation might encourage us to (re)imagine the future(s) of coaching research.

Edward Hall is an Assistant Professor of the Sociology of Sport as well as a consulting expert advisor, coach developer and mentor. His sociological research examines the relational, (micro)political and emotional complexities of sports work. As an ethnographer and drawing extensively from situated interviewing approaches and participatory forms of fieldwork, his work critically examines the opportunities and challenges associated with professional practice to inform and beneficially impact workforce development to the benefit of those leading, working and participating in sport and exercise (across public, private, and voluntary sectors).

Derek O’Riordan works across high-performance sport, coach development, and higher education, with experience spanning research, policy, and practice. He teaches at the University of Stirling and contributes to strategic work in the UK high-performance and sporting systems, with a particular interest in leadership, coach learning, and the complex realities of performance environments. His work often brings together critical scholarship and applied practice, exploring how coaching knowledge, policy, and decision-making are shaped through culture, relationships, and lived experience.

Andrew Mark Gillott is a Senior Lecturer in Performance Coaching at the University of Stirling and Visiting Fellow at Leeds Beckett University. Prior to academia, he built a successful career in high-performance sport and the performing arts and continues to work with leading organisations on knowledge exchange in human performance. He has held senior roles influencing practice and policy nationally and internationally, and co-authored professional standards for coach development. He serves on CIMSPA’s Coach Development Expert Group and is Deputy Chair of the Performance Sport Professional Development Committee. His consultancy focuses on mentoring and supervising practitioners in high-performance coaching environments.

Design Thinking in Sport Coaching: A Human-Centred Approach for Innovative Practice.

Sydney Graper, Diane Culver, Siobhan Rourke and Rabia Ozturk-Kizilkaya

Background: Sport coaches operate in increasingly dynamic environments and navigate competing priorities of performance, wellbeing, and development, often within multiple constraints. Design Thinking (DT), a human-centred, solution-focused paradigm, offers an action-oriented approach to help coaches navigate this complexity by understanding end-users' needs and inviting them to shape systems that directly impact them (Laursen & Tollestrup, 2017). Originally developed in design and engineering, DT is now widely applied across sectors such as business, healthcare, and education (Michi et al., 2021). Although interest in DT within sport coaching is growing, particularly for coach learning and development (Askew et al., 2024; Ozturk Kizilkaya et al., 2025), there is limited practical guidance on how coaches can apply DT to address relational, ethical, and performance challenges in contemporary coaching practice.

Aims: This workshop aims to (a) introduce the principles and processes of DT and their relevance to coaching practice and coach identity; (b) engage participants in a hands-on, team-based learning experience applying DT to a contemporary coaching challenge; (c) develop mindsets, skills, and behaviours that support creativity, collaboration, and iterative problem-solving.

Methods: Participants will engage in an interactive workshop designed for coaches, coach developers, and scholars. The session will begin with an introduction to DT's key principles, processes, and examples. Attendees then work through a shared coaching dilemma using Stanford's 5-step DT model: Empathize, Ideate, Prototype, and Test (Brown, 2008). Activities include empathy mapping, problem framing, and low-fidelity prototyping, with ongoing attention to ethical implications. The workshop concludes with a guided debrief linking key DT competencies to everyday coaching practice and coach development.

Learning outcomes: Participants will learn innovative, practical approaches to enhance their problem-solving abilities. They will begin building competence and confidence in using DT to address coaching dilemmas while surfacing the often-overlooked voices of their sport members (e.g., athletes, coaches).

Sydney Graper (she/her) is a PhD candidate in Human Kinetics at the University of Ottawa, Canada, under the supervision of Dr. Diane Culver. Her doctoral research examines how design thinking and sport psychology can enact innovation and meaningful change across sport systems. Her research topic is informed by her prior experience as a university-level basketball player and as a competitive girls' basketball coach. Sydney has led design thinking workshops with diverse sport members, including coaches, across recreational, varsity, and high-performance contexts to address complex challenges related to mental health, mental performance, gender equity, disability inclusion, and coach education.

Parallel Sessions, Quickfire and Poster Details

Tuesday 9th June

15:00-16:30 – PS1A, PS1B, PS1SY

PS1A | Coach Learning and Development 1

15:00-16:30 | Room: 2A43 | Chair: Anna Stodter

PS1A1 | An exploration into the global coach development regarding effective coaching practice for supporting development athletes with intellectual disabilities

Brennan, Steph

PS1A2 | How learning happens: coach educators' beliefs and practices on a national governing body (NGBs) designed formal coach education course

Wang, Zhenlong

PS1A3 | Beyond the Course: A Longitudinal Case Study of Coach Learning in Community Coaching

Chapman, Reece

PS1B | Ethics and Care in Coaching 1

15:00-16:30 | Room: 2A54 | Chair: Alex Consterdine

PS1B1 | Inside the Club: Understanding the role of a Sports Chaplain within Professional Football

Simpson, Harley-Jean

PS1B2 | Caring in a Culture of Performance: Coaches' Relational and Emotional Labour

Willson, Erin

PS1B3 | Essential Yet Devalued: From Care Ethics to Social Reproductive Labour

Porter, Jesse

PS1SY | Coaching as Lived, Relational, and Political Practice - Symposium

15:00-16:30 | Room: 2A73 | Chair: Michelle Smith

PS1SY1 | From alienation to resonance: Empirical, pedagogical and philosophical reimaginings of coaching

Bjørndal, Christian Thue (Paper 1, Alienation as a Diagnostic of Contemporary Coaching Practices: Bjørndal, C.T.; Paper 2, Entanglement, Uncertainty and Professional Judgement in Coaching: Corsby, C. & Lewis, E.; Paper 3, Reimagining Coaching as Resonance: A Philosophical Pedagogy: Reinhold, M.)

Wednesday 10th June

09:30-11:00 – PS2A, PS2B, PS2C, PS2SY

13:30-15:00 – Poster Presentations

15:30-17:00 – PS3A, PS3B, PS3C, PS3D

PS2A | Ecological Coaching: Ethics, and Pedagogical Identity

09:30-11:00 | Room: 2A43 | Chair: Brian Gearity

PS2A1 | What Coaches Learn to Notice: Attentional Ethics Across Two Traditions of Becoming

Darpatova-Hruzewicz, Donka

PS2A2 | Pedagogical Identity Development of United Kingdom Fencing Coaches Through the Lens of Community of Practice Theory

Cubuk, Ethem

PS2A3 | From practice to performance: Show jumping riders prioritise horse confidence over representative practice design in training

Davies, Marianne

PS2B | Youth and Athlete Development 1

09:30-11:00 | Room: 2A54 | Chair: Don Vonsen

PS2B1 | Echoes of adaptation: how families shape coaching practices in Brazilian youth sports systems

Milan, Fabrício João

PS2B2 | An examination of the type, frequency, and intensity of parental stressors across the English field hockey talent system

Taylor, Robin

PS2B3 | “An arm around the shoulder or a kick up the backside?” Using athlete voice to develop a more informed understanding of the knowledge coaches require in relation to the coach–player relationship in performance football contexts

Newland, Andrew

PS2C | Coaching as Lived, Relational, and Political Practice 1

09:30-11:00 | Room: 2A73 | Chair: Adam Nichol

PS2C1 | Tales from the Coaching Pit: exploring the act of competition climbing coaching

Freeman, Clare

PS2C2 | “It is persistent emotional blackmail”: Coaches’ stories of non-physical violence in their daily work as coaches

Erdogan, Sanna

PS2C3 | Living, resisting, negotiating, and contesting the socio-cultural high-performance sport environment: entangled notions of the sociomateriality of power-relations in athletics

Consterdine, Alexandra

PS2SY | Ethics and Care in Coaching – Symposium

09:30-11:00 | Room: 2A73 | Chair: Gillian McLellan

PS2SY1 | Who Cares? An interactive symposium exploring how needs are addressed in sport coaching

Cronin, Colum (Paper 1: Howe, O.; Paper 2: Cronin, C.; Paper 3: Gherardi, M.)

Quickfire Presentations

13:30-15:00 | Room Campus Central, Level 3 | Chair: Don Vinson

This session features a series of quickfire three-minute presentations, each accompanied by a single slide or image. Running simultaneously across three tracks, presentations will take place in an open-plan communal space with all conference delegates present. Each presentation is followed by up to three minutes of questions, creating a rapid share, move, and chat format designed to be both fun and inspiring. With around 40 presentations in total, this is an exciting and dynamic way to build and support critical sport coaching communities.

Physical Poster Presentations

13:30-15:00 | Room Campus Central, Level 3 | Available throughout the conference

PP1 | Breaking the Silence – The unexplored impact of menopause on female equestrians and implications for equestrian coaching practice

Bradley, Stephanie

PP2 | Models based practice as an equitable means to facilitate community physical activity

Murray, Alison

PP3 | Exploring Coach Development in Esports through an Online Social Learning Space

Watson, Matthew

PP4 | Coaches and players' experiences of 'in-competition' scaffolding practices in the first FIFA Women's Futsal World Cup qualifying stage

Silva, Luciana DeMartin

PP5 | Understanding of the Key Issues for Coach Development in Para Sport: Canadian Stakeholders' Perspectives

Ozturk Kizilkaya, Rabia

PS3A | Exploring Gendered Experiences in Contemporary Coaching Contexts 1

15:30-17:00 | Room: 2A43 | Chair: Chris Szedlak

PS3A1 | Navigating the Field: Understanding Women Coaches' Experiences at International Sporting Events

O'Conner, Donna

PS3A2 | Fitting-in and 'learning the ropes': The experiences of an international coach

Santos, Sophia

PS3A3 | Challenging the “think coach, think male” stereotype. Career experiences of women coaching men in field hockey

Phibbs, Rory

PS3A4 | The reflections of coaches’ experiences in the NRLW and what insights they draw on for future practice and development as the game transitions within an emerging elite women’s sport

Barkell, James

PS3B | Ethics and Care in Coaching 2

15:30-17:00 | Room: 2A54 | Chair: Diane Culver

PS3B1 | “You have to be careful that it doesn’t feel like the Truman show or Big Brother”: Exploring the “routinization” of quantification in academy football

Toner, John

PS3B2 | Retired performers' reflections for movement practice (edited book in press)

Jones, Luke

PS3B3 | Making sense of performance and health complexity in sport and music through a Salutogenic lens

Kirkland, Andrew

PS3C | Coach Learning and Development 2

15:30-17:00 | Room: 2A73 | Chair: Christian Bjørndal

PS3C1 | Learning in Place: Designing A Coach Education Pilot Through Community-Rooted Praxis

Mann, Mallory

PS3C2 | ‘Entangled Becoming’: Reframing Coach Developer Learning Through a Cultural Lens

Walton, Jack

PS3C3 | Exploring sport coaches’ experiences of online learning since 2017: A systematic review

Bush, James

PS3C4 | Unlearning for the Coach Developer

Gearity, Brian and Callary, Bettina

PS3D | Pedagogy in Coaching

15:30-17:00 | Room: 2A19 | Chair: Anna Stodter

PS3D1 | Whose stories are being heard? One athlete's experience with an alternative coaching practice

Skebo, Kristi

PS3D2 | Who gets to decide what is worth knowing? The practicality of epistemology.

Lascu, Alex

PS3D3 | A Selection-Box Approach to Module Design and Teaching Practice in Higher Education Sport Coaching – A Tale of Frustration, Support and Hope (Preliminary Findings)

Dempsey, Noel

PS3D4 | Developing collective tactical knowledge and understanding through a participatory research approach: Learning as a socio-pedagogical act

Thomas, Gethin Llewellyn

Thursday 11th June

09:45-11:15 – PS4A, PS4B, PS4SY1, PS4SY2

13:45-15:15 – PS5A, PS5B, PS5C, PS5D

PS4A | Coaching as Lived, Relational, and Political Practice 2

09:45-11:15 | Room: 2A43 | Chair: Luciana De Martin Silva

PS4A1 | Compliance, rupture, and re-storying: A longitudinal view of coaching identity

Stonebridge, Ian

PS4A2 | Towards a sociology of (non)coaching: intentional silence and absence in coaching practice

Hall, Edward

PS4A3 | Becoming, knowing, and coaching: a journey through skilled movement, discipline, and resonance

Bjørndal, Christian Thue

PS4B | Youth and Athlete Development 2

09:45-11:15 | Room: 2A54 | Chair: Luke Jones

PS4B1 | On the problems of athlete choice: rethinking health care for young student-athletes

Øydn, Marie Loka

PS4B2 | Coaching for Positive Youth Development in Swimming: Barriers, Facilitators, and Lived Experience

Hilton, Nathan

PS4B3 | The Logics of Youth Sport Coaching in Estonia: Rethinking Performance and Development

Stoljarova, Snezana

PS4SY1 | Youth and Athlete Development - Symposium

09:45-11:15 | Room: 2A73 | Chair: Kieren Elder

PS4SY1 | Seen From All Sides: Ability Grouping as a Lived Coaching Practice in Youth Sport

Burns, Alex & Moran, David

PS4SY2 | Ethics and Care in Coaching - Symposium

09:45-11:15 | Room: 2A19 | Chair: Sofia Santos

PS4SY2 The Risk-Aesthetic Framework; risk, aesthetics and ethics in high-performance action sports

McKenna, Lesley

PS5A | Coach Learning and Development 3

13:45-15:15 | Room: 2A43 | Chair: Matt Gherardi

PS5A1 | Dyadic Morphogenesis: Surfacing, Shaping, and Re-authoring Coaching Stories in 1:1 Development

Jones, Tim

PS5A2 | Perceptions of educational pathways available for Scottish football club charity and community programme coaches

Wilson, Teigan

PS5A3 | Pedagogical strategies to reckon with the folk wisdom of coaching students: A cross-case analysis of instructional practices amongst US higher education-based coach educators

Driska, Andrew

PS5B | Youth and Athlete Development 3

13:45-15:15 | Room: 2A54 | Chair: Matt Watson

PS5B1 | The Formation of the Self-Surveillance Disposition: How Video-Based Feedback Shapes Embodied Play in Elite Football

Safe, Stan

PS5B2 | Individual Review Meetings in Elite Australian Football: Coach and Athlete Perceptions

O'Connor, Donna

PS5B3 | Endurance Runners' Experiences of the Tapering Process: A Theory-Practice Divide?

Kirkland, Andrew

PS5C | Coaching as Lived, Relational, and Political Practice 3

13:45-15:15 | Room: 2A73 | Chair: Robyn Jones

PS5C1 | 'Space and Time': Team Mental Models in a Northern Ireland Senior International Coaching and Athlete Support Team

Toole, Simon

PS5C2 | Utilizing Non-Traditional Learning Approaches for the Assessment and Development of Sport Coaches' Gender Beliefs

Rourke, Siobhan

PS5C3 | Creating surplus value with little reward: Using Marxist theory to explore the experience of an experienced S&C coach in elite sport

Szedlak, Christoph

PS5D | Entangled Ethnographies: Reflexivity, Relations, and Ethics

13:45-15:15 | Room: 2A19 | Chair: Michel Milistetd

PS5D1 | Do I Wanna Know? Rethinking Researching With vs Researching of Coaches in Ethnography

Skeen, Becky

PS5D2 | Entangled Worlds: Relational Labour, Emotion and Reflexivity in Academy Football Ethnography

Thomas, Ryan

PS5D3 | "Hey, look, there is Autoethnography! Have you ever met?": Meeting my methodology... in person

Gazetas, Georgios

Friday 12th June

10:45-11:45 – PS6A, PS6B, PS6C

PS6A | Coach Learning and Development 4

10:45-11:45 | Room: 2A43 | Chair: Charlie Corsby

PS6A1 | Evaluating a Social Learning Space for Coach Development in Brazilian Taekwondo: A Value Creation Perspective

Milistetd, Michel

PS6A2 | Echoes of coaching: The sonic potential of sport

Bunyard, Jess

PS6B | Youth and Athlete Development 4

10:45-11:45 | Room: 2A54 | Chair: Gethin Thomas

PS6B1 | Foreign Ideas, Local Realities: How Foreign Coaching Philosophies Meet Culture in Lithuanian Youth Football

Feng, Runze

PS6B2 | Balancing Challenge and Support: An Exploration of Coaching Practices in Youth Football Academy Environments and the Development of the Challenge and Support 'Dials' Concept

Holmes, Pete

PS6C | Exploring Gendered Experiences in Contemporary Coaching Contexts 2

10:45-11:45 | Room: 2A73 | Chair: Michelle Smith

PS6C1 | 'Just learning and staying safe': Coaches' adoption of tackle training programmes in adolescent female rugby

Stodter, Anna

PS6C2 | Inside the Interval: The Social-Affective Dynamics of Half-Time in Elite Women's Field Hockey

Wright, Jennifer

Conference Awards

The CRiC 2026 awards are presented by CRiC and Sports Coaching Review journal.

Presented by CRiC:

Best Presentation

Best Postgraduate Presentation

Best 'Quickfire' Presentation

Presented by Sports Coaching Review:

Distinguished contribution to the conference

Excellence in Scholarly innovation

Outstanding poster presentation

Social Events

Monday 8 th June	18:30	Hillwalk up Dumyat (Dumb-aye-at) 418m
Tuesday 9 th June	18:30	Walk to Wallace Monument
Wednesday 10 th June	19:15	Gala Dinner
Thursday 11 th June	17:30	Optional Whisky Tasting

Monday 8th June

The Dumyat hillwalk, setting off conveniently from the University, offers a great wee 418m ‘field study’ in effort, perspective and unexpectedly honest self-reflection. Allow 1-2 hours for this experience as you progress steadily through woodland trails, bluebell forests and grassy tracks, culminating in stunning panoramic views capturing the essence of central Scotland. Methodologically, conditions may be variable and muddy – so appropriate footwear and clothing is strongly advised. For context, our annual Dumyat hill race winners complete the full up-and-down run in under 33 minutes, which is either inspiring benchmarking data or deeply unhelpful, depending on your research stance.

Tuesday 9th June

The walk to the Wallace Monument, offers a slightly more structured ‘case study’ in ascent, along tarmac paths, free from mud-related variables. The Monument itself provides a striking focal point, an iconic landmark and a compelling prompt to engage with the life and legacy of William Wallace (arguably one of Scotland’s most cited historical figures). Unlike Dumyat, specialist footwear is not required, just a willingness to embrace elevation, curiosity and the occasional strategic reflective pause.



Wednesday 10th June

The Gala dinner serves as our ‘synthesis phase’ where we will gather, reflect and celebrate the collective outcomes of the conference’s explorations. With a dress code spanning as smart as you want to be and as casual as you need to be for dinner. Proceedings will begin at 1830 in Campus Central, outside the library, for pre-dinner drinks where you are also invited to visit the Commonwealth Games exhibition in the library archives.

The evening will feature Dr. Lesley McKenna, who will unpack our theme of entanglement in relation to her journey through sport. Lesley is a three-time Olympic snowboarder, an Olympic



snowboard coach and Team Manager and now High-Performance Coach Developer. Her studies have focused on gaining an understanding of the values, practices and ideas of high-performance action sports athletes, coaches and other front-line practitioners and on comparisons with traditional high-performance sports. Lesley will bring these themes to light in the context of her own sporting journeys, from a starting point growing up in the Highlands of Scotland and on to travels through many different sporting landscapes, communities and cultures.

Thursday 11th June

In partnership with WoodWinters of Bridge of Allan, we invite delegates to an evening of rigorous, evidence-based inquiry into one of Scotland's most enduring research questions:

Why does whisky taste so good, and why do we become more interesting after two drams?

Across five carefully curated whiskies (£30 to delegates), we'll explore how Scotland's "water of life" functions as a cultural archive, a social practice and, a highly effective method for encouraging collaboration. Expect notes of peat, honey, heather, and emerging insights into identity, place, and why your colleague from another university suddenly has a lot to say about terroir. This session celebrates whisky as a sensory ethnography in a glass: a chance to think, laugh, sip, and maybe even generate a research idea you'll pretend you had before the tasting. A warm, convivial addition to the conference. Come join us for scholarship with spirit.

slàinte mhath

For this session, we need to capture numbers in advance, therefore if you plan to attend this optional social session (payment of £30 due at the event), **please complete this form by Friday 5th June:**

[Whisky Tasting – Fill out form](#)

Travel, parking and venue

Getting to Stirling

The University of Stirling's campus is just two miles from the centre of Stirling in central Scotland and is easily accessible by bus, on foot and bike from Stirling city centre or Bridge of Allan. The 'usual' web based services will be able to create an efficient itinerary from Scotland's airport to Campus.

Edinburgh Airport - The citylink website has up-to-date timetable from Edinburgh Airport (service 909) to the University of Stirling. [Citylink | Edinburgh, Edinburgh Airport, Stirling and Dunblane bus](#)

Glasgow Airport – The FlixBus website has up-to-date timetables from Glasgow to the University of Stirling. [Flixbus | Glasgow Airport to Stirling bus](#)

Stirling - There is a university link bus (Unilink) from Stirling city centre which runs every 10-30 mins throughout the day. The midland Blue bird website has the most up-to-date timetable information. [Unilink - Stirling city centre to the University of Stirling | Midland Bluebird](#)

Parking

Parking charges apply Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm. Visitors can pay for parking through the RingGo app or over the phone.

CRiC delegates can enjoy free parking however they must provide their vehicle registration number, make and model the conference registration desk. If you don't submit your car registration on arrival this will result in a private parking notice. Please see the link below for more details:

<https://www.stirlingvenues.com/visiting-us/find-us-parking>

There are several car parks on Campus which are monitored by Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), so please be sure to provide your car registration details at registration so you can enjoy free parking.

Accessible Parking

All the car parks around campus include disabled parking bays, which are usually located close to the level access entrances of our main teaching buildings and halls of residence. Any Blue Badge holder can park in these spaces and are not required to pay and display.

Accessibility on Campus

The University of Stirling is committed to catering for the needs of every individual, and we're always working to make sure our campus environment, and support services provide maximum accessibility for students and visitors.

Most footpaths around campus have gentle gradients, although there are some areas where steps or steeper slopes are unavoidable. All our buildings have provision for level access. Accessible toilets are provided in all our main buildings, and our teaching buildings and central atrium are

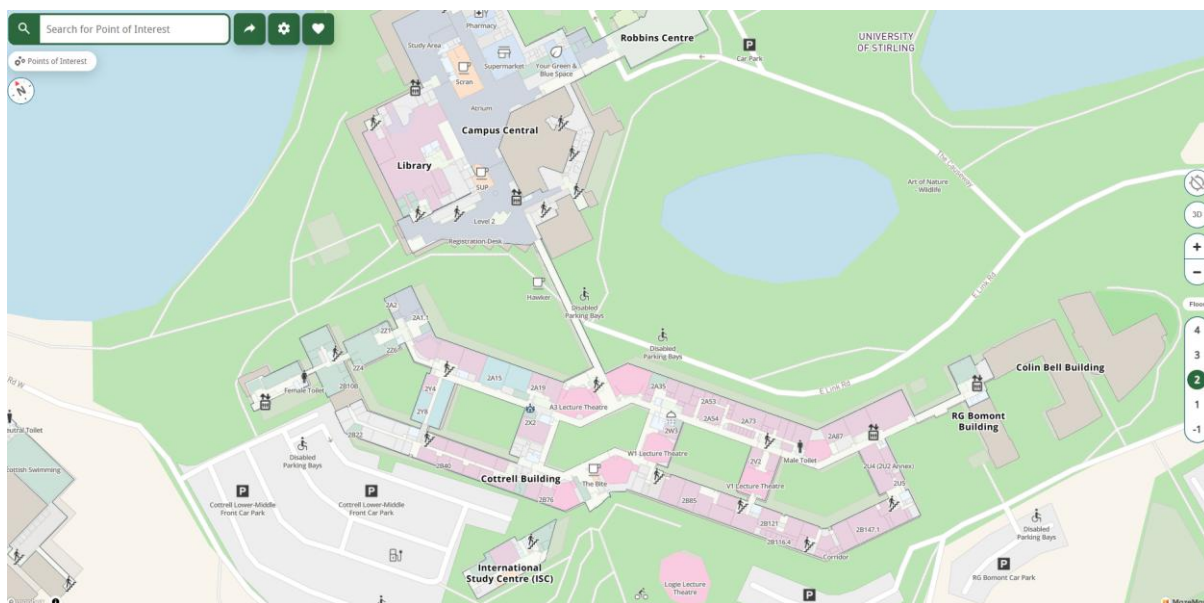
equipped with passenger lifts. All the main lecture theatres also have wheelchair accessible stations and modern audio/visual support systems installed. Many doors on campus are fitted with automated opening buttons, and we're always implementing improvements as we carry out on-going refurbishments.

Getting around campus

The following link to Mazemap can be used to navigate your way to specific rooms and around the wider Campus Estate.

[Getting around campus | About | University of Stirling](#)

Here is an overview of our Campus Map.





Emergency and Key Contacts

Requesting an Ambulance

The person with the casualty should **dial 999** direct;

Once the call has ended, the person with the casualty must call the Security Control Room to make security staff aware that an ambulance has been contacted and will be attending the campus - **'2222'** from any internal telephone or **01786 467999** from a mobile phone; The security staff will then meet the dispatched ambulance and direct it on campus to its destination.

All Other Requests for Emergency Assistance Including 'Fire' and 'Police'

Direct requests to the University Main Security Control Room **'2222'** from any internal telephone or **01786 467999** from a mobile phone; security staff will call/liase with the Emergency Services Control Room.

Sports Facilities on Campus

If you are resident during the conference in the Stirling Court Hotel you can enjoy complimentary access to the University's leisure facilities. If you are not staying on campus, you can pay as you go.



[Swimming pool >](#)



[Gym and fitness >](#)



[Tennis courts >](#)



[Sports halls and squash >](#)



[Grass and artificial pitches >](#)



[Athletics track >](#)



[High performance suite >](#)



[Golf Studio >](#)



[Sports Centre Opening Hours & Swimming Pool Timetable](#)

These facilities include our 50m swimming pool, indoor gym, fitness classes, athletics track and our 8-court or 3-court sports halls.

Historic Stirling and University

The University of Stirling was opened in 1967 on a brand-new campus built on the estate of the 18th century Airthrey Castle. Lying two miles from the Royal Burgh of Stirling, the campus boasts impressive views as well as a large amount of wildlife, which adds to a relaxed atmosphere.

The campus is widely regarded as one of the most scenic university campuses in the United Kingdom, set within a 330-acre estate at the foot of the Ochil Hills and centred around the historic Airthrey Estate. The University acquired the estate following its founding, when the UK government selected the site for a new university as part of the 1960s expansion of higher education, purchasing it from the Henderson family, who had been the estate's principal private owners in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



The campus incorporates Airthrey Castle, an 18th-century mansion originally built for Robert Haldane, later expanded in the Victorian period, and surrounded by landscaped parkland designed in part by the landscape gardener William Tait.

From its inception, the University was designed to integrate modern academic buildings within this historic and natural setting, and it has since evolved with the addition of teaching, research, and residential facilities.

As Scotland's University for Sporting Excellence, our sports facilities are ranked 1st in the UK and 2nd in the world (International Student Barometer 2024). Our campus has extensive outdoor and indoor facilities including gym spaces, a 50m swimming pool, tennis courts, sports halls, athletics track and outdoor pitches.



The city of Stirling itself is an impressive mix of old and new and has a growing reputation as one of the most attractive places to live in the UK. With a population of almost 210,000, Stirling has emerged as a leading cultural and business centre, with ongoing regeneration in both industry and the arts attracting investment from home and abroad.

Stirling, Scotland's ancient capital and the original seat of the Scottish crown, has played a pivotal role in Scotland's history. Dominated by its famous Castle, Stirling has been a focal point for some of the most influential episodes in Scotland's past, including the Wars of Independence during the Middle Ages.

The National Wallace Monument, dedicated to William Wallace (portrayed by Mel Gibson in the Oscar-winning film, *Braveheart*), is a reminder of the city's turbulent history, and stands as a sentinel above the University campus.



Appendix: Abstracts

This section contains all abstracts arranged in alphabetical order by presenting author's surname.

B

Abstract PS3A4 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3A4 | The reflections of coaches' experiences in the NRLW and what insights they draw on for future practice and development as the game transitions within an emerging elite women's sport

Barkell, James F.¹; O'Connor, Donna¹; Hanlon, Clare²; Taylor, Tracy³

¹ The University of Sydney, Australia

² Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia

³ RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

Keywords: Women's rugby league, sports coaching, professionalisation, coach development, bioecological framework (PPCT)

Women's sport is experiencing rapid growth and increasing professionalisation. The National Rugby League Women's (NRLW) competition in Australia exemplifies this transition, as it continues to evolve from a semi-professional to an elite professional environment. Coaches in the NRLW are navigating this shifting performance landscape, experiencing unique demands, expanding athlete pathways, and heightened expectations. These conditions present distinct challenges including managing resource constraints, supporting athletes with diverse developmental backgrounds, and facilitating transitions from dual-career participation to full-time professional sport (O'Brien et al., 2023). The aim of this study was to examine how coaches in the NRLW reflect on their coaching experiences and the insights they gain to inform their future practice and professional growth. To understand these experiences, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 NRLW coaches (seven female and five male). Data analysis employed reflexive thematic analysis, using Bronfenbrenner's PPCT framework (Process, Person, Context, Time). This model enabled a comprehensive examination of how coaching processes, individual coach attributes, contextual factors and the dynamics of time interact to shape coaching within the sport (Xia et al., 2020).

The PPCT framework illuminated intricate interactions between the differing layers within coaching (Brandão et al., 2024). For example, the coach's communication style often influenced their coaching process and the context from an environmental position. Changes over time impacted personal experience and created a cyclical process of coach learning and development.

Results demonstrate how these dynamic layers of coaching interact, consistently shaping and influencing one another. They highlight the importance of supportive cultures, equitable resourcing and responsive leadership. Findings provide practitioners with important implications for the future direction of coach education that specifically support the professionalisation of women's sport. Furthermore, they offer insight into how coaches learn, lead and adapt within a rapidly developing environment. Additionally, researchers gain a validated application of the PPCT framework to guide future inquiries into the dynamics of professionalising women's sports.

About the presenting author

James Barkell works as a lecturer in the Health and Physical Education Program at the University of Sydney. He lectures in Physical Education, Sports Nutrition and Sports Coaching. His research primarily focuses on exploring coaching practices and coach development as well as sports performance analysis. James brings both academic rigor and lived sporting experience to his work, as a former professional rugby union player turned coach. Awarded the Rugby Australia Coach of the Year in 2024, James also hosts The Coach Doctor Podcast, where he engages with leading voices on all aspects of coaching and performance.

Abstract PS4A3 | Thursday, 11th June | 09:45-11:15

PS4A3 | Becoming, knowing, and coaching: a journey through skilled movement, discipline, and resonance

Bjørndal, Christian Thue¹

¹ Norwegian School of Sport Science

Keywords: Sport coaching, athlete development, coach education, post-structuralism, new materialism

This presentation traces a personal and intellectual journey from striving for control and certainty in coaching toward a more relational, critical, and ethically attuned practice. Beginning with my embodied experiences as a handball goalkeeper and early career as a sport science-trained coach, I examine how disciplinary logics of planning, measurement, and optimisation shaped my assumptions about performance and learning. Encounters with the work of Michel Foucault revealed how these tools act as technologies of power, governing athletes' conduct through surveillance, normalisation, and compliance. Bruno Latour's actor-network theory then challenged the notion of coaching as the linear application of expert knowledge, showing instead how practice is continuously assembled through human and non-human relations. Karen Barad's agential realism further unsettled fixed boundaries between coach, athlete, and environment, foregrounding entanglement, intra-action, and ethical responsibility. Drawing on Hartmut Rosa's concept of resonance, I propose reimagining coaching beyond "best practices" toward emergent, situated "next practices" that cultivate connection, openness, and transformation. The chapter invites coaches and educators to know differently and create conditions for meaningful, resonant sporting experiences.

About the presenting author

Christian Thue Bjørndal is a Professor of Sport Coaching and Athlete Development at Norwegian School of Sport Sciences. His research focuses on coaching practices, athlete development, and power relations in sport, drawing on critical and post-structural perspectives. He has published widely on youth sport, elite development systems, and coach education, with particular attention to sustainability, wellbeing, and governance in sport.

PS1SY1 | From alienation to resonance: Empirical, pedagogical and philosophical reimaginations of coaching

Bjørndal, Christian Thue¹; Corsby, Charlie²; Lewis, Emlyn²; Reinold, Marcel³

¹ Norwegian School of Sport Science, Norway

² Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK

³ University of Tromsø, Norway

Keywords: Sociological theory, coaching research, contemporary coaching practices, relational, temporal and institutional forces

This symposium brings together sociological theory and coaching research to explore how contemporary coaching practices are shaped by broader relational, temporal and institutional forces – aligning with the CRiC 2026 theme Echoes of Entanglement. Drawing on Hartmut Rosa’s sociology of resonance (Rosa, 2019), the session proposes a coherent trajectory from empirical diagnosis, through pedagogical reframing, to a philosophically grounded reimagining of coaching.

The first paper situates coaching within socio-temporal conditions that can generate relational alienation, drawing on empirical and conceptual sport research (Bjørndal & Espedalen, 2025; Reinold, 2025). The second paper reframes coaching practice as an entangled pedagogical domain that foregrounds uncertainty, professional noticing and relational responsiveness in everyday practice (Steinwachs, Kalthoff, & Reinold, 2025). The third paper moves into philosophical terrain by articulating a resonance pedagogy as a normative orientation, emphasising affective engagement, mutual transformation and semi-controllability rather than instrumental optimisation (Quidu et al., 2025).

Across all three contributions, resonance is not proposed as a method but as a way of thinking about how coaches and athletes relate meaningfully to each other, their environment and their practice. Collectively, the symposium advances critical and practice-informed perspectives on coaching that resonate with CRiC’s invitation to rethink coaching through relationships, shared experiences and context.

Paper 1: Alienation as a Diagnostic of Contemporary Coaching Practices (Christian Thue Bjørndal)

Recent sport research documents rising levels of stress, burnout, emotional detachment and instrumental self-relations among athletes and coaches. This paper brings together empirical findings and sociological theory to diagnose these developments through Hartmut Rosa’s concept of alienation (Rosa, 2019).

Alienation is conceptualised not simply as dissatisfaction or overload, but as a relational condition in which individuals remain active and productive while experiencing reduced responsiveness, meaning and affective engagement. Drawing on empirical research from youth and adult sport, alongside recent sport-philosophical analyses, the paper examines how dominant coaching environments—characterised by acceleration, performance metrics, surveillance and expectations of continuous improvement—may foster affectively “mute” relationships (Bjørndal & Espedalen, 2025; Reinold, 2025).

Rather than attributing alienation to individual motivation or coaching competence, the analysis situates it within broader socio-temporal and institutional arrangements that privilege optimisation, control and

outcome certainty. These conditions shape what counts as “good coaching,” narrowing pedagogical imagination and marginalising uncertainty, vulnerability and relational responsiveness.

By grounding Rosa’s theory in empirical sport research, the paper establishes alienation as a diagnostic lens for understanding contemporary coaching practices. This diagnosis provides the empirical foundation for subsequent papers, which explore how coaching might be reframed and reimagined beyond instrumental effectiveness.

Paper 2: Entanglement, uncertainty and professional judgement in coaching (Charlie Corsby & Emlyn Lewis)

Building on the empirical diagnosis of alienation, this paper reframes coaching as an entangled pedagogical practice characterised by uncertainty, relational complexity and situated professional judgement. While dominant coaching models often emphasise planning, control and effectiveness, everyday coaching unfolds in dynamic contexts that resist linear causality and predictable outcomes.

Drawing on resonance-oriented research in education, particularly work on resonance-sensitive professional vision, the paper examines how prevailing notions of coaching quality privilege controllability and outcome achievement, shaping what coaches notice, value and respond to in practice (Steinwachs, Kalthoff, & Reinold, 2025). Such orientations risk sidelining affective engagement, responsiveness and ethical judgement.

By foregrounding entanglement, the paper conceptualises coaching quality as emerging through ongoing interactions between coaches, athletes, institutional demands, material conditions, and coaches’ familial lives. Uncertainty is treated not as a deficit of expertise, but as an inherent feature of pedagogical practice that requires attunement rather than technical certainty. In this way, the paper takes the work-life-leisure nexus as a particular point of consideration for coaches. This reframing provides a conceptual bridge between empirical diagnoses of alienation and philosophical discussions of resonance. Coaching is positioned as a pedagogical practice that cannot be reduced to methods, techniques, or even tied to particular locations, but instead depends on professional sensitivity to relational and temporal dynamics. Doing so explores the entanglements of coaching in resonance terms.

Paper 3: Reimagining coaching as resonance: a philosophical pedagogy (Marcel Reinold)

The final paper turns explicitly to philosophy, developing resonance pedagogy as a normative orientation for reimagining coaching. Drawing on Hartmut Rosa’s theory of resonance, coaching is conceptualised not primarily as an intervention aimed at predefined outcomes, but as a mode of relating characterised by affection, response-ability, mutual transformation and semi-controllability (Rosa, 2019).

Resonance is not presented as a technique or guarantee of positive experiences. Instead, it functions as a philosophical criterion for evaluating the quality of coaching relationships and pedagogical environments. Engaging critically with recent sport and physical education scholarship, the paper clarifies both the possibilities and limits of resonance pedagogy, cautioning against its instrumentalisation while acknowledging tensions between resonance, skill acquisition and performance demands (Reinold, 2025; Quidu et al., 2025).

The paper also explores implications for coach education, suggesting a shift from competence-based prescriptions toward cultivating professional sensitivity, ethical judgement and openness to uncertainty.

In doing so, it offers a philosophically grounded alternative to dominant effectiveness-driven paradigms without rejecting performance or learning outcomes outright.

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About the presenting authors

Christian Thue Bjørndal is a Professor of Sport Coaching and Athlete Development at Norwegian School of Sport Sciences. His research focuses on coaching practices, athlete development, and power relations in sport, drawing on critical and post-structural perspectives. He has published widely on youth sport, elite development systems, and coach education, with particular attention to sustainability, wellbeing, and governance in sport.

Charlie Corsby is a Senior Lecturer in Sport Coaching at Cardiff Metropolitan University. His work explores coach education, learning, and professional practice, with a particular interest in pedagogical approaches and the lived experiences of coaches. He is actively involved in coach development programmes and research addressing reflective practice and contemporary challenges in sport coaching.

Emlyn Lewis is a footballer, club captain, and centre-half at Weston-super-Mare AFC. He holds a PhD in sport coaching from Cardiff Metropolitan University, where he combined his playing career with Cardiff Met FC alongside extensive academic study. He has also represented and captained the Wales C national team and featured for Cardiff Met in the UEFA Europa League.

Marcel Reinold is an Associate Professor in Sport Science at UiT The Arctic University of Norway. His research centres on coach learning, talent development, and high-performance sport environments, often informed by qualitative and sociological approaches. He has contributed to studies on elite sport systems and coach education in Nordic contexts.

PP1 | Breaking the Silence – The unexplored impact of menopause on female equestrians and implications for equestrian coaching practice

Bradley, Stephanie¹

¹ Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK

Keywords: Menopause, perimenopause, equestrian, coaching, performance

Background: The physiological, cognitive, and psychosocial consequences of menopause and perimenopause remain underexplored within equestrian sport, despite their potential to influence both performance and well-being. Equestrian disciplines are uniquely sex-integrated, with athletes often sustaining participation across the lifespan. Consequently, coach understanding of the menopause transition is essential to the delivery of genuinely athlete-centred practice.

Aim: This study examined the perceived impact of perimenopause and menopause on equestrian riders' participation and performance, with a focus on identifying underreported challenges and informing coaching practice.

Methods: A total of 1,629 female equestrian participants (age range: 21–73 years; $M = 51.86$, $SD = 14.95$), self-identifying as within or beyond perimenopause or menopause, were recruited across disciplines. Data were collected via an online, non-validated questionnaire disseminated through Facebook over a 16-day period. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses were subjected to thematic analysis.

Results: Five overarching themes were identified: (1) physical discomfort; (2) mental health and emotional well-being; (3) riding confidence and perceived ability; (4) awareness and support; and (5) hormone replacement therapy and management strategies. Notably, 62% of respondents reported discontinuing coaching sessions, while 60% of those continuing indicated that their experience was negatively affected by symptoms. Furthermore, over half of participants reported feeling unable to communicate openly with their female coach regarding menopause-related challenges.

Conclusion: The menopause transition exerts multifaceted effects on equestrian athletes, shaping motivation, confidence, and overall engagement. These findings highlight a critical need for enhanced coach education and supportive practice environments. Beyond equestrian sport, the study offers broader insights relevant to ageing female athletes, including those engaged in Masters sport, and contributes to addressing the cultural silence surrounding this life stage.

About the presenting author

Steph Bradley is a British Equestrian Level 4 Coach, Grand Prix dressage rider, and CIMSPA Chartered Coach Developer, working across multiple sports including football, hockey, and gymnastics. She has represented Wales in dressage every year since 2011 at the Home Internationals, and also competes for the Wales Women O55s field hockey team, playing in the Hockey Masters World Cup 2024 in Auckland, New Zealand. Steph completed a Masters in Professional Practice in Sport Coaching at the University of Gloucestershire in 2024. Her research on peri/menopause and sport has been awarded three academic first prizes and has been accepted for publication in Post Reproductive Health. She is currently undertaking a Doctorate in Sport Coaching at Cardiff Metropolitan University, alongside running her equestrian, coaching, and coach development business. Steph is based near Wrexham in North Wales.

PS3C4 | An exploration into the global coach development regarding effective coaching practice for supporting development athletes with intellectual disabilities

Brennan, Steph¹; Collins, Rosie¹; Taylor, Robin¹

¹ Dublin City University, Ireland

Keywords: Inclusive Sport, Special Olympics, coaching effectiveness, athlete perceptions, PWID

The Special Olympics (SO) is a global sports movement, founded in 1968, with the aim of fostering inclusion and confidence for participants, thereby embedding a joy of sport and life-long movement. The SO promotes respect, acceptance, and equal opportunities, helping to break down barriers and change perceptions about People with Intellectual Disabilities (PWID) worldwide (Special Olympics, 2025). Unfortunately, at all levels of sport, coaches lack formal training specific to working with PWID leading to uncertainty or exclusion. Whilst a number of professional coach development programmes (such as university level courses, as well as formal ‘coaching badges’) have been developed (Cushion et al., 2003), very few programmes have attempted to offer specialist knowledge for those working in environments with vulnerable populations (such as parasport, or individuals with intellectual disabilities). Previous challenges for coaches of PWID include communication concerns (coaches often face difficulties adapting communication styles to meet the cognitive and emotional needs of PWID), motivation and inclusion (engaging athletes can be challenging, especially if traditional methods are not effective or the group has disparate coaching needs; Townsend & Cushion, 2017) and ethical considerations (Coaches need to balance safety, autonomy, and dignity, while sometimes facing limited resources or support from institutions; Hardin, 2005). This research project will look to expand understanding of coaching within this specific population. Specifically, this study will include the athlete and coach voices, to better understand their perception of coaching. Focus groups will be employed to create a sense of inclusion and community for participants, as well as a familiar space for them to share their own experiences and hear more about the experiences of peers.

About the presenting author

Steph Brennan is a Research Assistant at Dublin City University, Coach Developer at England Hockey and Hockey Coach with interests in effective coaching practice. Steph recently completed an MSc in Elite Performance Sport at DCU and is now working on research projects with the intention to impact coaching in real world environments.

PS3C4 | Echoes of coaching: The sonic potential of sport

Bunyard, Jessica¹

¹ Leeds Beckett University, UK

Keywords: Sound; coaching, coach development, gender bias

Sport and sports coaching are sonic, as well as visual mediums. However, this is often neglected, especially when considering sports coaching and acts of research. Drawing on the title of the conference, Echoes of Entanglement, the presentation will explore how sound can be used within coach development and research. Pulling together theories from visual cultures and sports coaching the presentation will form a call to action to explore the sonic nature of sport and sports coaching, and to use sound as a coach development tool.

Alongside a theoretical grounding including Michel Chion and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, the presentation will feature practical applications and examples. Through my own practice and Professional Doctorate, I have explored the use of sound as a reflexive tool and as a way to tell emotive stories of marginalised voices (in my case as a female coach within a male dominated sport).

Alongside the presentation, I would like to display a sound work instead of a poster. The work is an example of using sonic methods to explore coach development and my own experiences as a female coach. The work is an artwork but has flexible ways of being presented (an audio device with headphones or a space online so that attendees can digitally listen would work).

About the presenting author

Jess Bunyard is a researcher, coach and coach developer exploring visual cultures/arts-based methods, rugby union and social justice.

PS4SY1 | “Seen from all sides: Ability grouping as a lived coaching practice in youth sport”

Burns, Alex¹; Moran, David¹

¹ Dublin City University, Ireland

Keywords: Streaming, youth sport, coaching practice, lived experience

Ability grouping, commonly referred to as streaming, is a routine yet under-examined organisational practice in youth sport. Despite its prevalence, streaming is often framed as a technical or logistical solution, rather than as a socially situated coaching practice shaped by values, assumptions, and lived experience. This is notable given long-standing critiques from education that ability grouping can reproduce inequality and shape learner identities beyond measurable outcomes (Johnston & Wildy, 2016; Terrin & Triventi, 2023). Drawing on two interconnected qualitative studies conducted as part of a wider research programme with the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), this work explores how streaming is understood and experienced through the lenses of players, parents, and coaches.

The first study centres the voices of young players and parents, illustrating how streaming is experienced as both enabling and constraining: supporting feelings of belonging and appropriate challenge, while also producing concerns around stigma, inequity, and restricted opportunity. These findings align with sport research emphasising the role of appropriate challenge and perceived competence in sustaining engagement (Guadagnoli & Lee, 2004; Back et al., 2022).

The second study foregrounds coaches' accounts, revealing streaming as a “double-edged sword” shaped not only by pedagogical intentions, but also by personal coaching histories, moral responsibilities, and competitive and structural pressures within youth sport systems. Across both studies, streaming emerges as an everyday coaching practice through which assumptions about ability, motivation, and development are enacted. Collectively, this work raises awareness of streaming as a critical yet taken-for-granted feature of youth sport and highlights the need for future research across sports and theoretical lenses to better understand how grouping practices shape developmental environments and young people's sporting experiences.

We propose that Alex Burns and Dr. David Moran co-present this research to highlight the importance of examining sport-coaching practices through the multiple lenses of those who *live and shape them*.

About the presenting author

Alex Burns - Early career researcher, with a deep interest in talent development, coaching expertise and high-performance environments

PS3C3 | Exploring sport coaches' experiences of online learning since 2017: A systematic review

Bush, James¹; Roberts, Simon¹; Twitchen, Alex²; Cronin; Colum¹

¹ Liverpool John Moores University, UK

² The Open University, UK

Keywords: Learning, sport coaching, coach learning, technology

Recent technological advances and the COVID-19 pandemic have accelerated the adoption of online coach learning provision. Despite this, scrutiny of such provision is only beginning to grow (Perez-Camanero et al. 2022). Given the inherently complex and situated nature of coaching practice, continued research is required to ensure that the ongoing development of online coach learning meaningfully accounts for coaches' biographical experiences and contextual conditions (Stodter & Cushion, 2017). To meaningfully inform the development of online coach learning practice, the field requires rigorous and credible research that can be systematically identified, appraised, and synthesised. In response, this systematic review synthesises research on online coach learning published since 2017. Following PRISMA guidelines, a comprehensive search across ten databases identified 19 relevant studies that were appraised using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool. A reflexive thematic analysis generated an overview of theoretical, methodological, and practical insights. Findings suggest that online coach learning offers perceived benefits including knowledge acquisition, increased confidence, and enhanced reflective skills. However, the existing literature frequently lacks philosophical and conceptual clarity, methodological rigour, and analysis of measurable impacts in practice. Future research should employ learning theories aligned with the virtual domain. Theoretical perspectives such as connectivism and post-humanism may offer valuable frameworks for advancing research in this field by conceptualising how human and non-human actors interact in the production and reproduction of coaching knowledge. Overall, while the evidence is promising, in the absence of more conceptually grounded and methodologically robust studies, the efficacy of online coach learning remains in question. In particular, there is insufficient empirical evidence to determine whether engagement in online coach learning leads to sustained changes in coaches' practice or behaviour, a gap that is likely to persist in the absence of methodologically robust research.

About the presenting author

James Bush is a PhD candidate researching the emerging field of online coach learning. James' research experience also encompasses coaching philosophy and care in coaching, informed by and complementary to his applied practice as a football coach developer. Alongside James' doctoral studies, he is a Lecturer in Football Coaching at the Global Institute of Sport, where he primarily supports postgraduate (MSc) students.

PS1A3 | Beyond the Course: A Longitudinal Case Study of Coach Learning in Community Coaching

Chapman, Reece¹; Cronin, Colum²

¹ Northumbria University, UK

² Liverpool John Moores University, UK

Keywords: Coach education, critical pedagogy, situated practice, community coaching

Classic education theory (e.g., Dewey, 1938; Freire, 1973) and classic, and contemporary, coach education literature (e.g., Stodter et al., 2014) explain that authentic learning happens in context. However, much coach education literature focuses on coaches on course experience and perceptions and has rarely considered how it impacts their lives and coaching practice. Whilst these practices do not occur in a social vacuum and are manifestations of a wider (social) system, there remains a requirement for revised approaches that meet the needs of coaches. Subsequently, this presentation advances the field by exploring coaches learning from a longitudinal perspective, sharing an original and novel, case-studied creative non-fiction story and the trials and tribulations throughout one coach's engagement with formal coach education.

This presentation emanates from a wider project working with three coaches over 12-months where author one adopted a participant-observer position (Johnson et al., 2006) and collected in-situ observation field notes (59-sessions), semi-structured interviews (12), non-formal discussion and NGB portfolio evidence (3-portfolios). Utilising Freirean theory, specifically concepts including, but not limited to, humility and hope (Freire 1973; Chapman et al., 2023), this presentation explores one coach's (Rupert) story and interrogates how he navigated a pre-determined curriculum with varied success. Rupert, like many grassroots coaches, attended formal coach education that lacked opportunity for time and space to explore their nuanced needs, although, it is important to note that some learning was recognised. Presented through four scenes and adopting evocative language, this story presents a 'negative social context' (e.g., a somewhat deprived UK location) where Rupert's practice prioritised social development to empower, liberate and provide equal voice to those who he works with. Therefore, this presentation calls for formal coach education to be more situated within the community and for coaching researchers to consider and evaluate the efficacy of coach education within coaches' worlds.

About the presenting author

Reece is an Assistant Professor in Sport Coaching at Northumbria University. His research focuses on the socio-pedagogical development, and coach experiences, of coach education. This work has attempted to prioritise the voice of coach educators/developers and importantly, community coaches.

PS2C3 | Living, resisting, negotiating, and contesting the socio-cultural high-performance sport environment: entangled notions of the sociomateriality of power-relations in athletics

Consterdine, Alexandra¹

¹ Liverpool John Moores University, UK

Keywords: Power, coach-athlete relationships, poststructuralism/postmodernism, ethno-drama

Background: In high-performance sport, the coach–athlete relationship is often framed as central to athlete development and well-being. Yet, such relationships are dynamic, contested, and deeply embedded within broader sociocultural and institutional landscapes.

Aim: Using the sporting domain of elite track and field athletics in the United Kingdom, the research focuses on the way power dynamics play a central role between athletes and coaches, but also considers the influence of equipment, sponsors, athlete agents, coaching managers, and selectors in this field.

Methods: Drawing on poststructuralist and postmodern theory, sensibilities, method and analysis, this study takes a contemporary and critical perspective to present new readings of power that operate within and between both human and non-human agents. Over 35 semi-structured interviews with coaches, athletes, Governing Body (GB) staff, and sporting agents and sponsors were engaged with. Inductive and deductive analysis coupled with reflexive creative analytical practice led to the creation of an ethno-drama staged at a fictional warm weather training camp in Tenerife.

Findings: Sensitive, individualised first person stories are mapped against entangled poststructural conceptualisations of power between athletes, coaches, athlete system managers and GB staff where actors navigate their lived experiences in high-performance sport. Regimes of truth and discourses interact with the productive elements of power that creates people, process and things in a fluid and dynamic topographical landscape. Power relations are not limited to human interaction but include the sociomateriality of non-human agents (e.g., stopwatches, selections policies, funding arrangements).

Conclusion: By allowing for the concepts of struggle, strategy, cooperation and diplomacy, this research provides novel insights by locating evolving coach-athlete relationships within the broader public arena. By recognising the coach-athlete relationship as being part of a system phenomenon where multiple intersecting, conflicting relations occur can we offer a more holistic understanding of high-performance sport.

About the presenting author

Dr Consterdine is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology of Sport, Exercise and Health at Liverpool John Moores University. After completing her PhD on power and high-performance athletics at Manchester Metropolitan University in 2021, Alex has held teaching and research positions at the University of Birmingham and Nottingham Trent University, teaching across undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Her work draws upon poststructuralist and postmodern theory and sensibilities to take a contemporary and critical perspective in (re)conceptualising high-performance coach-athlete relationships. Alexandra positions herself as a critical sports sociologist pursuing qualitative methodologies, poststructural notions of power and postmodernism as both theory and method.

PS2SY1 | Who Cares? An interactive symposium exploring how needs are addressed in sport coaching

Paper 1: Howe; Olivia¹

Paper 2: Cronin, Colum²; Roberts, Simon²; Keane, Alan²

Paper 3: Gherardi, Matthew³; Cushion, Chris³; Cope, Ed³

¹ KU Leuven, Belgium

² Liverpool John Moores University, UK

³ Loughborough University, UK

Keywords: Coach-athlete relationships, ethical practice, feminist ethics

Relationships are essential to the coaching process (Cronin & Armour, 2017). In recent years, some research has argued that coaching relationships should be caring to understand participants' needs, develop dialogical partnerships, and support athletes' learning and performance (see Fisher et al. 2019). Whilst aspirational, the sustainability and efficacy of caring relationships have, however, been questioned (See Dohsten et al 2020; Gearity et al. 2023). From this juncture, and through three critical papers and audience participation, this symposium advances a complex view of care, situated in organisations, and not just interpersonal relationships.

Firstly, Olivia Howe draws on Trontian care ethics to critically view care from an organisational position. This perspective moves beyond the existing accounts of care in coaching that typically use Noddings' conceptualisation, which positions the coach as carer. In doing so, Howe considers whether organisations can care, and if so, who is responsible.

Bridging a relational view of care with a recognition of how organisations influence coaching, Colum Cronin will analyse a head coach's attempt to care in a UK Basketball club. Informed by Noddings' care theory and change management theory, this action-focused work explores the promises and pitfalls of intentionally seeking to care in a sporting organisation. First person accounts from the head coach provide practical and theoretical insights.

Finally, Matt Gherardi will present ongoing, unpublished work on care in English academy football. Drawing on longitudinal observations and interviews with coaches, players and academy staff, this presentation considers how needs are understood and identified. Specifically, it examines whose voices are prioritised in this process and whether identified needs reflect the athletes' best interests or organisational priorities.

Supplemented with audience interaction, this symposium moves beyond existing cross-sectional and retrospective accounts, to a situated view of caring coaching.

About the presenting authors

Paper 1 - Olivia Howe is a Post Doctoral Researcher at the Department of Movement Sciences, KU Leuven, Belgium, researching sports ethics and integrity issues. Olivia holds a PhD in Sports Ethics, specialising in the intersection of feminist issues and sport.

Paper 2 - Colum Cronin is a Reader in Sport Coaching and PE at Liverpool John Moores University. His research focuses on coach-athlete relationships, coach education and the caring dimensions of sport coaching. His work is interdisciplinary, drawing from pedagogy, philosophy, psychology, sociology, education and sports science.

Paper 3 - Matthew Gherardi is a Postgraduate University Teacher in PE and Sport Pedagogy at Loughborough University. Here he researches care in football coaching contexts.

PS2A2 | Pedagogical Identity Development of United Kingdom Fencing Coaches Through the Lens of Community of Practice Theory

Cubuk, Ethem¹; Girginov, Vaasil¹; Blair, Richard²

¹ Brunel University of London, UK

² University of Gloucestershire, UK

Keywords: Pedagogical identity, fencing, coach identity, community of practice

Background: Coaches' identities and practices are interconnected. Pedagogical identity (PI) is the aspect of coaches' identity and refers to how a coach understands who they are as a coach including their beliefs, values, professional objectives, and ways of coaching. Although coaches' identities evolve through experience and social interactions, the development of their PI remains poorly understood. Insights from education and physical education research have yet to be fully applied to coaching contexts. Community of practice have been widely used to examine how coaches reconstruct their identities, as they provide a social space in which learning emerges. **Aim:** This study explores how fencing coaches' community shapes their PI.

Methods: The study is situated within a constructivist paradigm. A case study design was employed, focusing on the British Fencing Community. Following ethical approval from the university, data were collected through coach education course observations (n=6), and semi-structured interviews with coaches (n=21) and coach developers (CD, n=4) and were analysed using thematic analysis.

Findings: The analysis revealed two overarching themes related to PI development of coaches.

Theme 1: The PI of fencing coaches: Crafter, Executive technician, Professional Learner

Theme 2: The role of members in becoming a community: Coach developers, coaches.

The mechanism shaping coaches' PI is lies in the ongoing interaction with people.

Conclusions: The findings highlight that fencing coaches' pedagogical identities are shaped through the interplay between individual agency and social participation, influencing both their coaching methods and underlying values. Formal coach education courses offer initial opportunities to engage with peers and coach developers, while membership in sub-communities, such as clubs and regional networks, contributes to the diversity of their pedagogical identities.

About the presenting author

Ethem graduated with a bachelor's degree in Physical Education Teaching, followed by an MSc in Sports Education. He worked as a physical education teacher and coach in state schools in Türkiye. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Sports Coaching, with his doctoral research exploring fencing coaches' pedagogical development through the lens of Communities of Practice theory. His research interests include coaching pedagogy and learning.

PS2A1 | What Coaches Learn to Notice: Attentional Ethics Across Two Traditions of Becoming

Darpatova-Hruzewicz, Donka¹

¹ SWPS University, Poland

Keywords: Post-structural pedagogies, ecological dynamics, non-linear pedagogies, immanent ethics, coach becomings

Coaching ethics is often treated as something applied after the ‘real work’ of session planning and delivery: a set of values, a code of conduct, or reflective prompts introduced once training decisions have already shaped what becomes possible for athletes. I take the opposite view. Ethics is already at work in coaching insofar as practice and interaction shape what coaches and athletes learn to notice, ignore, value, and repeat. Put simply, ethics sits in how attention is organised - through practice design, in-the-moment guidance, and the everyday judgments that come to define ‘good coaching’.

Drawing on a Simone Weil-inspired ethics of attention, I bring into dialogue two influential traditions that treat coaching as becoming while foregrounding distinct ethical sensitivities. In ecological dynamics/constraints-led coaching, becoming-coach is cultivated as attunement to information and affordances, guiding attention without over-specifying solutions and shaping representative learning environments that expand athletes’ action possibilities. In post-structural work, becoming-coach is a process of subject formation, with attention to how inherited norms are reproduced, contested, and reworked in practice: which bodies and styles are legitimised, when “coaching quality” becomes a regime of judgement, and how affective atmospheres and material arrangements often imperceptibly include or exclude certain futures.

Rather than comparing or synthesising these paradigms, I mobilise their shared concern with becoming to clarify what each makes salient and what can slip from view. The practical contribution is a compact ‘dual attention check’ for coach education: first, a design-focused lens for judging whether interventions genuinely widen an athlete’s lived options in context; and second, a cultural probe into which forms of participation, identity, and aspiration are privileged by what the environment rewards and normalises.

About the presenting author

Donka Darpatova-Hruzewicz, PhD, is a researcher at SWPS University in Warsaw, Poland, where she supervises graduate projects in social, political, and clinical psychology. Her work sits at the intersections of psychology, cultural studies, sociology, and philosophy, with a sustained interest in how critical methodological practices shape knowledge production. She engages questions of ethics and social justice in national and organisational contexts, examining diversity management, racialised dynamics, and various aspects of coaching. Alongside her academic research, she has also worked as an applied practitioner in elite sport environments with organisations, coaches, and athletes.

PS2A3 | From practice to performance: Show jumping riders prioritise horse confidence over representative practice design in training

Davies, Marianne J.¹; Stone, Joseph A.¹; Davids, Keith¹; Williams, Jane²

¹ Sheffield Hallam University, UK

² Hartpury University, UK

Keywords: Ecological dynamics, constraints-led approach, representative practice design, autonomy, confidence.

In equestrian sports there remains a lack of research concerning the skills necessary for both horses and riders to achieve success. Existing studies emphasise the horse's action capabilities, focusing on aspects like biomechanics and physiology, and the rider's postural stability and communication with the horse. Hence, this study explored the factors that shape how horse-rider dyads develop their skills in show jumping. The experiential knowledge of experienced riders was explored through semi-structured interviews guided by ecological dynamics framework in the question design and thematic analysis. The riders provided insights into the skills and attributes they deemed essential for success, what they emphasise during practice, and what they pay attention to in both training and competition. The findings reveal prominent themes while also highlighting conflicting perceptions and a disconnect between practice activities and the demands of competition. Although riders consistently recognised that the horse's actions capabilities were important, they placed greater emphasis on the horses' and riders' psychological and cognitive skills. In training, riders prioritised cultivating the horse's confidence, responsiveness, and ability to adjust their own stride for take-off, as well as strength and conditioning. During competition, their focus was toward the horse's psychological state, quality of the canter, and the specific demands imposed by the course. Despite well-aligned training objectives, there was a stark contrast between training activities and competitive reality. Practice sessions were designed to be low-stress and focused on repetitive drills, which suggests that current practice activities may not adequately prepare riders and horses for competition. This research highlights a potential lack of representativeness in current practice design for horse-rider dyads, raising questions about the transferability to competition settings. The findings underscore the need for future research to optimise practice environments, ensuring they facilitate the transition from training to competition.

About the presenting author

Marianne has over 35 years of coaching experience in adventure sports, academia, and corporate settings. Currently, she works as a Senior Coach Developer at UK Coaching, where she supports pathway coaches and enhances coach learning across multiple sports and activities. As a learning and skill acquisition specialist, Marianne designs evidence-informed experiences and resources. Alongside coaching, Marianne has a rich background in academic research and is currently pursuing a PhD in the application of a nonlinear pedagogy in equine sports. Outside of work, Marianne enjoys equestrian activities, climbing, mountaineering, and paddle sports.

PS3D3 | A Selection-Box Approach to Module Design and Teaching Practice in Higher Education Sport Coaching – A Tale of Frustration, Support and Hope (Preliminary Findings)

Dempsey, Noel¹; Milistetd, Michel²; Hughes, Dean¹

¹ University Campus of Football Business, UK

² Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil

Keywords: Selection-Box, curricula design, coach education, Bernstein, higher education

The construction of coach education curriculum continues to be a critical topic of discussion and exploration. For many, curricula design offers a complex and multifaceted landscape to navigate when considering key curricula concepts of process, content and forms of assessment. In the context of Higher Education (HE) this is often compounded by wider policy foci around retainment, completion, and progression, creating a spearhead of objective focus for those designing and delivering sport coaching education. More recent research has advocated for a process or learner driven focus. This current study therefore presents the metaphor of the 'selection-box' approach and associated features (i.e., choice, time, knowledge) that have been theoretically informed by the work of Bernstein (2000) to curricula design. As such, the aims of this research were 1) to examine the design and application of the S-B features and its influence on student agency, engagement, and relevance to coaching practice and (2) to explore how students and lecturer experienced the S-B features in a postgraduate coaching module. This research used a multimethod approach to collect data on one postgraduate module, including: document analysis, class observations, weekly learner surveys, photography, lecturer reflective diary and learner interviews. These methods were used to capture experiential and reflexive notions of the module, teaching practice and experiences by both learners and lecturer. Initial and tentative findings (analysis in early stages) highlight the difficulty of undertaking a truly process driven/learner first approach within a large objective educational system. Despite positives of learner engagement and developing self-awareness, experiences of frustration from the lecturer were present in trying to promote to learners the need to focus on themselves first. This original and significant piece of work tackles the practicalities of curricula design within a HE space, utilising theoretically informed features, highlighting real-world challenges of such an endeavour.

About the presenting author

Noel is a Senior Lecturer in the academic centre of sport coaching and performance.

PS5A3 | Pedagogical strategies to reckon with the “folk wisdom” of coaching students: A cross-case analysis of instructional practices amongst US higher education-based coach educators

Driska, Andrew¹; Langdon, Jody²

¹ Michigan State University, USA

² Georgia Southern University, USA

Keywords: Coaching beliefs, coaching epistemology, instructional practices, folk wisdom, constructionism

Comparatively little is known about the life experiences, scholarly preparation, and curriculum and instruction practices of US higher education-based coach educators. As part of a larger project to examine the technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge and occupational socialisation of 13 exemplar educators in the US, this particular study examined how these instructors reckoned with coaching students’ “folk wisdom” (an analyst-created concept describing coach beliefs developed through observation, experience, and broader assumptions about humanity). Guided by a social constructionist epistemology, we used semi-structured interviews as the primary method of data collection. After transcribing, excerpting, and coding each interview, we employed cross-case item and pattern analysis (Patton, 2015) to examine convergence and divergence of instructional practices across participants. Results showed a nascent consensus amongst instructors reckoning with folk wisdom, with participants falling into one of three camps: (1) recognising students’ folk wisdom without employing a deliberate pedagogical strategy to address it; (2) deliberately employing pedagogies to increase awareness of the self/positionality in the coaching role; (3) deliberately interrogating or deconstructing folk wisdom germane to curricular content. Some instructors (generally those with more experience) understood the utility of folk wisdom as a “best-available heuristic” that allowed a coach to do the work of coaching. These instructors recognised the limitations of attempting to “debunk” strongly held beliefs using more scientific evidence. Furthermore, they recognised that coaching students are constrained by norms of sporting cultures that prescribe coaching methods (punishment) and approaches (“athlete-centered” coaching, task involving climates) that reify the status quo power arrangements; this recognition, in turn, moderated these instructors’ expectations for changing coaching students’ beliefs and behaviours. These findings imply that coach educators should find ways to meaningfully engage student subjectivities (emotions, beliefs) through pedagogies that can explore, interrogate, and deconstruct coaching epistemologies while demonstrating a humanistic respect for coaching students.

About the presenting author

Andrew Driska is the co-director of the Master of Applied Sport Sciences degree and the Associate Director of the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports in the Department of Kinesiology at Michigan State University (USA). He researches coach learning and current challenges in the

youth sport context and conducts capacity-building and coach development outreach with youth sport programs. He is a former swimmer and swimming coach.

Jody Langdon is a professor in the Department of Health Sciences and Kinesiology at Georgia Southern University (USA). Her research focuses on coach learning and its intersection with self-determination theory. She is a former coach and physical educator and currently works as a CMPC with youth athletes.

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Abstract PS2C2 | Wednesday, 10th June | 09:30-11:00

PS2C2 | “It is persistent emotional blackmail”: Coaches’ stories of non-physical violence in their daily work as coaches

Erdogan, Sanna¹

¹ University of Lapland, Finland

Keywords: Sport coach, non-physical violence, sport club, social power

The purpose of this study is to explore whether coaches are being target of emotional abuse at work and identify the perpetrators. In this study, emotional abuse refers to a patterned maltreatment used to break down the personal integrity and sense of self-worth of the target. Previous research has given voice to athletes who are perpetuated, for example, by coaches’ mistreatment or harassment. Little attention has been paid to the coaches as employers and how the sport cultures enable targeting emotional abuse towards coaches in their daily work. Writings from 33 coaches (18 women, 14 men, and 1 not identified by gender) were collected in 2025 to gain insight into coaches’ experiences of emotional abuse and perpetrators. To meet the aim of the inquiry, thematic analysis was conducted. Three key themes were found to facilitate the hostile working atmosphere: 1) employers as perpetrators of emotional maltreatment, 2) injustice and emotionally abusive leadership culture, and 3) mobbing from athletes’ parents targeted at coaches and their professional competence. The study offers insight into coaches’ daily work by identifying emotional abuse and bullying. It provides a nuanced understanding of contemporary work cultures in sport associations. The findings shed light on the hostile work atmospheres of paid coaches, broadening the understanding of how emotional abuse has negative consequences for coaches’ well-being, emotional safety, professional identity, and self-esteem. Further, the study raises awareness of the need to validate coaches’ experiences and to foster respectful, safe sporting workplaces.

About the presenting author

Sanna Erdogan is expected to complete her PhD in 2026. Her research interests are in coaches and coaching possibilities. Her theoretical discussions draw from feminist praxis.

PS6B1 | Foreign Ideas, Local Realities: How Foreign Coaching Philosophies Meet Culture in Lithuanian Youth Football

Runze, Feng¹; Stankevic, Edgaras^{2,3}; Fominienė, Vilija Bitė³; Raya-Castellano, Pablo⁴

¹ China Football College of Beijing Sport University, China

² Lithuanian Football Federation, Lithuania

³ Lithuanian Sports University, Lithuania

⁴ University of Extremadura

Keywords: Cross-cultural coaching; coaching behaviour; practice activity; youth development

Background: Foreign coaches are frequently recruited by developing football nations, yet limited empirical work has examined whether their coaching philosophies and methods align with local cultural contexts, player characteristics, and developmental traditions. Equally little is known about how these coaches adjust their behaviour when working in environments that differ markedly from their own.

Aim: This study explored these issues by comparing Lithuanian youth coaches with foreign coaches currently working in Lithuania.

Methods: A mixed approach was employed, combining systematic observation of 32 training sessions (3,980 minutes; 40,488 coded behaviours) with semi-structured interviews (6 h 29 min) involving four Lithuanian and four foreign coaches. Observational data captured coaches' behavioural patterns and training structures, while interviews probed the beliefs, intentions, and contextual influences underpinning their practice. Reflexive thematic analysis guided the interpretation of interview data.

Results: Significant differences emerged in practice scheduling and specific coaching behaviours. Both groups devoted substantial time to playing-form activities, yet Lithuanian coaches spent more time in training-form, whereas foreign coaches allocated more time to non-active periods and intervened more frequently for providing instruction. Significant differences also appeared in instruction, feedback, silence, management, and hustle. Thematic analysis generated four themes: 1) contrasting philosophical foundations rooted in differing football cultures; 2) cultural fit and friction, suitability of foreign coaching methods in Lithuania; 3) cultural adaptation in practice, how foreign coaches adjust coaching behaviour; and (4) shared ambition to modernise Lithuanian football development.

Conclusion: The findings suggest that while foreign coaching methods introduce valuable perspectives, successful application requires cultural sensitivity and thoughtful adaptation. Both Lithuanian and foreign coaches recognise the need for a more modern, player-centred developmental environment, highlighting opportunities for collaborative progress when cultural context is taken seriously.

About the presenting author

Dr. Feng Runze is a Lecturer in Sport Coaching and research secretary at China Football College of Beijing Sport University, China. Runze's current research focuses on coaching behaviour and youth development in soccer. He is also an editorial board member of the academic Chinese journal "Sports Coaching Science: Research and Practice" published by the General Administration of Sport of China; and a researcher of the Lithuanian Football Federation. He also has the AFC "C" Coaching License and Certificate in Psychology for Sports Coaches in High Performance.

Abstract PS2C1 | Wednesday, 10th June | 09:30-11:00

PS2C1 | Tales from the Coaching Pit: exploring the act of competition climbing coaching

Freeman, Clare¹; Low, Chris¹; Cowburn, Ian¹

¹ Leeds Beckett University, UK

Keywords: Sport coaching, sport climbing, relational ontology, action-adventure sports, Olympic Games

Coaching for/of competition climbing is an emerging phenomenon, situated within a complex and shifting space. Climbing, an activity traditionally positioned as an action-adventure sport, is itself negotiating sportisation, commercialisation, commodification, and inclusion in the Olympic and Paralympic Games (Wheaton and Thorpe, 2022), and coaches and coaching have emerged as part of this shift.

Although there is a body of research about climbing and climbers, and a growing academic interest in climbing as a competitive and Olympic sport, there is relatively little known within the research literature about coaching for/of climbing, particularly competitive climbing. The preceding study, which sought to establish an initial theory of coaching practice through interviews with experts, found that participants believed relationships are a key element of coaching for/of climbing. Subsequently, this project sought to explore how human and non-human relationships are enacted in this space, and what influence the wider shifting socio-cultural environment is having on those relationships.

Underpinned by a relational ontology, this two-part project aimed to get a sense of what coaching for competition climbing is, how it is shaped by both human and non-human actors, and the relationships between them (Camire, 2023; Hubbard and Wood, 2024; Ingold, 2021). The first part used writing as method to make sense of the researcher's own embodied, sensory experiences of becoming a coach at international climbing competitions. The second part used a year-long ethnographic study with climbing coaches at training sessions and national to international level competitions.

This presentation will share stories from the researcher's time embedded as a participant-observer within these competition climbing environments. The stories aim to capture the lived-experiences of climbing coaches, enabling critical reflection on how the act of coaching is shaped by relationships within a shifting culture.

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About the presenting author

Clare Freeman is a postgraduate researcher at the Carnegie School of Sport at Leeds Beckett University. Her research explores effective and ethical coaching practice in competition climbing in the UK, and how stakeholders are experiencing and responding to the shift from lifestyle/action-adventure sport to Olympic sport. Clare is also a climbing coach supporting athletes on the GB Junior, GB Paraclimbing, and England teams.

G

Abstract PS5D3 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS5D3 | “Hey, look, there is Autoethnography! Have you ever met?”: Meeting my methodology... in person

Gazetas, George¹; Macdonald, Stephen¹; Gillott, Andrew Mark¹

¹ University of Stirling, UK

Keywords: Autoethnography, stories, practitioner, sea kayak

One of the potential contributors to the support of research that successfully informs and becomes useful for coaching practice, thus often leading to worth-sharing experiences, might be hiding in the exact opposite concept of supporting those worth-sharing experiences in coaching practice to find their way into research successfully.

These lived experiences, distilled in stories coming from a first-person narrative of the reflexive and (meta)cognitively engaged actor(s) in them, seem to provide a highly potent channel for the exciting aspects of reciprocity between coaching practice and research. Under such lights, autoethnography, a methodology that inhabits a space between science and art (Bochner & Ellis, 2016, p.66), situates the voices of researcher-participant compounds (Sheridan, 2013), voices echoing on possibly catalytic hubs of this reciprocity.

This presentation, with foundations on my (unpublished) work “Presenting as a Guide, Thinking as a Coach: An Autoethnographic Investigation of a Sea Kayak Leader’s (Meta)cognition and its Implications”, will attempt to provide insights into my experience of using an autoethnographic approach in my research.

Amidst a vibrant and fair quest for the reinforcement of the avenues that support the implementation of coaching research into practice and its usefulness, this presentation will highlight the potency of reflexivity, a first-person narrative, and real stories from lived experiences of coaching practice, finding their way to support and benefit sports coaching research.

In the fictional theme of my "actual meeting with a methodology, called Autoethnography", as an author/presenter, I will attempt to share with the audience what engaging with an autoethnographic approach felt like, the challenges, the opportunities, and the previously unforeseen positive side effects in more personal, human dimensions of an engagement with the particular methodology.

References:

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Sheridan, R. (2013). Autoethnography: Researcher as Participant. *Teaching for Success Journal*.

About the presenting author

George Gazetas is a sea kayak (adventure sports) coach based in Kefalonia, Greece. He has been a professional outdoor guide for the past 17 years (sea kayaking mainly). With a passion for coaching and supporting paddlers to learn and develop, he has a focused interest in further understanding the coaching practice and development in adventure sports and sea kayaking, via both practitioners' as well as scholars' lenses. Studies at the University of Stirling (MSc in Sports Performance Coaching, 2025) and an expanded community of practice have allowed him to nurture his passion for coaching in new dimensions.

Abstract PS3C4 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS1A1 | Unlearning for the coach developer

Gearity, Brian¹; Callary, Bettina²

¹ University of Denver, USA

² Cape Breton University, Canada

Keywords: Education; development; unlearning, narrative; story

The purpose of this conceptual oral presentation is to present unlearning as a theoretical approach for coach developers.

Coaches and coach developers alike have overpacked schedules, lid screaming performance pressures, and never-ending lines of people grasping for their attention. Coaches often complete formal coach education courses and certifications and then, engage in professional development for annual (licensing) requirements. Yet, this "legitimate" (Foucault, 1985, p.9) coach education has been criticised for becoming a too complex or simple time-consuming check box experience with minimal real-world relevance. Yet, as "expert" coach developers and scholars of sport coach education, we're expected to use evidence-informed practices and sophisticated, if not impenetrable, theoretical verbiage, or be charged with a litany of academic

cardinal sins like anti-intellectualism, the dumbing down of education, or the coddling of the mind. Yet, sport coaches need proximal development to learn and grow with the support of coach developers.

Within this cacophony of “Yets”, rather than coach developers learning to develop coaches in the normal ways, we propose unlearning: intentionally not using ineffective practices. Maybe we have been a bit ludicrous from the outside dictating to coaches to tell them their truth, or was it our truth (Foucault, 1985)? To the extent that it “might be possible to think differently” (Foucault, 1985 p. 9), we engage unlearning through storytelling. Storytelling, an ancient practice of problematisation and a technology of the self, and still a peripheral creative analytic practice within coach education, is a promising tool for unlearning. Set within the scenes of coaching, we integrate diverse theories, personal experiences, subject matters, and a healthy mix of science (i.e., episteme) and practical wisdom (i.e. phronesis) to show a storied-unlearning approach to coach development.

About the presenting author

Dr. Brian T. Gearity, CSCS, ATC, FNSCA is Professor of Kinesiology and Sport Studies and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the University of Denver’s Graduate School of Professional Psychology. Brian co-edited the book, “Coach Education and Development in Sport: Instructional Strategies” and co-authored, “Understanding Strength and Conditioning as Sport Coaching: Bridging the Biophysical, Pedagogical and Sociocultural Foundations of Practice.” He is an Associate Editor for the International Sport Coaching Journal and Strength & Conditioning Journal and Editor for the National Strength and Conditioning Association’s practitioner journal NSCA Coach

H

Abstract PS4A2 | Thursday, 11th June | 09:45-11:15

PS4A2 | Towards a sociology of (non)coaching: intentional silence and absence in coaching practice

Hall, Edward T.¹; Gallagher, Tom²; Hill, Laura³; Cristea, Liviu³; McCutcheon, Mark³; Skeen, Rebecca⁴; Morgan, Callum⁵; Thomas, Ryan⁶; Nichol, Adam³; Avner, Zoë⁷; Potrac, Paul^{3,8,9}

¹ Premier League, UK

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⁶ Plymouth Marjon University, UK

⁷Deakin University, Australia

⁸University College Dublin, Ireland

⁹Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK

Keywords: Sociology of nothing, Susie Scott, coaching practice

Existing inquiry is dominated by a disproportionate focus on what coaches observably do. It is coaches' most tangible and glaring actions (e.g., instruction, feedback) that have been "marked" for attention. Less explicit features of coaching (e.g., silence) have been overlooked in our rush towards the empirically manifest, corporeal, and apparently (dis)functional. Such emphasis has served to mystify and to magnify some practices in ways that promote simplistic imitation or indisposition. Instead, pursuing a more sophisticated scholarship of coaching's mundane complexities (Lee et al., 2025), this research begins to engage with phenomena that remain relatively unmarked. Reporting initial insights from a larger project, this presentation focuses on data generated during in-depth interviews with 10 coaches from women's football. Phronetic iterative analysis (Tracy, 2024) examined when, how, why and with whom the practitioners proactively decided not to act, to stay silent, to avoid, and to absent themselves from interactions with key stakeholders in everyday practice. In so doing, we break new empirical ground by bringing into focus coaches' sense-making regarding potential courses of action, as well as their motives for (in)action and how these acts of commission were negotiated in relations with others. Drawing principally upon Scott's (2018, 2019, 2022 inter alia) "sociology of nothing", we will introduce a novel theoretical framework which holds exciting potential to understand hitherto neglected dimensions of how coaching is artfully accomplished. Finally, we will map a tentative trajectory for further examining (non)coaching, acknowledging that "roads not taken" in practice may also arise from acts of omission, where coaches are deficient, inattentive, and negligent, which results in perceptions of lacking, deficiency, and unrealised potential. In sum, this presentation will begin to show how nothings matter to sport coaches because they are "subjectively meaningful, oriented towards others and tak[e] their views into account" (Scott, 2022 p.199).

About the presenting author

Edward is the Coach Development Manager for the Premier League, as well as a consulting expert advisor, coach developer and mentor to international governing organisations, national teams and high-performance practitioners. His work is informed by a passion for critical, socio-pedagogical scholarship that engages with the relational, (micro)political and emotional complexities of sports work. As a researcher, and drawing extensively from situated and participatory forms of fieldwork, Edward seeks to interrogate the opportunities and challenges associated with professional practice, to beneficially impact workforce development to the benefit of those leading, working and participating in sport (across public, private, and voluntary sectors).

PS4B2 | Coaching for Positive Youth Development in Swimming: Barriers, Facilitators, and Lived Experience

Hilton, Nathan¹; Holmes, Pete¹; Johnston, Julie P.¹; Harwood, Chris¹

¹ Nottingham Trent University

Keywords: Positive youth development (PYD), life skills, sport coaching, swimming, autoethnography

Background: Extensive research has been conducted on Positive Youth Development (PYD) in sport, with organised youth sport long perceived as a potent environment for fostering PYD. However, to date, there has been relatively little research on PYD in swimming, perhaps due in part to the sport's dominant performance culture. Therefore, the current study addresses this void by employing an autoethnographic approach to explore how PYD has been enacted (or not) within the context of swim coaching.

Aim: Drawing on the first author's lifelong personal journey in swimming—initially as an athlete, then and (primarily) as a coach, and most recently as a programme manager—this study examines the landscape of swim coaching over a 35-year period and how it may or may not have enabled the integration of PYD.

Methods: This study employs a reflexive, analytical autoethnography, initially guided by an autobiographical timeline, to explore this journey through grassroots, developmental, and elite competitive swimming. This approach enables critical, sequential reflection on key experiences as an athlete, coach, and programme manager, illuminating how personal, social, and organisational factors have influenced the application and understanding of PYD in swim coaching.

Results/Discussion: Results are presented in a series of chronological vignettes and analysis guided by the COM-B framework, which examines how capability, opportunity, and motivation have interacted to influence swim coach's practice. We highlight a number of key challenges to integrating PYD, considering how tradition, culture, and strategy may have hindered coaches to some degree. In exploring these challenges, we hope to identify ways coaches can facilitate PYD in swim coaching going forward.

About the presenting author

Nathan Hilton is a British swimming coach and currently serves as Marathon Swimming Lead and Performance Pathway Coach for Aquatics GB. A published author with Dr. Mustafa Sarkar, he has coached Commonwealth and European medallists and placed swimmers into World Championship finals. Hilton is recognized for his strategic, athlete-centred approach to preparing athletes for international success. His work focuses on nurturing talent, strengthening national pathways, and driving podium ambitions for Great Britain in pool and marathon swimming, with his current PhD work focusing on PYD in swimming.

PS6B2 | An exploration of academy football coaches' practice and the subsequent development of the challenge and support dials concept

Holmes, Pete¹; Ashdown, Ben¹; Hafesji-Wade, Sulayman²; Sarkar, Mustafa¹

¹ Nottingham Trent University

² Chelsea FC

Keywords: Challenge and support, youth football, coaching, coaches, athlete development

A combination of challenge and support is typically considered crucial for sport coaches in fostering development in athletes. While a challenge and support framework, originating through the work of Sanford in the 1960s, has been addressed in depth in education, teacher training, executive coaching and sporting resilience contexts, it remains underexplored in sport coaching. Specifically, no research has focused on how sport coaches use both challenge and support within TDEs to develop their athletes.

Participants were 10 experienced male youth football academy coaches ($M = 9.5 \pm 6.3$ years coaching experience). All coaches held a minimum of a UEFA B qualification. Semi-structured interviews explored how these coaches integrated challenge and support by drawing on specific examples from their practice, whilst reflexive thematic analysis identified key themes.

Coaches reflected on the dynamic and intertwined use of challenge and support in their practice, with four key themes identified: 1. The use of challenge across the Football Association's Four Corner Model, with consideration of the wider club environment, academy ethos and personal beliefs; 2. The use of support in its various forms (emotional, esteem, informational and jovial); 3. Blending one with the other, with no ideal level or balance; 4. Knowing athletes at an individual level in order to continually tailor challenge and support for maximum benefit.

This study presents the first detailed insight into how coaches in TDEs utilise challenge and support together in their practice. We suggest that sport coaching in developmental (and probably other) environments can be viewed as a multifaceted and dynamic process of combining the two. From this complexity, we present a simplified conceptual two-dials framework that could potentially be used by both novice and more-experienced coaches as a tool with which to plan and reflect on their practice. We hope, through intentionally and purposefully considering challenge and support, coaches can make a shift somewhat from the implicit to the explicit.

About the presenting author

Pete is Senior Lecturer in Sport Coaching at NTU where his research interests centre on coach learning and development, in addition to how these feed into coaches' everyday practice. With an additional role of Associate Coach Developer, supporting coaches across a range of sports with UK Coaching, Pete has a strong interest in research with an applied focus that can aid coaches and/or coach developers. As such, his research is typically in collaboration with sport

governing bodies, including British Swimming, the Lawn Tennis Association and the Rugby Football League.

J

Abstract PS3B2 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3B2 | Retired performers' reflections for coaching practice (edited book in press)

Jones, Luke¹; Avner, Zoë²; Jeffrey, Allison¹

¹ University of Bath, UK

² Deakin University, Australia

Keywords: Movement practice, retirement, sports coaching, wellbeing, social theory

In response to a previous edited collection regarding the sports retirement experience (Jones, Avner & Denison, 2023), several contributors expressed to the lead editor their interest in extending discussions surrounding their retirement from their skilled movement practices. Specifically, these discussions focused on their subsequent associated choices regarding the practices they employ as they steward/instruct/coach.

As sport scholars with varied experiences facilitating movement practices, we were aware of dominant ways of understanding coaching and athlete retirement and how these influence coaching pipelines and practices. A high-profile post-performer saturated in social capital accrued through their own successful performance career is often fast-tracked into a prominent role, charged with the management, inspiration, and improvement of performers in their respective context. Yet, perhaps unsurprisingly, well documented undesired outcomes for performers prevail. Movement practitioners repeat the lessons of their coaches perpetuating an ongoing cycle where established 'best' practices are not questioned. The culture, largely uninterrupted, is perpetuated and the same old wine (read coaching/instructive practices and solutions) is simply poured into a new bottle (Denison & Avner, 2011).

As a provocation for this collection of chapters, we asked ourselves, and our authors, what can be done to further interrupt this repetitive cycle? How can facilitators of movement practices break free from the conditioning of their training to transform coaching practices? What are the mechanisms that are enabling deeper reflection and how can these practices inform future facilitators?

In this presentation, we offer reflections inspired by our recent edited collection Retired performers' reflections for movement practice. This edited collection is the first of its kind to consider the implications of retirement for the post-performance coaching practices of former skilled movement performers. We invited our contributors to embrace a marriage of creative narrative writing practices with their own chosen social theory to communicate their experiences

of retirement, exercise, and wellbeing and how these experiences have influenced their coaching and thoughts about the production of performers.

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Jones, L., Avner, Z., & Denison, J. (Eds.). (2023). *Exercise and well-being after high-performance sport: post-retirement perspectives*. Taylor & Francis.

About the presenting author

Luke Jones, PhD, is Assistant Professor and Lecturer in Sport Coaching in the Department for Health at the University of Bath, UK. He is also a member of the SPHERE Research Centre at Bath. He is a former youth international (Wales) and semi-professional footballer. His doctoral research and subsequent research programme have focused on exploring retirement from sport using a sociocultural perspective, including how former athletes relate to their own exercise and, more recently, the longer-term experience of retirement from high-performance sport.

Abstract PS5A1 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS5A1 | Dyadic Morphogenesis: Surfacing, Shaping, and Re-authoring Coaching Stories in 1:1 Development

Jones, Timothy¹; Allen, Justine¹; Macdonald, Stephen²; Chapman, Reece¹

¹ Northumbria University, UK

² University of Stirling, UK

Keywords: Development dyad, coach development, narrative, power, relational learning

Despite the growing volume of research on sport coaching and coach development, scholarship has tended to prioritise questions of effectiveness, learning, and practice improvement, often within instrumental or policy-oriented frameworks (Cushion et al., 2010; Lyle and Cushion, 2017). While issues of power, culture, and context have been acknowledged within sociological and critical coaching research (Cushion and Jones, 2006; Denison, 2010; Jones et al., 2011), these dynamics are most often examined at the level of coaching practice itself, rather than at the point where knowledge is interpreted, negotiated, and translated into action through developmental relationships.

This presentation argues that questions of power, representation, and authorship can be made explicable within the 1:1 coach development relationship. Within these relational dyads, coach developers occupy a structurally ambiguous yet influential position, mediating between institutional narratives, professional norms, and coaches' lived experiences (Culver, Werthner,

and Trudel, 2019; Jones, Allen, and Macdonald, 2023). As such, CDs are active participators in shaping how coaching is understood, narrated, and legitimised.

Drawing on a series of empirically grounded vignettes, the presentation foregrounds how coach developers participate in the surfacing, shaping, and reframing of coaches' stories within the 1:1 development encounter. These vignettes are offered as analytic entry points into the relational, narrative, and political work of coach development. To move beyond description, the presentation re-examines these vignettes using the RECODE model as an explanatory framework (Jones et al., in writing). This analytic re-reading elucidates often unseen mechanisms shaping CD–CL interactions, including how developmental agendas are framed, how authority is negotiated, and how particular narratives of practice become stabilised or disrupted over time.

In doing so, the presentation demonstrates how re-explaining stories through theory can render visible the relational and structural forces shaping whose voices are heard, what forms of knowledge come to count, and which possibilities for action become imaginable.

About the presenting author

Tim is a PhD Researcher at Northumbria University researching the role of the Coach Developer in one-to-one settings. He is a practicing coach developer in football and has amassed 20 years of experience coaching the sport.

K

Abstract PS3B1 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3B1 | Making sense of performance and health complexity in sport and music through a Salutogenic lens

Kirkland, Andrew¹; Lubert, Veronika Jana²

¹ University of Stirling, UK

² Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

Keywords: Performance optimisation, Salutogenesis, biopsychosocial

Performance optimisation in sport and music happens in open ecological systems, where the causes of performance and health reflect a complex state of dynamic equilibrium between body, mind, and the environment (Galderisi et al., 2015). Performance emerges through capacity to meet domain specific demands via psychobiological responses and coping skills. However, tradition and historical precedence (Williams & Hodges, 2005) often dominate how performance is conceptualised, with simple empiricist methods, disciplinary conventions, and entrenched biases shaping wider performance systems. Consequently, there is an ontological incongruence between the complex causation (Groff, 2016) of performance and the practices that claim to enhance it. Our aim is to present a conceptualisation of performance using a Critical Realist

ontology (Bhaskar, 1975), synthesising the work of Meyer (1951) and Antonovsky (1979) on the causes of health and human adaptation.

Meyer (1951) was an early critic of reductionist clinical approaches used to diagnose and treat psychiatric illness. The biopsychosocial model (Engel, 1977) emerged from his central ideas of holism and integration (Owen, 2023). Within this perspective, dynamic equilibrium is understood through life course analysis and case formulation, processes that help identify “dominant facts and what are the points of attack for modification and adjustment” (Meyer, 1951, p. 65).

Salutogenesis, a complementary health promoting meta theory (Antonovsky, 1979), extends deficit models reflected by Meyer (1951) to understanding the origins of good health and human adaptation through stress coping responses throughout the life course approach. The theory rests on two biopsychosocial foundations: Sense of Coherence, comprising comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness, and General Resistance Resources, which reflect stress coping capacities shaped by life experiences and sociocultural and historical context.

Drawing these strands together, we present a complex, integrative, and holistic model of performance that aligns ontological assumptions with biopsychosocial processes, offering a coherent framework for understanding how performance and health can be more effectively supported and enhanced.

About the presenting author

Dr Andrew Kirkland is a Lecturer at the University of Stirling, specialising in integrative and holistic ways of understanding sports performance and coaching. His work blends rigorous theoretical insight with practical system application, challenging entrenched assumptions and advocating for ethical, sustainable approaches to coaching and governance.

Abstract PS5B3 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS5B3 | Endurance Runners’ Experiences of the Tapering Process: A Theory-Practice Divide?

Kirkland, Andrew¹; Moran, Donal

¹ University of Stirling, UK

Keywords: Endurance running, tapering, biopsychosocial

Optimising performance in competitive sport requires navigating complex biological, psychological, and sociological processes, particularly during the taper, the final preparatory phase before major competition. While tapering in endurance running is typically framed as a physiological training load adjustment (Mujika & Padilla, 2003; Ritchie et al., 2017), contemporary perspectives argue for a more integrated understanding of athlete adaptation (McGawley, 2024). This study emerged from practitioner discussions highlighting that physiologically driven recommendations often fail to translate effectively into the realities of international competition. Notably, athletes’ voices remain largely absent from tapering research (Weissensteiner, 2015). We therefore sought to understand athletes lived experiences of tapering and asked: What do we

need to do to support coaches and athletes in developing better tapering processes for major competitions?

Methods: Following ethical approval, six world class endurance runners were recruited. Semi structured interviews explored athletes' definitions of tapering, their implementation strategies at major events, and the emotions and challenges experienced during this period. Interview transcripts were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019), informed by a critical realist ontology (Bhaskar, 1975; North, 2017; Kirkland & Cowley, 2023).

Findings: Athletes' tapering decisions were predominantly heuristic rather than rational, shaped by accumulated experience, contextual demands, and situational pressures. Contrary to dominant physiological discourse, athletes did not conceptualise or implement tapering primarily as a load management exercise. Instead, decisions were influenced by prior exposure to similar competitive scenarios, the quality of support networks (coaches, peers, family), and logistical constraints such as travel. Crucially, individual stress coping mechanisms played a central role in shaping stress appraisal and decision making throughout the taper.

Conclusion: Tapering support must be individualised, recognising the interplay of experiential knowledge, psychosocial influences, and contextual demands. A more holistic, athlete centred approach is required to optimise preparation for major competitions.

About the presenting author

Dr Andrew Kirkland is a Lecturer at the University of Stirling, specialising in integrative and holistic ways of understanding sports performance and coaching. His work blends rigorous theoretical insight with practical system application, challenging entrenched assumptions and advocating for ethical, sustainable approaches to coaching and governance.

L

Abstract PS3D2 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3D2 | Who gets to decide what is worth knowing? The practicality of epistemology

Lascu, Alex¹; Accurso, Bruna²; La Fontaine, Jean-Paul²

¹ University of Canberra, Australia

² Boccia Australia, Australia

Keywords: Coach development, epistemology, creative methods, paralympic sport, learning design

The growing emergence of sport scientists in skill acquisition and learning design has reinvigorated research into how coaches, athletes and scientists regard knowledge, (co)design and collaboration. Learning Design within the Australian high performance sport system is

defined as “the optimisation of skilled performance by designing practice environments and experiences that are intentional, individualised, imaginative and evidence-informed, through the integration of principles from skill acquisition, coaching science, pedagogy and other specialist domains” (AIS, 2025). As such, the nature of how sport scientists interact with and support coaches-athletes includes joining with their everyday practices and sharing knowledge from various specialist domains to evolve training design, and by extension, coaching practice. But who decides what knowledge is shared, and thus, what is worth knowing in each context? Existing coach education centres on ready-made curricula and knowledge, but this static view makes it difficult to reconcile with the dynamic, unfolding world that coaches, athletes and scientists experience daily. Viewing knowledge as ecological emphasises that coaches-athletes-scientists are entangled, active participants primarily experiencing the world as it is coming-into-being (Woods et al., 2022). This presentation will explore how joining with the conversation as a sport scientist can manifest in different ways, where ‘what is worth knowing’ is “constructed and negotiated in real time by the contributions of those engaged in the learning process” (Cormier, 2008, p 3). A series of inflection points between coach-athlete-scientist will be discussed through a hand-drawn comic strip, specifically crafted to centre different ways of knowing, doing and being in the sport sciences. Such cases are not presented as a definitive way of how sports scientist should work but rather interrogates the power and representation of historical storytellers with the aim to spark a correspondence that overflows this presentation.

About the presenting author

Dr Alex Lascu (she/they) is a Sport Scientist in Learning Design, specialising in how talent and skill development practices can inspire a lifelong love of sport and physical activity, and foster elite performance. With a PhD in Sport Science, Alex consults directly with state and national sporting organisations, professional and amateur sporting teams, within Australia and overseas to help create more engaging learning environments and support holistic athlete and coach development. In particular, they specialise in generating knowledge together, fostering athlete and coach curiosity and building evidence-informed practice.

M

Abstract PS3C1 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3C1 | Learning in Place: Designing A Coach Education Pilot Through Community-Rooted Praxis

Mann, Mallory E.¹

¹ Pacific Lutheran University, USA

Keywords: Context-driven praxis, coach education, community-based

In a recent meta-analysis, 78% of coach education programs and interventions were associated with positive changes in coaches’ knowledge and behaviour as well as improved psychological

and physical outcomes for athletes (Li et al., 2024). However, coach education and training practices are often technocratic, employing a mechanistic approach. Instead, learning emerges through participation in specific sociocultural environments rather than transmitting decontextualised knowledge (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Similarly, coaching scholars and theorists have demonstrated the value of flexible, experiential, co-created, and socially grounded coach education rather than top-down models (e.g., Curcio & Harbour, 2025; Cushion et al., 2003; Moen et al., 2025). The coaching community and coach education experts, together, underscore the need for context-driven, participatory approaches that recognise the learning process as dynamic rather than standardised and prescriptive.

Guided by this orientation to learning, this presentation will outline a co-designed, community-rooted youth sport coach education program. Aligning with critical praxis, scholars and coaches were co-creators of knowledge and the piloted program emphasises responsiveness to community conditions of a mostly volunteer coaching corps (e.g., time scarcity, resource variability, diverse participant population). The pilot draws on field observations, dialogic needs assessments, and collaborative workshops to identify how coaches make sense of their roles, skills, and challenges faced.

Initial insights illustrate the impact of community-driven, context-specific design on the quality and meaningfulness of the program as well as the likelihood of implementation among volunteer youth sport coaches. By centering place and the lived experiences of coaches, this work contributes to ongoing critical sport scholarship that calls for more contextually grounded, equitable, socially engaged models of coach education. This presentation will outline this program as part of a larger call for community-engaged, evidence-informed, flexible, context-driven, iterative approaches to coach education.

About the presenting author

Dr. Mallory E. Mann is an Associate Professor of Kinesiology at Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, Washington, USA). Her education and work are situated within Sport Sociology and Sport Psychology. Prior to her academic career, Dr. Mann was an intercollegiate coach in the United States and also conducted mental skills training. Since then, she has remained engaged in youth sports and coach training. Dr. Mann has delivered over 300 local, regional, national, and international coaching workshops. She has also written multiple peer-reviewed articles and co-authored "Achieving Excellence: Mastering Mindset for Peak Performance in Sport and Life" (2022; Human Kinetics).

PS4SY2 | The Risk-Aesthetic Framework; risk, aesthetics and ethics in high-performance action sports

McKenna, Lesley¹

¹ Leeds Beckett University, UK

Keywords: Action sports, risk-aesthetic logic, virtue ethics, critical realism, high-performance sport, stoke, human flourishing, adaptive theory

This research addresses two interconnected problems in contemporary high-performance sport: the cultural tensions arising from the integration of action sports into Olympic systems, and the documented crises of toxic culture, athlete mental health, and coach burnout in traditional high-performance sport.

Using adaptive theory methodology (Layder, 2013) grounded in critical realist ontology (North, 2017) and MacIntyrean virtue ethics (2007), the research involved 74 participants – 56 from high-performance action sports (HP AS) and 18 from traditional high-performance sport (HP TS) — contributing 97 interviews across three iterative cycles alongside systematic observations at international snowboard events. HP AS perspectives form the primary evidence base, with HP TS accounts providing comparative context.

The central finding is that HP AS operates through a distinct organising principle named as the risk-aesthetic logic, in which risk and aesthetic sensibility combine to structure practice differently from the goal-oriented, rule-governed logic that tends to characterise HP TS. The resulting Risk-Aesthetic Framework identifies four mechanisms operating as two complementary pairs: (M1) inside-out performance and (M2) outside-in viewing explain how excellence is enacted and recognised through embodied, embedded, aesthetically guided engagement and competent witnessing; (M3) epic moments and (M4) creative story-based learning explain how excellence is stabilised in collective memory and transmitted through narrative across time and community. These mechanisms generate the experiences participants call ‘stoke’ – conceptualised as a family of experiential states operating across individual, shared, and collective levels – and support the development of ‘positive insignificance’ a perceptual stance in which recognising personal limits can become a source of humility and openness rather than diminishment.

The framework offers practical applications for both research problems, identifying mechanism-aware design features for Olympic integration and suggesting how risk-aesthetic sensibilities and experiences – found to exist in HP TS but often suppressed by institutional conditions – might address problems of athlete and coach mental health and cultural breakdown. The research extends MacIntyrean (2007) ethics into embodied, high-risk sporting contexts, contributing to sustainable approaches to high-performance sport in which competitive excellence and human flourishing are understood as complementary aims.

About the presenting author

Lesley McKenna is a final year PhD research student at Leeds Beckett University (due to complete viva late March), a three-time Olympic snowboarder, an Olympic snowboard coach and Team Manager and now High Performance Coach Developer. Her studies have focused on gaining an understanding of the values, practices and ideas of high-performance action sports athletes, coaches and other front-line practitioners and on comparisons with traditional high-performance sports.

Abstract PS2B1 | Wednesday, 10th June | 09:30-11:00

PS2B1 | Echoes of adaptation: how families shape coaching practices in Brazilian youth sports systems

Milan, Fabrício João¹; Vilela Lima, Cláudio Olivio^{1,2}; Milistetd, Michel¹

¹ Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil

² Minas Tênis Clube, Brazil

Keywords: Youth sports, family-coach relationships, complex adaptive systems

Background: In Brazil, despite advocacy for a long-term development model by the Brazilian Olympic Committee and related organizations (COB, 2022), families and coaches continue to operate within a cultural context characterised by early specialisation, results-driven values, and institutional pressures for rapid performance (Kerling et al., 2019). These factors create expectations that significantly shape coaching practices.

Aim: Drawing on Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) theory (Carmichael & Hadzikadic, 2019; Holland, 1992), this study theoretically analyses the influence of families on coaching practices within the sociocultural ecology of Brazilian sports.

Results: A CAS, such as the youth sports system (Dorsch et al., 2022), comprises multiple agents interacting locally, with emergent patterns and system adaptation to environmental conditions. Within this framework, families and coaches function as adaptive agents, exchanging nonlinear feedback through daily communication, emotional investment, and mutual dependence. These micro-level interactions produce emergent cultural patterns, such as the normalization of early specialisation and pressure-based training, which sustain the current structure of Brazilian youth sports. Rather than attributing influence on a single actor, this structure emphasises co-adaptation: families shape training behaviours while responding to institutional and cultural feedback loops that reward immediate success, and coaches adapt to maintain consistency and legitimacy within the system. These dynamic fosters the self-organisation of a culture of early specialisation and constrain athletes' developmental potential. Which means, these factors form the selective environment within which parents and coaches learn what “works.”

Conclusion: In Brazilian youth sports, families influence coaching not only by exercising direct power, but because, in a complex adaptive system, they are co-constructors of the cultural and relational rules that shape how coaches act, learn, and survive. Transformation, therefore, requires change in interactions with small changes (path dependence, as demonstrated by Carmichael & Hadzikadic, 2019), and not just in intentions.

About the presenting author

As a researcher, I am passionate about exploring how families shape the world of sports. My work delves into the powerful influence of family involvement on the connections between athletes, coaches, and the broader sports community. In recent years, I have brought this research to life by launching innovative parental support initiatives that inspire positive participation in sports clubs and federations across Brazil. These efforts include developing engaging online platforms for families, leading interactive workshops for families, coaches, and athletes, and collaborating on practical guidelines to strengthen sports organizations.

Abstract PS6A1 | Friday, 12th June | 10:45-11:45

PS6A1 | Evaluating a Social Learning Space for Coach Development in Brazilian Taekwondo: A Value Creation Perspective

Milistetd, Michel¹; Milan, Fabrício João¹; Vilela Lima, Cláudio Olivio^{1,2}

¹ Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil

² Minas Tênis Clube, Brazil

Keywords: Coach learning, sport coaching, professional development, value creation

Introduction: Coach development has increasingly emphasised situated, collaborative and practice-based learning approaches. Social Learning Spaces (SLS), grounded in social learning theory, have been proposed as a way to support sustainable professional learning through interaction, reflection and collective inquiry. In 2025, the Brazilian Taekwondo Confederation (CBTKD) implemented a coach development programme structured as a Social Learning Space, forming part of Level 2 of the Brazilian Coach Education Pathway.

Purpose: To examine how value was created through participation in the CBTKD Social Learning Space.

Methods: A qualitative research design was adopted. Eighteen coaches from different regions of Brazil participated in a five-month programme consisting of eight online sessions and one face-to-face meeting. Data were generated through semi-structured interviews conducted at the end of the programme, focusing on participants' learning experiences. The data were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The Value Creation Framework guided the analytical process, supporting the identification and interpretation of themes related to immediate, potential, applied, realised and transformative value.

Results: Findings demonstrated evidence of value creation across all five cycles of the framework. Immediate value was reflected in high levels of engagement, positive learning experiences and meaningful peer interactions. Potential value emerged through the acquisition of new concepts, tools, and perspectives related to training planning, load monitoring, and evidence-informed decision-making. The implementation of new strategies in daily coaching practice evidenced applied value. Realised value was associated with perceived improvements in training quality, athlete development and coaching confidence. Transformative value was evident in reported shifts in coaching philosophy and professional identity.

Conclusion: The CBT KD Social Learning Space proved to be an effective coach development strategy, fostering meaningful learning, practice change and longer-term professional transformation.

About the presenting author

Michel Milistetd is an associate professor at the Sports Centre in the Federal University of Santa Catarina. His main research focus is on Coach Development and Youth Sport. He is certified as a Coach Developer by NCDA/ICCE and works as a consultant in national sports organisations, structuring athlete & coach development initiatives.

Abstract PP2 | Wednesday, 10th June | 13:30-15:00

PP2 | Models based practice as an equitable means to facilitate community physical activity

Murray, Alison¹; Murray, Pamela²; Cowley, Joe¹; Howells, Kirsty³; Johnston, Brian¹

¹ Strirling University, UK

² University of Worcester, UK

³ Canterbury Christchurch, New Zealand

Keywords: Models-based practice, complexity adaptive system, executive function, physical education and activity, community oriented coaching

Background and aims: This study examined ways pedagogy supports executive function to encourage after-school physical activity among students, noting disparities in access outside school. By integrating a metacognitive instructional strategy alongside direct instruction within the PE curriculum, the study aimed to illuminate and address inequities in learning opportunities between in and out of school curricular time.

Theoretical framework: Drawing on Brown's (1987) metacognition theory and a complex adaptive systems approach (Murphy et al., 2018), the research explored how students could apply their knowledge and skills beyond school to foster self-directed physical activities in their communities when out of school term provision and support. This concept was integrated through a models based practice (Metzler and Colquitt, 2021) during physical education time where the school 'key signature pedagogy, for their curricula and extra curriculum provision; direct instruction, was complemented by another; metacognitive instruction.

Methods: Using a mixed methods design, students, from four classes participated in various game-based PE lessons set, twice weekly over one semester. Two of each were experienced through the selected models and compared through a pre and post comparative design.

Findings: Quantitative results showed that students (n=50) who received explicit metacognitive instruction in executive function significantly outperformed peers (n=50) in applying their knowledge and health related activity skills ($F(79,4) = 23.552, p=.001, \eta^2=.544$, observed power=1.00). Qualitative data indicated these students better planned for summer workouts.

Implication: The study suggests the value of explicit practice that scaffolds executive functioning

so that students develop acumen and tacit understanding in ways meaningful to them when they are in their respective communities. This approach is suggested as a method to address inequities in physical activity opportunities for youth outside of school-based programs.

About the presenting author

Alison thrives in her work and passion with the University of Stirling through Initial Teacher Education. Alison has coached various sports—including gymnastics, swimming, and track and field—at every level from high schools to NCAA Division 1 programs in the UK, Mexico, and the US. Drawing on her experience as a former national pole vault champion and physical educator, Alison brings a nuanced understanding of equitable practices to both curricular and extracurricular activities. She enjoys collaborating with colleagues and students on research, policy, and practical approaches that expand community opportunities for healthy, active living throughout life. Alison views primary physical education as a powerful foundation from which much of this development and engagement can begin.

N

Abstract PS2B3 | Wednesday, 10th June | 09:30-11:00

PS2B3 | “An arm around the shoulder or a kick up the backside?” Using athlete voice to develop a more informed understanding of the knowledge coaches require in relation to the coach–player relationship in performance football contexts

Newland, Andrew¹; Whitehead, Amy¹; Cronin, Colum¹; Cook, Gillian¹

¹ Liverpool John Moores University, UK

Keywords: Football, coach-player relationship, coach education, performance

Given the positive outcomes associated with high-quality coach–player (C–P) relationships, one would expect this topic to feature prominently in formal coach education. However, research on English Football Association UEFA A and B Licence courses, designed to prepare coaches for roles in the performance domain, reveals a significant gap (Newland et al., 2023). Despite the C–P relationship being valued by coach developers and included in assessment frameworks, it is not adequately addressed in formal course content.

This presentation moves beyond critiquing existing curricula and seeks to support the reconstruction of coach education to better serve performance-based football coaches in England. While models of the C–P relationship exist (Jowett, 2007), high-performance English football is shaped by specific socio-cultural factors, including significant performance pressures, hierarchical norms, micropolitics, and competing motivations. This underscores the need to explore what C–P knowledge high-performance football coaches truly need.

Athlete perspectives have traditionally been underrepresented in coaching research, meaning findings are often detached from the lived experiences of players (Wilsson et al., 2022). To address this, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight professional players (4 male, 4 female) who currently play or have played at the highest levels, including the English Premier League, Women's Super League, and senior England internationals. Inductive thematic analysis revealed five key themes: (1) The C-P relationship matters; (2) Self-awareness and clear values: the cornerstone of relationship building; (3) The sweet spot: balancing listening, guiding, and challenging; (4) The interrelated nature of relationships and culture; and (5) Managing conflict within a highly micropolitical environment.

These findings provide a basis for integrating context-specific C-P relationship knowledge into coach education. They also highlight the importance of identifying theoretically informed and evidence-based knowledge that can help coaches navigate the complex demands of high-performance English football.

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About the presenting author

Andy Newland is a UEFA A Licence football coach with extensive experience in professional and international talent development programmes across the men's and women's game. He has worked for Liverpool FC and currently works for the English FA within the England Women's National Pathway. Having previously worked as a secondary school teacher, Andy now leads the Physical Education Postgraduate Certificate in Education course at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU). He has recently completed his PhD at LJMU, titled *An Exploration of the Coach-Player Relationship in Performance-based Football in England and its Integration into Formal Coach Education*.

PS3A1 | Navigating the Field: Understanding Women Coaches' Experiences at International Sporting Events

O'Connor, Donna¹; Lefebvre, Jordan²; Rynne, Steven²; Mallett, Cliff²

¹ University of Sydney, Australia

² University of Queensland, Australia

Keywords: Women coaches, international sport, coaching experiences, communication, relationships

Women remain significantly underrepresented as coaches at major international sporting events like the Olympics, Paralympics, and World Championships. This disparity occurs within a context where the intricacies and uniqueness of all coaching at international events remain poorly understood. Consequently, women coaches may face unique challenges navigating team dynamics and gaining recognition for their expertise. Limited research specifically explores the lived experiences of women coaches in this high-pressure environment. This study employs a mixed-methods approach to address this gap. Phase 1 involved a scoping review of 6461 records (after duplicates removed) across four major databases (SportDiscus, PsycInfo, Scopus, web of Science), identifying 22 articles containing information about women coaching at the international level. The review yielded key themes highlighting the impact of gender bias on women's coaching, alongside crucial elements such as the significance of athlete and coach relationships and communication styles, the evolving opportunities and challenges shaping their experiences and professional journeys, and the vital role of supportive structures within sporting and national team cultures. Phase 2 comprised in-depth interviews with five women coaches working with Australian national teams, which revealed key themes centred around the critical role of communication and relationships, alongside the importance of self-awareness, resilience, adaptability and proactive strategies for strategic preparedness in high-pressure coaching environments. Findings highlight lessons learned emphasizing self-compassion, open communication, emotional regulation and strong coaching partnerships. This presentation offers an in-depth understanding of national coaches' experiences and reflections, providing valuable insights into the development of more supportive coaching environments and offering practical guidance for fostering positive coach development and team environments at the international level.

About the presenting author

Donna O'Connor is a Professor of Sports Coaching and coordinates the postgraduate Sports Coaching program at the University of Sydney. She is a former high-performance coach, an active researcher, coach developer and consultant on coaching practice, athlete and coach development, and sports performance.

PS4B1 | On the problems of athlete choice: rethinking health care for young student-athletes

Øydna, Marie Loka¹; Nielsen, Jens Christian²; Saarinen, Milla¹; Bjørndal, Christian Thue¹

¹ Norwegian School of Sport Sciences, Norway

² Danish Institute for Cultural Policy Analysis, Denmark

Keywords: Athlete development, poststructural theorising, health care, youth

Amid the accelerating professionalisation of talent development, debates surrounding the demands faced by young athletes have increasingly emphasised that they must learn to make “good choices” as a core educational outcome on the pathway to elite sport. However, rather than leading to compliance, expectations to prioritise long-term goals and health frequently generate experiences of confusion, indignation, and defiance. What remains underexamined in these matters is how multiple, and often conflicting, forms of knowledges intersect to delimit what counts as legitimate choice – and who ultimately bears responsibility when things go wrong.

We draw on fieldwork-based empirical stories from lower secondary schools, focusing on health-related dilemmas faced by young student-athletes. Through a Foucauldian analysis of power/knowledge governing athlete conduct, we set out to challenge the assumption that health-related decision-making is a straightforward matter of rational choice.

Across these stories, student-athletes are taught to attune to bodily signals, such as fatigue and reduced capacity, as part of contemporary health care strategies in talent development. Yet knowing what constitutes a “good choice” (for example, reducing training intensity) does not necessarily translate into the improvements hoped for. Instead, when health care is centred on individual choice, student-athletes encounter a shifting set of tensions that require renegotiation: it requires breaking down structures and categories that define what a performing body is and how athletic commitment is recognised.

From a coaching perspective, the crucial issue may not be that student-athletes fail to choose well, but that they are required to choose too much. We argue that meaningful intervention lies not in further individualising responsibility, but in developing the capacity to critically interrogate the competing versions of “right choice” circulating within talent development systems. This requires coaches to first identify the problematisations through which personal responsibility is positioned as the solution to structurally produced health dilemmas.

About the presenting author

Marie Loka Øydna is a PhD candidate at the Department of Sport and Social Sciences, which is affiliated with the Child and Youth Sport Research Centre, Norwegian School of Sport Sciences. Her doctoral research explores athlete development as a discursive educational practice in the context of a lower secondary school, with special interest in how student-athletes’ self-governing practices are shaped within these sociocultural conditions. With a background as a former elite

handball player and further education in cognitive sports psychology, Marie brings both academic insight and practical experience to her study of youth sport environments.

Abstract PP5 | Wednesday, 10th June | 13:30-15:00

PP5 | Understanding of the Key Issues for Coach Development in Para Sport: Canadian Stakeholders' Perspectives

Ozturk Kizilkaya, Rabia¹; Culver, Diane M.¹; Kilic, Koray²

¹ University of Ottawa, Canada

² Kırşehir Ahi Evran University, Turkey

Keywords: Social relational model, coaching, disability sport, coach development opportunities

We examined the key factors influencing coach development opportunities in Para sport within Canada from the social relational model perspective. Although Para sport participation and policy attention have grown, coaches continue to report limited access to learning opportunities that reflect the realities of disability sport and support inclusive practice. To inform more responsive coach development systems, we examined the perspectives of stakeholders across the Para sport landscape to understand how these opportunities can be more effectively tailored to meet the needs of coaches. Guided by a social constructivist approach, we employed a qualitative case study methodology. Ten Canadian stakeholders (five women, five men), including managers, former athletes, coaches, and coach developers, participated in semi-structured interviews (30–75 minutes) following the National Coaching for Para Sport Summit. We analysed the data using the five-step SAMMSA method, which enabled thematic development both within and across interviews and supported the construction of a cross-synthesis narrative. The findings emphasized the importance of transforming coaching perspectives to be more disability-conscious and challenging able-bodied dominant assumptions that continue to shape Para sport coaching. Accessibility issues across facilities, transportation, funding, and the design of learning resources (e.g., inaccessible formats) were identified as ongoing barriers, underscoring the need for systemic improvements rather than isolated adaptations. The critical roles of empathy, athlete–coach collaboration, and individualized coaching approaches were highlighted, particularly in Para sport contexts where impairment effects, equipment adaptations, and environmental constraints make individualized decision-making not just preferable, but often necessary. There is a clear need for coach development opportunities that meaningfully incorporate individuals with disabilities, strengthen representation, and promote continuous professional development through structured support mechanisms such as mentorship and communities of practice. By empowering coaches with disabilities through tailored support systems and fostering collaboration and systemic improvements, we can enhance the quality of coach development opportunities.

About the presenting author

Rabia Ozturk Kizilkaya is a PhD candidate in the School of Human Kinetics at the University of Ottawa. She conducts qualitative research focused on coach development and equity in sport. Her master's research examined coach development opportunities within the Canadian Para Sport landscape. She is currently working with a women coaches' mentorship program in Canada, exploring mentorship experiences and supports for women coaches.

P

Abstract PS5B2 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS5B2 | Individual Review Meetings in Elite Australian Football: Coach and Athlete Perceptions

Perris, Lloyd¹; O'Connor, Donna¹

¹The University of Sydney, Australia

Keywords: Coach-athlete relationships, feedback delivery, Self-determination theory (SDT), elite sport, review meetings

Coaching in high-performance environments requires more than technical instruction; it involves navigating complex interpersonal dynamics, employing effective communication skills, and fostering environments where athletes can thrive. Previous studies have shown that effective feedback can enhance athletes' perceived competence and motivation (Amorose & Nolan Sellers, 2016) and the quality of coach-athlete relationships has been linked to both performance outcomes and well-being (Fisher et al., 2019). Individual review meetings are a key platform for targeted feedback, yet limited academic attention has been paid to how these interactions are experienced by both coaches and players. This research addresses this gap by investigating the perceptions and understandings of individual review meetings within an elite AFL environment. Employing semi-structured interviews with eight participants (assistant coaches, n = 4; players, n = 4) from a single AFL club, data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis and discussed through the lens of Self-Determination Theory. Three interconnected themes were identified 1) Coach-athlete relationships, emphasising the role of trust and emotional support in fostering productive feedback exchange; (2) Preparation and role expectations, revealing inherent asymmetries shaped by hierarchical norms; and (3) Effective feedback delivery and reception, highlights the crucial role of autonomy, flexibility, clarity and psychological safety in shaping how feedback is received and internalised. These themes highlight the interpersonal depth and educational potential of individual review meetings, while also identifying challenges coaches face in balancing technical instruction with relational care. The findings underscore the importance of structured yet relational review processes and suggest implications for coach development, practice design, and organisational support to promote athlete ownership of learning.

About the presenting author

Lloyd Perris is a former professional Australian footballer. He is currently the Carlton Academy Coach and Head of Development at Carlton AFLW in Melbourne, Australia. Lloyd recently completed a Masters of Sports Coaching at the University of Sydney.

Professor Donna O'Connor is Professor of Sports Coaching at The University of Sydney, specialising in sports coaching, athlete development, performance analysis and coach education. She has worked with elite sporting organisations including the Australian women's basketball team, the Wallabies, and professional rugby league and netball teams.

Abstract PS3A3 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3A3 | Challenging the “think coach, think male” stereotype. Career experiences of women coaching men in field hockey

Phibbs, Rory¹

¹ University of Brighton, UK

Keywords: Women, coaching, men, power, hockey

Women in sports coaching is a site of significant research interest. Previous findings demonstrate women face a number of barriers in gaining and maintaining sports coaching roles (LaVoi and Dutove, 2012). Notably, ‘the think coach, think male narrative’, whereby coaching competence and leadership are associated with men. Men get the best of both, with large numbers coaching both men and women. In comparison, statistically, the number of women coaching women remains low and is even lower when coaching men (Gosai, Jowett and Rhind, 2024). Moreover, there is a dearth of academic literature regarding women coaching men in the United Kingdom (U.K.).

This presentation will share findings from 16 semi-structured qualitative interviews. These interviews focused on the career experiences of women who coach, or have coached, male field hockey teams in the U.K. as part of a wider PhD project. Feminist Standpoint Theory was applied as a critical methodological lens for working with marginalised voices, with Pirkko Markula's application of Foucauldian ideas to sport used to analyse findings (Markula, 2003). This framework helped to interrogate gendered power relations and binary ideas that exist within coaching and sport.

Through thematic analysis, key themes were constructed using the Markula-based theoretical framework. This formed three broad themes across the interviews: Sport as a Masculinised Cultural Space, Coaching as Gendered Identity, and Negotiating and Resisting Gendered Power. Findings demonstrate how gendered ideas within sport impact coaches' positions, the think coach, think male stereotype and how women negotiate and resist gendered power relations in coaching. This presentation will provide insight into women coaching men in sport, the discriminatory practices and issues women face, as well as the barriers and supports present, guiding future research direction within the field. Amplifying voices from the margins.

About the presenting author

Rory (he/him) is a South Coast Doctoral Training Partnership funded final year PhD student based at the University of Brighton. His research focuses on cross gender coaching, exploring women coaching men in field hockey. Prior to this he completed a Masters by Research and BSc in Sports Coaching at Oxford Brookes University. He continues to work as a professional field hockey coach at a variety of clubs, schools and universities alongside associate lecturing at Oxford Brookes University.

Abstract PS1B3 | Tuesday, 9th June | 15:00-16.30

PS1B3 | Essential Yet Devalued: From Care Ethics to Social Reproductive Labour

Porter, Jesse¹; Kerr, Gretchen¹

¹ University of Toronto, Canada

Keywords: Coaching work, care, Social Reproduction Theory

Coaches are engaged in the face-to-face work of developing and supporting the psychological, social, and physical capacities of athletes. While some scholars have labelled these processes as care (e.g., Cronin & Armour, 2018; Fisher et al., 2019; Jones, 2009), current applications of relational care ethics lack theoretical depth to make sense of the structure and organisation of care within sport systems (Howe & McNamee, 2025). Specifically, Cronin and Armour (2018) suggest coaches face a ‘paradoxical care crisis,’ where they have been criticised for abusive practices while also being expected to provide “unheralded, often-unseen caring practice” (p. 2), while other scholars have separated practices of care from the mundane everyday tasks of coaches. In this theoretical presentation, I draw on Marxist feminist thought and social reproduction theory (SRT) to conceptualise coaches’ care as care work, defined as socially necessary mental, physical, and emotional work required to reproduce individuals on a daily basis and across generations (Laslett & Brenner, 1989). Three interconnected mechanisms are discussed to reveal how care work in sport coaching is obscured and devalued, impacting how coaches engage with care. First, care is naturalised as an invisible or taken-for-granted essence of coaching, disappearing it from formal work responsibilities; second, care is romanticised as a moral virtue or duty of a “good coach” rather than material work that deserves and requires institutional support; and third, care is essentialised as feminine work through gendered and racialised expectations that disproportionately burden women and racialised coaches. This framework is used to analyse how sport systems simultaneously depend on yet systematically devalue coaches’ care work. What Marxist feminist scholars call a ‘crisis of care’ (Fraser, 2017). I engage with critical questions about who gets to define what coaching work counts and how it is valued and supported.

Jesse is a PhD Candidate and Head Coach of the Women's Lacrosse team at the University of Toronto in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education with a collaborative specialization from the Women and Gender Studies Institute. Her master's thesis explored women coaches' emotional labour, and her current doctoral work theorizes coaching as social reproductive labour, drawing on Marxist feminist frameworks to examine coaches' work within the political economy of sport.

R

Abstract PS5C2 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS5C2 | Utilizing Non-Traditional Learning Approaches for the Assessment and Development of Sport Coaches' Gender Beliefs

Rourke, Siobhan¹; Culver, Diane M.¹

¹ University of Ottawa, Canada

Keywords: Gender responsive coaching, mixed methods research, scale development, social learning

Coaches play a pivotal role influencing the sport experiences of girls and gender-diverse youth, influencing athletic development, belonging, and retention (Felton & Jowett, 2013; Burton, 2015). However, few resources exist to assess and positively impact coaches' confidence in applying gender-responsive practices. This presentation outlines this multi-phased study including: (1) the creation of the Gender and Coaching Self-Efficacy Scale (GCSES; a novel, psychometrically validated instrument to measure coaches' confidence in recognizing and addressing gender beliefs within their practice) and (2) the Social Learning approach we took to examine the relationship between gender-related self-efficacy and observable changes in practice.

Drawing on self-efficacy theory (e.g., Bandura, 1997), the Coaching Efficacy Model (Feltz et al., 1999), and informed by feminist and critical sport literature (e.g., LaVoi, 2016; Norman et al., 2018), the GCSES was developed in Phase 1 through a mixed-methods design involving coach focus groups, expert reviews, and survey testing. Exploratory factor analysis revealed a four factor structure operationalizing 'gender literacy' as a measurable component of coaching competence. The GCSES offers tangible outcomes for policy, practice, and education. In Phase 2, it served as a diagnostic tool for assessing the pre/post learnings from an online coach education programme (i.e., Coaching HER). Two groups of coaches from multiple sport contexts participated in Phase 2 to explore how gender-related self-efficacy is reflected in observable practice. Group 1 (n = 50) completed the education programme independently over five months, while Group 2 (n = 12) completed the education programme concurrently with a Community of Practice (CoP; Wenger, 1998) over four months. Group 2 coaches GCSES scores increased compared to those in Group 1 and demonstrated more examples of tangible changes (e.g.,

reflective journaling, adapting language, peer dialogue, etc.) to their practices. Additional findings and practical applications will be shared, highlighting the GCSSES as an innovative tool for advancing leadership and inclusion through evidence-based, gender transformative coaching.

About the presenting author

Siobhan Rourke is a PhD candidate at the University of Ottawa in sport pedagogy and psychology. She is also a Certified Mental Performance Consultant. Her research interests are centred around providing girls with better sport experiences. She works with coaches to develop more gender responsive coaching practices primarily utilizing social learning strategies and concepts. She has a passion for teaching and learning, especially in developing communities of practice to address knowledge to application gaps. She also works as the Senior Program Coordinator at Girls Forward Foundation (a national charity focused on empowering women and girls through sport, physical activity, and education) responsible for the organization's research and evaluation efforts.

S

Abstract PS5B1 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS5B1 | The Formation of the Self-Surveillance Disposition: How Video-Based Feedback Shapes Embodied Play in Elite Football

Safe, Stan¹; Spencer, Daniel²

¹University of Birmingham, UK

²Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK

Keywords: Video-based feedback, technological ambivalence, Pierre Bourdieu, self-surveillance disposition

Elite sport is increasingly characterised by a technophilic orientation, with technological innovation positioned as central to achieving ‘high performance’. Within this context, video-based feedback (VBF) is widely viewed as an objective means of revisiting performance, assumed to offer greater accuracy than coach recollection. This belief has normalised VBF, often without consideration of its wider pedagogical or performative implications. Research shows that VBF sessions can become confrontational spaces in which coaching authority is reinforced through control of interpretation, creating emotionally charged environments that may undermine athletes’ competence and identity. However, studies have focused almost exclusively on what occurs within these sessions—such as patterns of talk and the emotional reactions that arise. Despite indications that such practices may be problematic for learning, no research has examined their impact on performance; specifically, how VBF becomes embodied in athletes’ on-pitch actions. This omission motivates the present study.

In-depth interviews were conducted with four elite footballers regularly using VBF. The interviews explored how players experienced VBF and how session content interacted with their embodied histories to shape performance. Building on Brown and Jennings’ (2013) concept of Martial

Habitus, the study identifies the conditional emergence of a Self-Surveillance Disposition (SSD), inculcated within authoritarian coaching regimes and reinforced through the instrumental use of VBF. Here, video footage is afforded a sense of objective certainty, enabling coaches to frame performative moments in ways that reinforce and legitimise their own interpretive authority. SSD, then, describes a tendency among players to monitor themselves continually against prescribed performance criteria, which subsequently withdrew from their immersive engagement in gameplay. This, we claim, has significant consequences: expressive players striving to “play the way they want” become constrained by anticipatory concerns about future scrutiny, leading to overthinking and reduced capacity for in-the-moment performance. Coaching practice should therefore carefully consider the design and delivery of VBF, recognising its potential to constrain player autonomy and expression. Doing so may enable feedback processes that better support athlete learning and performance, rather than reinforcing narrowly defined expectations.

About the presenting author

During his BSc in Sports Coaching at Cardiff Metropolitan University, Stan developed a keen interest in the sociological work of Pierre Bourdieu, focusing on the ways in which technological artefacts mediate and structure coaching practices. This academic orientation was further strengthened through experience as a video coach-analyst, where he supported academy level football players in the development of individual performance. He is currently pursuing an MSc in Sustainable Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the University of Birmingham, where his interests centre on sustainability and technological innovation, with the broader aim of identifying sustainable responses to contemporary challenges across practical and political domains.

Abstract PS3A2 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS3A2 | Fitting-in and ‘learning the ropes’: The experiences of an international coach

Santos, Sofia¹; Minji, Kim¹; Harris, Kerry¹

¹ Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK

Keywords: Cross-cultural coaching, autoethnography, women in coaching

The globalisation of sport has accelerated the migration of coaches across cultural and national boundaries (Kim & Tak, 2024). While the experiences of international athletes have been widely explored, limited attention remains on the integration of international coaches. This study addresses such gap by examining the experiences of an international student-coach within the academic and athletic contexts of a UK university.

Employing an autoethnographic approach, the research investigates the challenges, cultural transitions, and learning processes encountered by a woman coaching a university women’s football team. The researcher’s relocation from South Korea to the United Kingdom offers a distinctive lens into the experiences emergent from contrasting coaching cultures; such as the

coercive and authoritarian tendencies often associated with Asian contexts (Lee & Corsby, 2022), and the more collaborative norms prevalent in Western environments.

The study explores the interaction between the coach's established beliefs and the socio-cultural expectations of her new setting. Findings reveal the complexities of adapting to unfamiliar academic structures, navigating diverse leadership expectations, and overcoming communication barriers rooted in cultural differences. These experiences demonstrate the potential of political and cultural astuteness and the development of a flexible coaching identity for success in foreign contexts.

By tracing the transition from novice to competent coach, this research contributes to the broader discourse on cross-cultural competence in sports coaching. It offers practical insights for sports institutions and coaching educators seeking to support international student-coaches in their integration and professional growth. Ultimately, the study highlights the need for culturally responsive education to foster inclusivity and effectiveness in globalised sporting environments.

About the presenting author

Sofia is the Programme Director for the MSc Sport Coaching degree in the Cardiff School of Sport and Health Sciences at Cardiff Metropolitan University. Her research profile focuses on sociological issues within sport, particularly about coaches' power and social interaction in the coaching context. Recently, her emergent research interest around women (and minorities) in sports coaching and coach education have led to collaborations with notable national governing bodies in the development and provision of educational initiatives, such as Team Wales' Leadership programme.

Abstract PP4 | Wednesday, 10th June | 13:30-15:00

PP4 | Coaches and players' experiences of 'in-competition' scaffolding practices in the first FIFA Women's Futsal World Cup qualifying stage.

Silva, Luciana De Martin¹; Vallance, Pete²; Kitson, Sion³; Thomas, Gethin⁴; Hall, Edward⁵; Roberts, Will⁶

¹ Hartpury University, UK

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³ England Futsal, UK

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⁵ Northumbria University, UK

⁶ Waikato University, New Zealand

Keywords: Scaffolding, women's futsal, FIFA, qualitative

Scaffolding has gained increasing attention as a central theme in coaching research in recent years. It relates to a “process of guided mediation of an individual/s alongside a more capable other, with the aim of achieving learning outcomes and internalising knowledge” (Thomas, Bailey and Engeness, 2023, p. 283). Despite some attempts to make sense of scaffolding within coaching practice (e.g., De Martin Silva and Francis, 2020) its application has typically been limited to theoretical discussions. The significance of this study lies in providing tangible and relatable examples of scaffolding practices within the complex realm of sports coaching to “unify practice and theory” (Jones, Corsby, and Thomas, 2023, p. 3). This research also takes place during a historic moment for women’s futsal, marking the first-ever qualifying stage for the inaugural FIFA Women’s Futsal World Cup.

The purpose of this study was to explore how in-competition ‘scaffolding’ as a socio-pedagogic activity is experienced at an international level. More specifically, the objectives are: 1) to explore in-competition scaffolding practices used by coaches; 2) to explore the contextual factors and discourses that influence the coaches’ scaffolding practices and 3) to explore players’ perceptions of the scaffolding approaches utilised during the competition stage.

Upon Institutional ethical approval, purposive sampling was adopted to recruit two coaches who had roles as either the Head coach or assistant coach within an International Women’s Futsal team and 12 Senior Women International players. These coaches are also two of the co-authors for this study, with one also holding an academic position at a Higher Education Institution. Data collection involved six video-elicitation focus group (FG) interviews (Karahan, 2023), three with coaches and three with players from the Women’s Senior team. To capture relevant video and audio data, coaches wore an audio transmitter connected to a camera near the technical area during all three official matches, recording their actions and conversations. Coaches and players then watched the footage, selecting video clips to serve as discussion prompts during the FG interviews. Additionally, the two coaches participated in two reflective conversations, using audio-elicitation to examine their scaffolding practices during training and off-court activities whilst away in the competition. To enable this, the coaches maintained a reflective diary throughout the seven-day competition, sharing their entries with the first author as soon as they were recorded. Both coaches and the lead author reviewed the audio entries and selected significant extracts for further exploration in the reflective conversations.

An iterative approach to data analysis was adopted including “existing theories and research questions on the one hand, and emergent qualitative data on the other” (Huffman, Tracy and Bise, 2019, p. 332). The concepts of macro, meso and micro scaffolding levels (Jones and Thomas, 2015; Boblett, 2012 and Engin, 2014) as well as literature on noticing and orchestration (e.g., Jones, Bailey and Thompson, 2013; Mason, 2002) were used to make sense of the data. Our findings highlighted that scaffolding strategies were carefully considered as a process of co-construction and negotiation between coaches and with players (meso and micro level) whilst guided by an Institutional framework and the game constraints (macro level). This interplay and symbiosis between macro, meso and micro scaffolding levels were perceived as key drivers for the creation and development of a positive learning environment, particularly identifying the need for ongoing development of self-awareness, noticing, role clarity and shared language.

About the presenting author

Dr Luciana De Martin Silva is a Principal Lecturer in Sports Coaching at Hartpury University. Her research interests include coach learning & development, professional identity and the exploration of sports coaching as socio-pedagogic practice. Luciana is a Coach Developer for UK Coaching, The Football Association and England Futsal. She has significant experience as a Futsal Coach at youth and international level.

Abstract PS1B1 | Tuesday, 9th June | 15:00-16.30

PS1B1 | Inside the Club: Understanding the role of a Sports Chaplain within Professional Football

Simpson, Harley Jean¹; Parker, Andrew²; Daniels, Graham³

¹ Anglia Ruskin University, UK

² Ridley Hall Theological College

³ Christians in Sport

Keywords: Goffman, dramaturgy, high-performance, chaplain

This study presents a sociological analysis of the collective nature of sports chaplaincy through a season-long case study conducted within a UK professional football club. Informed by Erving Goffman's (1959) framework of impression management, the research examines the everyday practices of sports chaplains as they operate across the complex, high-performance environment of professional football. Responding to a notable gap in the sociological and theological literature on sports chaplaincy, the study seeks to move beyond descriptive accounts of the chaplain's role by offering a theoretically grounded, empirically rich exploration of chaplaincy practice over time. Twenty-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with individuals and chaplains within the club across the course of a competitive season, allowing for a longitudinal, in-situ examination of practice as it unfolded. Analysis was undertaken using reflexive thematic analysis, creating three empirically derived themes that offer dramaturgical insight into chaplaincy work in elite sport. These themes included: (a) navigating a high-performance environment ("the outsider"); (b) role ambiguity and misrecognition ("feeling like a lemon"); (c) emotional and relational labour ("labouring for the Lord"), managing visibility, boundaries, and trust across front-stage and back-stage spaces. By integrating longitudinal empirical data with a robust sociological framework, this study contributes original knowledge to the emerging field of sports chaplaincy research. It offers both practical and theoretical insights that extend understanding at the intersection of sport, faith, and social theory, positioning chaplaincy as a complex, relational, and contextually negotiated practice within professional football.

About the presenting author

A Senior Lecturer in Sport Coaching and Physical Education at Anglia Ruskin University. My research interests span sport sociology, coaches' decision-making, qualitative methodologies, pedagogy, high-performance sport, and the intersection of sport, faith, and social theory. I am passionate about strengthening the relationship between academic research and applied practice. Therefore, I continue to combine my role in higher education with active collaboration across professional sports organisations.

Abstract PS3D1 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3D1 | Whose stories are being heard? One athlete's experience with an alternative coaching practice

Skebo, Kristi¹; Stang, Madison¹; Avner, Zoë²; Markula, Pirkko¹

¹ University of Alberta, Canada

² Deakin University, Australia

Keywords: Coaching, power imbalances, contextual interference, interpretivism, case study

In studies that examine interventions of how to coach differently, the voice of the practitioner (coach) or researcher is typically prioritised. Athlete voices are often subsumed in studies of changing coaching practices. To address this, we examine this issue using an interpretivist case study that emerged from a coaching intervention and consider how we navigated issues of power relations, not only between coach (Kristi) and athlete (Madison), but also between researchers (Kristi, Zoë, Pirkko) and participant (Madison). Hence, we tell the story of Madison's experience in two parts. First, we explore how an athlete can play a role in changing coaching practices. Second, we discuss how an athlete can be more than a research participant and included as a collaborator in a study. Our study began as a coaching intervention in response to a discussion between Madison (gymnast) and me (Kristi, coach). Together, we explored the social application of a motor learning model (contextual interference or CI) to push back against the dominant practice of rote repetition. Madison found she was able to take greater control over her self-led training time. Her training became more enjoyable because it had more structure. She was more productive, grew to see learning as an investment, and closed the gap between her perceived and actual performance. As a participant in this post hoc study, Madison shaped how and when data was generated. Her enthusiastic response to the question "so, how's it going with this CI approach" framed the study's theoretical perspective (interpretivist). Madison continues to play a role in the writing process. Overall, our study provides insight into how a small change in practise can have a much larger impact than anticipated both in sport settings and in coach studies research.

About the presenting author

Kristi Skebo (MSc Biology, Master of Coaching) is a PhD student in Kinesiology at the University of Alberta. She is passionate about skill acquisition and learning, and coach education in rhythmic

gymnastics. Her research interests focus on movement skill (motor) development from a socio-cultural perspective and is particularly interested in employing Deleuzian concepts to reconceptualise 'everyday' coaching practices to create novel, holistic and more ethical alternatives.

Abstract PS5D1 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS5D1 | Do I Wanna Know? Rethinking Researching With vs Researching of Coaches in Ethnography

Skeen, Becky¹

¹ University of Gloucestershire, UK

Keywords: Ethnography, Sociology of the Unmarked, ethical reflexivity

Qualitative inquiry in sport coaching seeks not only to document what coaches do, but to understand why they do it. Such questions are necessarily entangled with the complex coaching identities and practices that are suffused with historical, social, and cultural contexts. In this presentation I look to extend the reflexivity of ethnographic research beyond formality to encompass the subtle, unexamined effects of a researcher's interpretive presence within these complex systems. This comes from ethical implications that arose during a wider 16-month ethnographic doctorate of a community gymnastics club. As I attended to the unremarkable in coaching practice such as routines, rhythms, and pedagogical cues I became increasingly aware that the act of marking these phenomena through naming, analysing, and making visible was itself affective, interventionist, and posed ethical considerations.

The purpose of this reflection is to interrogate how my analytic gaze participated in shaping the practices and meanings I sought to understand. Drawing on the reflexive journals, fieldnotes, and a conceptual framework informed by Brekhus's Sociology of the Unmarked and Scott's Sociology of Nothing. I examined these tensions, and the dilemmas that emerged as I attempted to render the invisible visible (researching with) without distorting or reifying practice (researching of). This reflexive analysis highlights how marking practice can inadvertently solidify practice or amplify behaviours that were previous unaware of within the cultural ecology of coaching.

The presentation contributes to a broader discussion of ethicality in coaching and qualitative enquiry by advancing an understanding of researcher affect within the field, offering nuanced considerations of how researchers can navigate ethnographic demands particularly in studying the everyday, suggesting that ethical reflexivity requires sensitivity to one's own affective and epistemic influence within the cultural systems under study.

About the presenting author

Becky Skeen is a doctoral researcher whose work focuses on coaching practice, learning, and organisational culture within grassroots sport. Using reflexive ethnography, her research explores how coaches make sense of everyday routines, norms, and interactions, and how these shape

learning, identity, and ideology within a community gymnastics club. Her broader interests include coach socialisation, the unmarked dimensions of practice, and creative approaches in capturing tacit and embodied knowledge in sport coaching research.

Abstract PS6C1 | Friday, 12th June | 10:45-11:45

PS6C1 | 'Just learning and staying safe': Coaches' adoption of tackle training programmes in adolescent female rugby

Stodter, Anna¹; Dane, Kathryn²; Salmon, Danielle²; Shill, Isla³; Sick, Stacy²; Caron, Jeffrey⁴; Emery, Carolyn²

¹ Leeds Beckett University, UK

² University of Calgary, Canada

³ University of Victoria, Canada

⁴ Université de Montréal, Canada

Keywords: Injury prevention, coach learning, adolescent female rugby, grounded theory

As women's and girls' rugby grows, tackle-related injuries remain a pressing concern. While global programmes aim to improve tackle safety, coaches are often central delivery agents yet they may be subject to top-down, health-behaviour-informed educational workshops that neglect the sociocultural complexity of coaching. This study moves beyond barriers and facilitators to critically explore how coaches working in the context of Canadian adolescent female rugby adopt, adapt, and maintain tackle-training knowledge.

Semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and video-stimulated recall interviews were employed with 16 sport coaches working in community adolescent female rugby, following their engagement with World Rugby's Contact Confident and Tackle Ready workshops. Data were organised and analysed using the techniques of grounded theory.

Tackle training programme adoption was a dynamic, relational process shaped by coaches' biographies, interpersonal negotiations, and the specific socio-cultural context including gendered norms. Coaches engaged in cycles of understanding, experimentation, and reflective dialogue with players and peers. The findings challenge the reductionist dissemination of injury prevention initiatives, reemphasising the importance of socio-pedagogical approaches to coach learning. Moving beyond barriers and facilitators towards more participatory, context-specific work can have positive implications for coaches' learning and ultimately player welfare outcomes.

About the presenting author

Anna Stodter is a Senior Lecturer in Sport Coaching within the Carnegie School of Sport at Leeds Beckett University. Her research focuses on coach learning with recent application to injury

prevention in women's rugby. Anna has contributed to global initiatives including evaluation of World Rugby's High Performance Female Coach Development Programmes and UEFA's coach education provision. A former international rugby player and current coach, she aims to promote evidence-informed practice and foster more positive coaching cultures.

Abstract PS4B3 | Thursday, 11th June | 09:45-11:15

PS4B3 | The Logics of Youth Sport Coaching in Estonia: Rethinking Performance and Development

Stoljarova, Snezana¹; Santos, Fernando²;

¹Tallinn University, Estonia

²Polytechnic Institute of Porto, Portugal

Keywords: Youth sport coaching, coach education, sociocultural context, Positive Youth Development (PYD), Estonian sport system

Sport coaching practices do not occur in a vacuum; they are shaped by, and embedded within, the historical, cultural, and political conditions of the societies in which they operate, while simultaneously contributing to the reproduction of those conditions (Jones et al., 2011; North, 2017). This paper critically examines youth sport coaching practices in Estonia and explores how they are informed by broader socio-cultural and historical processes. In doing so, it seeks to open space for alternative ways of conceptualising coaching that move beyond dominant, outcome-oriented frameworks.

The paper first outlines the structure of the contemporary Estonian sport system and formal coach education, focusing on their organisational logics, pedagogical assumptions, and implicitly privileged forms of knowledge. These practices are then situated within Estonia's historical trajectories, including legacies of Soviet-era sport culture, post-independence nation-building, and prevailing social norms and values (Port & Luskmägi, 2015; Port & Kulbin, 2017). Through this analysis, it is shown how current coaching practices resonate with dominant discourses in coaching science that emphasise instrumentalist logics, technical delivery, hierarchical coach-athlete relations, and the positioning of athletes as objects of performance optimisation (Jones, 2007; Cassidy et al., 2016).

Building on this critique, and engaging with recent calls to move away from performance-oriented youth sport (Matthews et al., 2026), the paper questions whether a shift towards development-oriented approaches is sufficient. It argues that both performance- and development-oriented models may operate within a broader instrumentalist logic, thereby reproducing assumptions centred on usefulness, productivity, and measurable outcomes (Coakley, 2016).

Drawing on critical and transformative perspectives, the paper proposes an alternative conceptualisation of youth sport coaching that foregrounds relational, open-ended, and intrinsically meaningful experiences. The Estonian context, shaped by its specific socio-political

and historical trajectories, provides a lens through which these broader tensions and possibilities can be critically examined.

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About the presenting author

Snežana Stoljarova is Junior Research Fellow (Doctoral Candidate) at Tallinn University’s Institute of Natural Sciences and Health, focusing on sport coaching, positive youth development, and sociocultural approaches in coaching practice. She holds master’s degrees in psychology from Tallinn University and in sport sciences (sport psychology) from Lund University (Sweden) and is a certified sports psychologist. Snežana’s research and practice bridge sport psychology, coaching science, and socio-pedagogical perspective; she also lectures, leads applied projects in developmental and elite sports, and regularly presents at international sport psychology conferences.

PS4A1 | Compliance, rupture, and re-storying: A longitudinal view of coaching identity

Stonebridge, Ian¹; Cushion, Chris¹

¹ Loughborough University, UK

Keywords: Identity, power, discourse, sport coaching, subjectivity

This study examines how professional football coaches construct, negotiate, and revise their identities over time through the stories they tell about their practice. Although recent scholarship has called for greater attention to the 'who' of coaching, much existing research remains cross-sectional, offering limited insight into how coaching identities are formed and reworked within the institutional and power-laden contexts of elite football. In response, this research draws on two years of longitudinal, unstructured interviews and ongoing exchanges with professional football coaches to explore identity as a fluid, contingent, and continually negotiated process.

Guided by a post-structural, Foucauldian perspective, identity is conceptualised as discursively produced through relations of power rather than as a stable personal attribute. Interviews are treated not as neutral reports of experience but as sites where identities are actively negotiated in interaction. Analysis focuses on moments of compliance, rupture, and re-storying, tracing how coaches narrate and re-narrate episodes of practice across time. Coaches described closely regulating their conduct in line with hierarchical expectations and dominant performance discourses, while also articulating moments of doubt, ethical tension, and unease that disrupted taken-for-granted assumptions about 'good' coaching.

The longitudinal design reveals how earlier accounts are revisited, unsettled, and reformulated across successive encounters, highlighting identity as an ongoing form of situated labour rather than a trajectory of linear development. Rather than progressive identity formation, the findings point to the continuous work required to remain legitimate and intelligible within professional football cultures.

This study contributes empirically by providing rare longitudinal insight into elite coaches' identity work, and conceptually by demonstrating the value of a post-structural approach for understanding how coaching identities are repeatedly produced, contested, and re-authored over time.

About the presenting author

Ian's research interests relate to coach identity, learning and pedagogy. He completed his PhD, 'Who is a coach? Understanding coach subjectivities in professional youth football', under the supervision of Professor Chris Cushion at Loughborough University. An experienced Academy coach, Ian previously enjoyed a successful career as a professional footballer, making over 250 first team appearances and representing England at Under 18 level.

PS5C3 | Creating surplus value with little reward: Using Marxist theory to explore the experience of an experienced S&C coach in elite sport

Szedlak, Christoph¹

¹ Hartpury University, UK

Keywords: Marxist theory, strength and conditioning coaching, surplus value, surplus enjoyment

S&C is a relatively new coaching profession in the UK. Within the UK, the integration and impact of S&C is often undervalued. It is a typical requirement for S&C coaches, even at the semi-professional level, to have the highest qualifications, such as an MSc in S&C and an international accreditation (e.g., UKSCA, NSCA). Yet, expectations of long hours and remuneration as low as minimum wage are prevalent within the elite sport. There is a trend for more experienced S&C coaches to change professions due to the impact such a lifestyle has on their personal life and well-being. Although there have been calls to align wages as well as work expectations with other sports science professions (e.g., sports psychology), this is still in its infancy. The value S&C creates, realised in athletes' potential, benefits the organisation or clubs (e.g., the value of football players is increased); this discrepancy Marx termed "Surplus Value". This study aims to understand the lived experiences of the first author (who has 14 years' experience working as an S&C coach in elite sport) and how he navigated creating surplus value through a pursuit of his own surplus enjoyment (the process of always chasing something that has perceived value and then being disappointed – like progressing in your S&C career). This study outlines three critical themes: (1) I am enjoying it – so what? (2) I cannot pay rent with nice words and t-shirts? and (3) Would I do it all again? Probably yes. We draw on Marxist and Žižek's principles to problematise these findings and situate these within the current context of the S&C coaching profession, leading to some critical applied suggestions that focus on the well-being of S&C coaches, including steps to align value to current demands.

About the presenting author

Dr Chris Szedlak is a Reader in Strength and Conditioning at Hartpury University. His research focuses on psychosocial coaching behaviours in strength and conditioning coaching, including using critical approaches to understand the sociocultural contexts. Chris also uses innovative qualitative approaches (e.g., stories of change) to evaluate physical activity interventions within Sport England-funded organisations.

PS2B2 | An examination of the type, frequency, and intensity of parental stressors across the English field hockey talent system

Taylor, Robin¹; Tamminen, Katherine²; Behan, Stephen¹

¹ Dublin City University, Ireland

² University of Toronto, Canada

Keywords: Parental involvement, relative age effect, talent development, talent strategy, youth sport

Parents of youth sport athletes report a variety of stressors associated with their child's sport participation. However, there has been limited investigation of stressors among parents of youth athletes in talent development systems, limiting the ability of national governing bodies and organizations to provide efficient and effective support to parents. Therefore, this study examines the type, frequency, and intensity of stressors experienced by parents of athletes in the England Field Hockey talent system. A total of three hundred and thirteen parents of athletes in the England Field Hockey talent system completed the Stressors among Parents in Youth Sport Survey (SPYSS). The results revealed that parents generally experience low to moderate levels of stress. Key stressors identified include prioritisation of sport/sport-life conflict, financial demands, competition logistics, and interactions with other sport parents/guardians. The study found minimal differences in stressors based on the sex of the athlete, except for higher stress from other sport parents/guardians among parents of female athletes. Significant differences were observed based on the stage of the athlete's development, with parents of National Age Group squad athletes experiencing higher stress levels. Additionally, relative age effect influenced the frequency and intensity of stressors, with parents of athletes born in the first quartile reporting higher stress related to competition logistics and athlete responses to competition. The findings highlight the need for National Governing Bodies and coaches to support parents by fostering positive interactions between stakeholders and providing targeted resources, especially for those higher up the talent system.

About the presenting author

Robin is an Assistant Professor in Elite Performance. His research is focused on talent development and he is particularly interested in the holistic role family can play in the development of sporting talent. Robin is a Talent Academy coach within the England Hockey Player Pathway and has worked closely with a range of NGBs and sports organisation supporting player and coach development, and parental engagement. Robin works on the postgraduate Elite Performance Sport programmes supervising postgraduate students on MSc, DProf and PhD programmes. Robin is research active within the field of talent development, and works closely with several sporting organisations.

PS5D2 | Entangled Worlds: Relational Labour, Emotion and Reflexivity in Academy Football Ethnography

Thomas, Ryan¹; Potrac, Paul¹; Hall, Edward¹; Morgan, Callum³

¹ Northumbria University, UK

² University of Essex, UK

Keywords: Entangled ethnography, reflexivity, sport coaching, academy football, relational sociology

Ethnographic fieldwork in sport coaching has increasingly illuminated the emotional and ethical dimensions shaping practice. However, much of this literature conceptualises researcher positionality as something navigated within bounded entities. We seek to extend current debates by examining how ethnographic encounters in academy football were shaped not only by what happened ‘in the field’, but also through our wider histories, relationships and interconnected social worlds. Applying Crossley’s relational sociology, we explore how field access, disclosures and everyday practices become entangled with our own networks, demands and responsibilities, producing a form of relational labour that sits at the heart of qualitative inquiry in complex coaching systems.

Our analysis is grounded in a series of autoethnographic vignettes derived from 20 months of longitudinal fieldwork in a Category 3 academy. These were developed from field diaries, informal pitch-side conversations, participatory mapping exercises and ongoing dialogue as critical friends with earlier ethnographic engagements forming part of the sedimented histories shaping the present. Our collective reflexive work through ‘dialogues of discomfort’ enabled a deeper examination of how values, emotional strain and ethical tensions were negotiated within such environments.

The vignettes reveal how coaches, analysts and other staff often engaged in interactions that blurred professional and personal boundaries, disclosing concerns, frustrations and vulnerabilities that extended well beyond immediate academy issues. These exchanges required constant negotiation of care, responsibility and emotional presence, with implications for our own wellbeing and for the wider demands of academic, family and organisational life. In turn, these relational entanglements shaped what became visible, sayable and analytically meaningful in the study.

By foregrounding these dynamics, we contribute to ongoing discussions about relationality, ethics, wellbeing and methodological practice in sport coaching, offering a nuanced account of how coaching work, and the research that seeks to understand it, unfolds across interconnected rather than bounded social worlds.

About the presenting author

Ryan's work uses a relational approach to better understand interactions, relations, ties and network formation in sporting environments, predominantly through the theorising of Nick

Crossley. Some of this work has been used to influence further scholarly activity and impact policymakers through presentations at national/international conferences, publications in academic journals, and knowledge exchange/workshops/CPD via the Premier League and Association of Sporting Directors. He still maintains a foot in the industry through this work, but has explicit previous employment experience as a Development Officer, Coach, Coach Educator and Mentor across various levels of sport.

Abstract PS3D4 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3D4 | Developing collective tactical knowledge and understanding through a participatory research approach: Learning as a socio-pedagogical act

Thomas, Gethin Llewellyn¹; Jones, Robyn²; Corsby, Charlie¹

¹ Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK

² Loughborough University, UK

Keywords: Coaching, collective understanding, cultural historical theory, socio-pedagogical, tactical knowledge

The purpose of this study was to critically explore how Piotr Galperin's considerations of socio-pedagogy could be used as a 'practical theory' within sports coaching. A participatory research approach was used to develop a football team's conceptual knowledge and understanding of their performance over a competitive season. Engaging with Galperin's cultural historical theory (CHT), players' analysed video clips of game situations through verbalising answers to a series of questions related to their 'in action' understandings and intentions. Video recordings of these analysis sessions and focus group interviews revealed that Galperin's pedagogical phases were crucial for collective learning, allowing coaches and players to develop and merge intersubjective resolutions to game situations. The findings demonstrate how, despite clear evidence of intended learning, contextual features overrode the intentions of any pedagogical practice that took place. In turn, the study (re)addresses some misgivings surrounding CHT by illuminating how context influences perceptions, achievements and directions of intended pedagogical activities. Particular attention is given to how the power-infused judgements of the coaches superseded considerations of players' learning when competitive results deteriorated. The study redirects the view of sports coaching as a socio-pedagogical activity, illuminating how and when cognition and behaviour are shaped by social and historical interactions.

About the presenting author

Gethin's principal research interest lies in interrogating and positioning Cultural Historical Theory (CHT) within coaching in terms of merging the social with the pedagogical. By engaging with CHT in this way, his work provides theoretical insights that translate into meaningful, contextually relevant strategies for coaching practice. Having gained his PhD from the University of Exeter on

an ESRC bursary, Gethin is currently a Senior Lecturer and Research (& Innovation) Lead for Sports Coaching within the School of Sport and Health Sciences at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Abstract PS3B1 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3B1 | “You have to be careful that it doesn’t feel like the Truman show or Big Brother”: Exploring the “routinization” of quantification in academy football

Toner, John¹; Kate-Davidson, Tia¹; Towlson, Chris¹

¹ University of Hull, UK

Keywords: Routinization of quantification; coach decision-making; ethics of care; datafication; subjective-objective divide

Background: The emergence of affordable and easy-to-use technological systems has contributed to the spread and intensification of data-intensive practices in football. There is now a growing expectation that coaches draw on the ‘promise’ of technologically-mediated data when making decisions about athletes yet little is known about how these key decision makers perceive the relevance or utility of measurement systems (e.g., Global Positioning Systems) in sport. **Aim and methods:** We sought to address this lacuna by interviewing nine football coaches from across the academy system in English football to explore their perceptions of measurement and quantification in football. Porter’s (1995) work on the quest for objectivity in the natural sciences was drawn upon to interrogate the “push for quantitative rigour” (p. 210) that is so ubiquitous within academy systems. Thematic analysis was used to generate three key themes that cohere around calls for data to inform rather than drive decision making in football.

Results: Findings revealed that while coaches acknowledged the value and relevance of quantified modes of “knowing”, they were concerned about the sheer range and intensity of measurement systems in use within academy football. Rather than allow quantitative data to ‘speak for itself’, coaches drew on their personal judgement and experiential knowledge to determine the relevance of data in the context of their players’ developmental profile and trajectory. **Conclusions:** Our findings make an important contribution to the literature by highlighting how coaches might begin to resist the routinization of quantification in football. The findings may also inform an ‘ethics of care’ surrounding a more judicious, sensitive, and less invasive use of measurement systems in football.

About the presenting author

Gethin’s principal research interest lies in interrogating and positioning Cultural Historical Theory (CHT) within coaching in terms of merging the social with the pedagogical. By engaging with CHT in this way, his work provides theoretical insights that translate into meaningful, contextually

relevant strategies for coaching practice. Having gained his PhD from the University of Exeter on an ESRC bursary, Gethin is currently a Senior Lecturer and Research (& Innovation) Lead for Sports Coaching within the School of Sport and Health Sciences at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Abstract PS5C1 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS5C1 | 'Space and Time': Team Mental Models in a Northern Ireland Senior International Coaching and Athlete Support Team

Toole, Simon R.¹; Paradis, Kyle F.¹; Sharp, Lee-Ann¹; Donnelly, Paul¹

¹ Ulster University, UK

Keywords: Group dynamics, shared, complementary, high-performance.

Background: High-performance sport organisations are complex social environments (Meckbach et al., 2022). Coaching and Athlete Support Teams (CaASTs) increasingly comprise of practitioners from within coaching, sports science, and medicine sub-disciplines (Burns et al., 2024). Research enabling evidence-based guidance for CaASTs remains limited, though is emerging (Burns & Collins, 2023). Team cognition is a critical performance factor in dynamic sport environments (Niler et al., 2021). Team Mental Models (TMMs) reflect the extent and accuracy of shared and complementary cognitive-affective-behavioural knowledge types among members (Filho, 2019). The present study examined TMMs in a CaAST working with a Northern Ireland senior women's international athlete team.

Aim: To understand existing TMMs within a senior international CaAST, including the factors and contextual influences shaping their development, maintenance and application.

Methods: Longitudinal data was collected from eight CaAST members and leaders through serial interviews, supplemented by administration of the Team Mental Model Instrument (TMMI; Filho et al., 2022), at early, mid, and late season time points. Additionally, 12 one-off interviews with coaches, practitioners, leaders, and partners interacting with the CaAST were conducted. In total, 20 participants (Mservice = 2.44 years) discussed perceptions of TMM influencing factors and context. Interviews lasted between 25 and 93 minutes (Mlength = 56 minutes). Reflexive thematic analysis was applied to interview data, and quantitative analysis applied to TMMI data.

Results: Analysis of 664 raw interview data codes and 49 initial themes enabled the development of seven TMMs, 10 influencing factors, and six influencing contexts. TMMI data indicated a small perceived TMM mid-season decrease ($\eta^2=0.15$), and small late-season increase ($\eta^2=0.84$) from the early-season baseline.

Conclusions: Findings suggest that TMMs are shaped by a diverse range of factors and contexts. Identifying these factors contributes to the emerging CaAST literature, and may offer actionable insights for those within, leading, deploying, and supporting CaASTs.

About the presenting author

Simon is a Lecturer and part-time PhD researcher in the School of Sport and Exercise Science at Ulster University, joining in 2024 after 16 years at Sport Northern Ireland. He teaches in the subject areas of sport development, coaching, and performance analysis. His current research examines group dynamics within high-performance sport leadership, coaching, and athlete support teams. Simon's previous industry roles have involved coaching system development, coach development support, club development, investment management, and health initiatives for children, young people, and their families. In his spare time, he continues to coach, and facilitate coach education, in the sport of hockey.

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Abstract PS3C2 | Wednesday, 10th June | 15:30-17:00

PS3C2 | 'Entangled Becoming': Reframing Coach Developer Learning Through a Cultural Lens

Walton, Jack¹; Cushion, Chris¹; Cope, Ed¹

¹ Loughborough University, UK

Keywords: Coach developer learning, learning cultures, Hodkinson, Bourdieu

Traditional models of sport coach development tend to conceptualise learning as the acquisition or transfer of knowledge, positioning coach developers (CDs) as authoritative transmitters of methods, standards, and best practice. Such accounts obscure the cultural, relational, and embodied conditions through which CDs themselves learn and develop. This study draws on a longitudinal, multi-site investigation of five professional CDs working across development and high-performance sport in the UK to examine CD learning through Hodkinson et al.'s cultural theory of learning, a Bourdieusian-informed framework selected for its capacity to capture individual habitus and institutional culture simultaneously and longitudinally. Using interviews, observations, field notes, and documentary data, the analysis explores CD learning within and across various learning cultures, such as National Governing Bodies, clubs, qualification programmes, international camps, and networks, often during organisational change. These cultures are conceptualised as dynamic fields where histories, roles, relationships, and capital interact, shaping what CDs notice, value, resist, and accumulate. Findings show that CD learning does not follow linear or stage-like trajectories implied by competency-based professional development models. Instead, professional becoming emerges through participation in shifting practices, as CDs negotiate legitimacy, recalibrate authority, manage organisational turbulence, and navigate tensions between competing forms of knowledge and expertise. Moments of disjuncture, where personal dispositions clash with cultural expectations, proved particularly generative, prompting the incremental reconfiguration of dispositions and changes in how CDs position themselves and relate to others. This research argues that CD learning is better understood as entangled becoming rather than knowledge acquisition. It emphasises learning as

culturally mediated, relational, and temporally unfolding. By focusing on learning cultures, the study challenges technocratic, decontextualised approaches and provides a theoretically grounded account that explains how professional becoming occurs, not just what CDs should do.

About the presenting author

Jack Walton is a doctoral researcher at Loughborough University and a lecturer in golf coaching at the PGA. His research examines the professional learning of coach developers, drawing on sociological and cultural theories of learning to explore learning as relational, embodied, and situated. Jack also practices as a coach and coach developer, informing his research through sustained engagement with applied practice.

Abstract PS1A2 | Tuesday, 9th June | 15:00-16.30

PS1A2 | How learning happens: coach educators' beliefs and practices on a national governing body (NGBs) designed formal coach education course

Wang, Zhenlong¹; Casey, Ash¹; Cope, Ed¹

¹ Loughborough University, UK

Keywords: Coach educator behaviour, coach practice, behaviour analysis, systematic observation

Background: Formal coach education courses developed by National Governing Bodies (NGBs) are key sites for coaches' learning and professional development. Coach educators, as the key implementer/stakeholder of course content, policies, and pedagogical strategies, play an important role in coaches develop, yet their delivery practices remain unclear.

Purpose: Examine coach educators' beliefs about how learning occurs, and explore how these beliefs are reflected in their pedagogical practices on NGB formal coach education courses in football.

Methods: This study used a pragmatic, sequential mixed-methods design to investigate ten FA-affiliated coach educators across five NGB course cohorts over two football seasons. Data comprised pre-observation interviews, systematic observations, and stimulated-recall interviews built around educator-specific practice profiles. Interview and observation datasets were integrated through abductive thematic analysis.

Results: Three interrelated themes emerged: learning as 1) socially constructed and dialogic; 2) necessarily situated in practice; and 3) scaffolded by the educator to support progression from shared foundations toward independent exploration.

Conclusion: Coach educators in this sample enacted dialogic, situated, scaffolded pedagogy broadly aligned with their espoused beliefs, departing from empty-vessel critiques. Systematic observation triangulated with stimulated-recall produced an objective baseline beyond self-report and linked beliefs, enactment, and rationales.

Impact statement: This study is the first to offer actionable evidence to improve coach education. Observation-based practice profiles can inform NGB policymakers and coach educators, shaping recruitment that values pedagogy and resourcing enactment (e.g. time allocation, representative practice, viable educator–learner ratios). It urges the field to judge enacted pedagogy rather than rhetoric and flags women’s under-representation in coach education and the evaluation of coaches’ learning outcome as future priorities.

About the presenting author

Zhenlong Wang is a doctoral researcher in sport coaching at Loughborough University. His PhD examines how coach educators’ delivery practices shape coaches’ learning and development, particularly within formal coach education programmes designed by national governing bodies. Drawing on his experience as both a football coach and former player, his work aims to bridge research and practice by generating evidence to inform the design, delivery and evaluation of formal coach education.

Abstract PP3 | Wednesday, 10th June | 13:30-15:00

PP3 | Exploring Coach Development in Esports through an Online Social Learning Space

Watson, Matthew¹; Pedraza-Ramirez, Ismael¹; Leeder, Thomas²; Laborde, Sylvain¹; Vinson, Don³

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² University of East Anglia, UK

³ University of Worcester, UK

Keywords: Social learning space; Esports coaches

In esports, coach learning is typically self-directed and occurs in the absence of a codified, formal coach education pathway. This absence of classroom-based or curriculum-led provision presents an opportunity to explore alternative approaches to coach learning. Social Learning Spaces in particular hold promise, as they recognise the importance of social and contextual factors in (coach) learning and complement the autonomous and relational learning skills used by esports coaches. This study therefore examined how an online Social Learning Space (SLS) for esports coaches supported coach learning and coaching efficacy. Adopting a constructivist orientation that sees learning as co-constructed rather than transmitted, the intervention sought to recognise and value the knowledge within the group. Sessions were structured by a facilitator

to promote peer interaction, discussion, reflection and engagement with relevant research-based frameworks, while remaining flexible to participants' learning needs and contextual insights. Data were generated through pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, session recordings, ongoing participant feedback, researcher notes, and follow-up interviews. Analysis, which is ongoing at the time of presentation, adopts a reflexive thematic approach informed by Wenger-Trayner's value creation framework. Given the relative paucity of coach development research in esports, analysis focuses primarily on the immediate, potential, and applied value associated with participation in the SLS, as well as factors that enable or constrain learning. The study offers insights into how Social Learning Spaces can redistribute power in coach education settings, provide greater space for participants' voices, and support contextually-relevant learning in emerging coaching contexts. Findings have implications for coaches, researchers, coach educators, and governing bodies seeking to design meaningful, participatory coach development initiatives in esports and beyond.

About the presenting author

- PhD student at the German Sport University Cologne
- Research Assistant at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- Chair of Health & Well-Being at the Belgian Esports Federation
- Digital Engagement Officer at CRiC

Abstract PS1B2 | Tuesday, 9th June | 15:00-16.30

PS1B2 | Caring in a Culture of Performance: Coaches' Relational and Emotional Labour

Willson, Erin¹; Porter, Jesse¹; Kerr, Gretchen¹

¹ University of Toronto, Canada

Keywords: High-performance coaching, care work, relational labour, positive coaching, coach-athlete relationship

Coaches are increasingly expected to adopt positive coaching strategies that emphasise relational, developmental, and emotional support for athletes (Fullager et al., 2019). These practices closely align with forms of care, yet care remains underexamined in high-performance sport, where success is institutionally defined through technical expertise and outcomes (Potrac et al., 2017). This gap is particularly salient in high-performance contexts, predominantly led by men and shaped by cultural norms that rarely explicitly associate coaching expertise with care. Accordingly, this study explores how care manifests and is interpreted within high-performance coaching contexts.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with Canadian international medal-winning coaches (n=11; 8 men, 3 women) who reportedly embraced positive coaching styles. The sampling strategy enabled insights into caring practices, particularly among men, who engage in relational work without naming it as care. Data were analysed using a pluralistic and reflexive thematic analysis, examining how participants made sense of care in their coaching practices.

Four themes highlighted the complexities of coaches performing care in high-performance settings: i) care was enacted through consistent actions; ii) care was articulated through performance-oriented language, such as “support,” “trust,” or “preparation,” allowing coaches to describe their work without labelling it as care; iii) coaches navigated competing pressures, including gender expectations and organisational cultures that position care as secondary; iv) coaches differed in how they positioned care, with some viewing it as central to their practice while others didn’t explicitly identify it as such.

These findings, interpreted through gender and care theories (Howe & McNamee, 2025; Porter & Spence, 2025), highlight the often-unseen relational and emotional labour performed by coaches, including men. This study supports the recognition of care as professional coaching expertise and calls for coaching systems to embed relational labour within coach education, evaluation, and definitions of success, valuing care alongside performance outcomes.

About the presenting author

Erin Willson is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Safe Sport Lab at the University of Toronto. Her research examines interpersonal violence and safeguarding in high-performance sport, with a focus on athlete experiences and the cultural and organizational contexts that shape them. Using qualitative and mixed-methods approaches, her work aims to inform prevention efforts and support meaningful change within sport systems. Erin is an Olympic artistic swimmer and Past President of AthletesCAN, and she continues to work closely with sport organizations on applied policy development and knowledge-translation initiatives.

Abstract PS5A2 | Thursday, 11th June | 13:45-15:15

PS5A2 | Perceptions of educational pathways available for Scottish football club charity and community programme coaches

Wilson, Teigan¹; Hall, Andy¹; Malone, Michael¹

¹ Robert Gordon University, UK

Keywords: Coach education, football club charity, community programme, sport development, coach development

Scottish Football Club Charities and Community Programmes aim to support their local communities with key educational, health and social issues. To deliver programmes, coaches require relevant practical skills and knowledge to support participant engagement and

development. These are developed through educational opportunities however, courses are often performance-based, rather than community focused. Therefore, this research considers the perceptions of educational opportunities available to Football Club Charity and Community Programme coaches. Semi-structured interviews were completed with Football Club Charity and Community Programme staff and volunteers from various organisations and levels of Scottish football. Participants were recruited from different roles within the organisations (e.g., CEO, delivery staff, volunteers), ensuring a variety of viewpoints were considered and a voice was provided to those frequently overlooked within traditional coach education development and structures. Online semi-structured interviews were conducted exploring individual's roles and experience in their organisation and the wider sector; their educational requirements; the different types of educational routes and who should be involved in education development and delivery. Each interview was recorded and transcribed verbatim through Microsoft Teams, with participants able to check their final transcript prior to analysis. Reflexive Thematic Analysis was used to analyse collected data, with multiple members of the research team involved at each step. Initial findings suggest education through the national governing body has merit for elements of working within Football Club Charities and Community Programmes but can lack relevance across different population groups and projects. Practical experience was highlighted as more beneficial and desired within delivery roles, with a requirement for sector specific education to be developed. These findings can be used by relevant organisations to deliver more specific educational support to their coaches. Tailored support for coaches within Football Club Charities and Community Programs may enhance participant experience, supporting engagement and retention within programmes.

About the presenting author

Teigan is a PhD candidate studying under the supervision of Dr Michael Malone at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen, Scotland, having completed a BSc (hons) Applied Sport and Exercise Science at the same institution. Her research interests include sports coaching and development, youth sport and strength and conditioning. Her current focus is the work of Football Club Charities and Community Programmes, with her involvement with a Scottish football club charity sparking an interest in the area. Alongside her studies, Teigan is a sports coach who develops and delivers functional movement classes for children and strength and conditions session for youth athletes.

Abstract PS6C2 | Friday, 12th June | 10:45-11:45

PS6C2 | Inside the Interval: The Social-Affective Dynamics of Half-Time in Elite Women's Field Hockey

Wright, Jennifer A.¹; McDougall, Michael¹; Fullerton, Christopher¹

¹ University of Stirling, UK

Keywords: Half-time, female, field-hockey, social-affective dynamics

Half-time functions as both a strategic coaching and psychosocial space where the need to prepare tactically and technically intersects with managing relationships, emotions and shared meanings. Such duality can create tensions particularly within the intense time pressures of elite performance. This qualitative study explored half time experiences within a national European women's field hockey team; a context rarely explored in sport coaching or sport psychology research. Data were gathered through match observations, interviews with the coach and manager, and a focus-group with five players, all of whom provided written informed consent prior to data collection. This study explored how half-time is shaped by subjective experiences, relational dynamics and the structural conditions governing voice and authority.

Guided by a social-affective lens, the analysis explored how leadership behaviours authorise certain voices while constraining others, the institutional and performance demands placed on players and coaches, and how these factors converge to shape the emotional climate in this distinct performance context. Through reflexive thematic analysis, four themes were developed: (1) Leading the Way: The voices and leadership that set direction; (2) Inside the Room: Managing the shared emotional space; (3) Against the Clock: Handling time and pressure; (4) From Reflection to Readiness: The moments that matter. Findings suggest co-designing half-time processes to redistribute voice and responsibility would attend to tactical demands while balancing emotional and recovery needs. By foregrounding players' experiences alongside those of coaches and managers the practical implications extend to coach education, coaches, and players, by encouraging shared ownership of performance environments and greater attention to relational, emotional and temporal dynamics.

This study contributes to applied practice by highlighting how collaborative approaches enhance mutual trust, open communication, and shared decision-making. For players, these practices foster emotionally supportive and performance-enhancing conditions that strengthen collective identity. For coaches, collaboration provides valuable insights into players' perspectives, ensuring that strategic decisions are informed by those most affected by them.

About the presenting author

Jennifer Wright is a Lecturer in Initial Teacher Education (Physical Education) and Lecturer in Sport (Coaching and Development, and Psychology) at the University of Stirling. Having graduated with an MSc in Psychology of Sport with distinction in September 2025, her motivation for this work is shaped by her combined experiences as an athlete, coach and researcher. Jennifer taught physical education for 15 years in schools across Scotland, delivering the curriculum to 3-18yr olds. As an athlete, she has represented Scotland in Masters World Cups and European competitions, earning nearly 30 caps in Masters Hockey and over 60 caps in Touch Rugby.