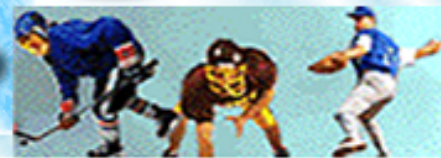




CHAMPS Newsletter



Counseling to **H**elp **A**thletes **M**aximize **P**ersonal **S**uccess

SEPTEMBER 2003

What is Sport Psychology?

Sport success depends upon an athlete's ability to optimize competition strategy, motor skill, and physical conditioning. Yet, even competitors who excel in these areas may "choke" under pressure, fluctuate in motivation, and perform inconsistently. Mastery of the tactical, technical, and physical aspects of sport can only carry an athlete so far. It is the highly skilled competitor with a strong grasp on the psychological side of sport that will ultimately rank among the elite.

Sport psychologists are experts in the study and understanding of mental and emotional aspects of human performance. It is their job to help athletes develop the psychological skills necessary to succeed in sport as well as to lead balanced and fulfilling lives outside of the competitive arena.

Questions and Answers about Sport Psychology

Question: Do NCAA Division I teams make use of sport psychology consultants?

Answer: In 2001, a study conducted at the University of Southern California revealed that of 115 universities participating in the strongest NCAA Division I conferences (Big 12 included) more than half reported they used sport psychology consultants. The consultants targeted a number of issues including anxiety regulation, goal setting, visualization, team building, communication, dealing with injury, and coping with adversity.

Question: Many coaches consider the "mental game" as part of their coaching expertise. Can they still gain assistance from a sport psychology consultant?

Answer: 1) A sport psychologist does not attempt to replicate performance enhancement strategies that a coach already implements effectively. However, when prior efforts have not produced the desired results, coaches and teams often benefit from a consultant's added expertise in understanding behavior and promoting change.

2) Sometimes athletes face difficulties that fall outside the domain in which a coach can help. Also, at times, athletes may be reluctant to share with coaches specific details about personal problems. Team sport psychologists are able to recognize and help when athletes suffer from concerns that may require clinical or counseling attention. A consultant's on-going relationship with a team allows athletes to see that help is readily accessible and, as a result, athletes will be more likely to seek help when it is needed.

Question: What is the scope of training and intervention for a sport psychologist?

Answer: Although sport psychologists can have differing backgrounds, CHAMPS sport psychologists are clinical or counseling psychologists who are trained to work in a variety of capacities. Equally important to the CHAMPS sport psychologist is helping to promote athletes' personal development and life satisfaction. CHAMPS sport psychologists also help athletes find ways to cope with stressors outside of sport—including problems with relationships, eating disorders, substance use, depression, anxiety, anger management, and learning problems.

What is CHAMPS?

CHAMPS is a KSU-Counseling Services program staffed by 2 licensed psychologists, 2 pre-doctoral psychology interns, and a kinesiologist specialized in sport and performance strategies. It is one of this country's few comprehensive sport psychology programs to exist at a university counseling center. CHAMPS specialists are available for coach consultation, team consultation, small group discussions, individual counseling, and biofeedback training. We can also work with intercollegiate athletic staff, trainers, and professors when needed. Additionally, CHAMPS offers special sections applicable to athlete needs in credit courses on career and life planning as well as on academic and sport performance enhancement. Finally, watch out for CHAMP's monthly newsletter with tips on integrating sport psychology into your training program and on living a healthy balanced life as a top-level competitor!

CHAMPS Specializations

- Goal-Setting
- Concentration and Attention
- Leadership Skills
- Body Image Concerns
- Balancing Life
- Stress Management
- Self-Confidence
- Emotional Concerns
- Performance Anxiety
- Team Building
- Relaxation and Imagery
- Coping with Injury
- Communication
- Biofeedback
- Academic issues
- Alcohol and Drug Use

CHAMPS Specialists:

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