

THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY SYSTEM CENTER FOR PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY



2012 PERFORMANCE PSYCHOLOGY CONFERENCE

Maximize the Power of the Mind!

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23

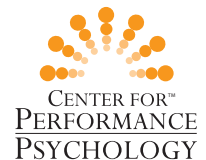
5 – 6 p.m. - Registration

6 – 6:45 p.m. - Featured Speaker: Lieutenant Colonel Carl Ohlson, Ph.D.

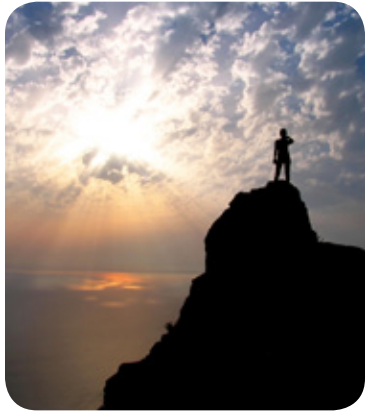
LTC Ohlson is Associate Professor and Director of the Center for Enhanced Performance (CEP) at the United States Military Academy. A prior enlisted Soldier, Dr. Ohlson has served as Company Commander at Fort Benning, Executive Officer and Deputy Director for the CEP at West Point, and Chief of Community Affairs for the Allied Forces Northern Europe. Dr. Ohlson returned to Afghanistan in the fall of 2009 to assist the National Military Academy of Afghanistan in developing their strategic plan. A frequent guest speaker on applying sport psychology and student development strategies to a variety of contexts, Dr. Ohlson serves as an advisor to several think tanks and also educates cadets and soldiers on his research interests, including psychological hardiness and self-regulated learning. LTC Ohlson will share his strategies for leveraging mental strength to enhance performance.

7 – 7:30 p.m. - Featured Speaker: Mr. Bill Duffy, Sports Agent

Mr. Duffy is one of the best-known and most recognizable agents in the world representing players in the National Basketball Association. His company, BDA Sports Management, is a global, full-service athlete management and marketing firm providing services to professional basketball players, such as Yao Ming, Steve Nash, Baron Davis, Brandon Jennings, Rajon Rondo, Darren Collison and Greg Oden. Duffy is a former collegiate basketball player who was selected by the Denver Nuggets in the fifth round of the 1982 NBA Draft. Mr. Duffy will address the challenges of young elite athletes as they transition into collegiate and professional athletics.



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7:45 - 8:15 p.m. - **Featured Speaker:** Aaron Taylor, *NFL*

Mr. Taylor is a former NFL player for the Green Bay Packers and San Diego Chargers and is currently a college football analyst for CBS Sports Network. A graduate of De La Salle High School in Concord, California, he attended the University of Notre Dame, where he was an All-American in 1992 and 1993 and won the Lombardi Award in 1993. One of the great offensive linemen in the history of Notre Dame football, Mr. Taylor was selected in the first round of the 1994 NFL Draft by the Green Bay Packers and played in two Super Bowls, including the Packers' 1997 championship victory in Super Bowl XXXI. He is the founder of the Aaron Taylor Impact Fund, which is dedicated to bridging the gap between those who have and those who need through education.

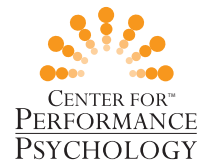


FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

8 - 8:45 a.m. - **Featured Speaker:** Dr. Mark Anshel, *Middle Tennessee State University*

Dr. Mark Anshel is a professor in the Department of Health and Human Performance, with a joint appointment in the Department of Psychology, at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. He teaches graduate courses in research methods, experimental design, psychology of sport & exercise and motor behavior. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in physical education from Illinois State University, a Master of Arts degree in human performance psychology from McGill University (Montreal), and a Ph.D. in performance psychology/motor learning from Florida State University (Ph.D.).

Dr. Anshel has authored over 130 research articles in scientific journals, 23 book chapters, and eight books including *Sport Psychology: From Theory to Practice* [5th ed., 2012], *Applied Exercise Psychology: A Practitioner's Guide to Improving Client Health and Fitness* (2006), and *Concepts in Fitness: A Balanced Approach to Good Health* (2005).



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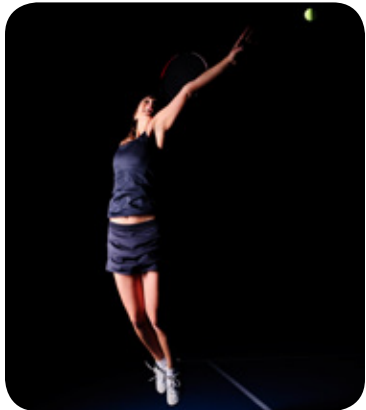


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His primary areas of research include coping with stress in sport, and examining the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral interventions on participation and adherence to health behavior change, with an emphasis on initiating and maintaining exercise behavior. His validated and published Disconnected Values Model concerns promoting a healthier lifestyle by helping individuals identify their values, acknowledge that their behavior patterns are inconsistent with their values, to understand the costs and long-term consequences of this inconsistency, and finally, to then engage in an action plan to promote health behavior change and reduce this inconsistency (disconnect). Dr. Anshel received a two-year, \$130,000.00 grant from Middle Tennessee State University to generate and direct the university's first employee wellness program. He has also consulted with the Murfreesboro Police Department (Murfreesboro, Tennessee) on improving the mental and physical health, wellness, and coping skills of police officers, detectives, and emergency dispatchers. This includes applying sport and performance psychology literature.



9 - 10:15 a.m. - **Themed Presentations #1: "Performance Psychology Research"**

9 - 9:15 a.m.: **Ashley Samson**, *Cal State Northridge*, "Multisport Training-Induced Psychological Changes: A Longitudinal Investigation"

As the triathlete population continues to grow, so does the interest into the psychological composition of these athletes. Researchers have explored such things as motivations for participation (Croft, Gray, & Duncan, 1999), differences when compared to marathoners (Virnig & McLeod, 1996), and mood profiles (Bell & Howe, 1988; Debate, Washington, & Sargent, 2001). While the contribution of these investigations is invaluable to developing our understanding of the triathlete's mind, the majority of these studies are cross-sectional and few have tracked athletes over time. The purpose of this study was to utilize a mixed-methods approach to investigate the effects of a 10-week intensive triathlon training program on psychological constructs such as body image, self-efficacy perceptions, sport competence and motivational goals.



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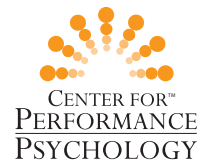
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9:20 – 9:35 a.m.: Daniery Rosario, Alison Rhodius, and John Kerr, JFKU,
“An Exploration of Aggression in MMA: A Qualitative Study”

Aggression can be defined as any behavior with the intent to harm another living being (Tenenbaum, Stewart, Singer, & Duda, 1996). This definition; however, far from encompasses the complexities of this widely debated topic in the sporting realm. Much of research has focused on aggression from an early developmental perspective such as Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1978) and Instinct Theory (Gillespie, 1971). However, the use of aggression in combat sports requires intricate skill and extensive learning, as in the case of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA). In MMA, many fighters represent an array of martial art backgrounds as a means to knock out or submit an opponent. Studies have shown the impact of martial arts on aggression (Trulson, 1986), but very few research studies have looked at the motivation and emotion behind the behavior. Recent studies have provided an alternative perspective to viewing aggression that replaces the simplistic dichotomy of hostile and instrumental aggression (Grange & Kerr, 2011, Kerr, 2005, and Bushman & Anderson, 2001). Using a Grounded Theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 1990), the researcher explored how aggression is experienced among professional MMA fighters by looking at the factors that influence their aggression before, during, and after competition. In addition, using the theoretical frameworks of the Reversal Theory (Kerr, 2005), the study was able to explore the meta-motivational states experienced by the participants. The qualitative research design process consisted of six formal semi-structured interviews with professional mixed martial artist from various martial art academies. The results support examples of both hostile and instrumental aggression along with strong evidence of deliberate use of controlled aggression.

Practitioners can use this information going forward as a basis to develop interventions to help teach athletes how to facilitate performance through the use of controlled aggression.

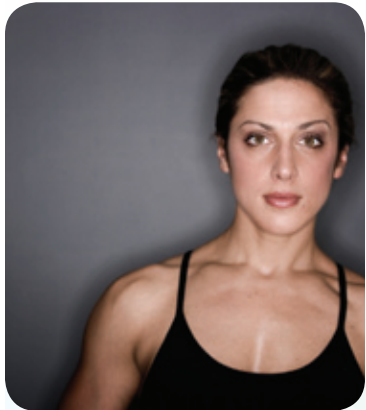


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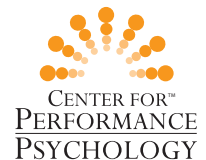
9:40 – 9:55 a.m.: **John Evans**, *UNC Greensboro*, “Emotional Intelligence and Swimming Performance”

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has received ample recognition in education, health, business, and recently sport. Yet, after two decades, there is little consensus over its definition and measurement (Zeidner et al., 2008). Some describe EI as a set of abilities and form of intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1997), while others conceptualize EI as a mixture of abilities and personality (i.e. Schutte et al., 1998). The limited research in sport has examined EI using a variety of measurement approaches. While EI has been tied to performance outcomes, it may be that athletes’ use of mental skills mediates the relationship between EI and performance. The study explores two common EI measures, based on different frameworks, and athletes’ use of mental skills. A significant relationship between EI and mental skills use could provide insight into interventions to increase use of mental skills by increasing EI, or vice versa; possibly enhancing performance.



10 – 10:15 a.m.: **Aaron Weinstein & Alison Rhodius**, *JFKU*, “A Framework of Mental Toughness in Professional Poker Players”

Mental toughness has been referred to as a “psychological edge” that entails an ability to cope and be more consistent than your opponents (Connaughton, Hanton & Jones, 2002). Poker experts reveal that winning at poker is not about luck, playing your cards correctly, or even understanding the statistics related to pot odds, but is about knowing yourself and understanding how others think, feel, and behave (Fujitsu & Peachey, 2006). This presentation discusses results from a study with fifteen professional poker players, consisting of 12 males and 3 females between the ages of 21-60, with winnings totaling more than \$8.6 million, 409 tournament cashes, and 24 titles. Qualitative semi-structured interviews addressed three areas: examining a poker-specific definition of mental toughness, identifying attributes that encompass mental toughness in poker at the professional level, and developing a poker-specific framework of mental toughness. Results verified



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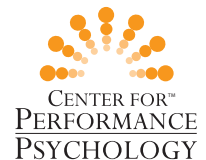
Connaughton et al.'s (2002) definition of mental toughness and identified 47 components in 14 attributes that exemplify mental toughness. These attributes were grouped into four dimensions: one general (attitude/mindset) and three time-specific (pre-competition, competition, post-competition), within an overall framework of mental toughness. The constructed table and framework, created to display the entire conceptualization of the results graphically, are shared. The applied implications as well as future research areas involving mental toughness and poker are discussed.

10:15 - 10:30 a.m. - **BREAK**

10:30 - 11:45 a.m. - **Themed Presentations #2: "Issues in Professional Development"**

10:30 - 10:45 a.m.: **Alison Rhodius, JFKU**, "To Graduation, Certification, and Beyond: The Importance of Post-Training Peer Support and Reflective Practice in Sport"

Mentoring support does not have to cease upon graduation or when certification has been achieved. Ongoing peer support is a critical element in successful consulting. In other areas of psychology (and in other fields entirely), ongoing peer consultation is encouraged or even required. Waumsley, Hemmings and Payne (2010) have gone so far as to suggest that ongoing peer consultation should be included in re-accreditation criteria for sport psychology professionals in the UK. This presentation will discuss the importance of post-graduation/post-certification peer consultations in sport psychology and will give an example of a successful peer consultation group. The presentation will cover how this group started, practical considerations about where they meet, how often, what is discussed, what is not discussed, group rules, and how the group incorporates reflective practice. Knowles, Gilbourne, Tomlinson, and Anderson (2007) have suggested how reflective practice can facilitate the supervisory process with trainees. Indeed reflective practice has become an essential ingredient in accreditation requirements for



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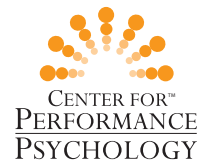
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BASES (British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences) and may be something that other sport psychology accrediting or certifying bodies may consider. Reflective practice has become an important aspect for the work produced at John F. Kennedy University. JFKU encourages its use with students for research work and interns for applied graduate work. It also encourages the use of reflective practice and the incorporation of formalized peer support post-graduation and after any certification has been achieved, for example AASP (Association for Applied Sport Psychology) certification.

10:50 – 11:05 a.m.: Karlene Sugarman and Sara Robinson, JFKU, “Pre-Performance Routines: A Vital Component of Mental Training for Athletes”

Pre-performance routines can be an important and valuable part of how an athlete prepares. Research suggests how vital mental training programs are to sport performance in general, and specifically when striving to become a mentally and physically consistent athlete (e.g., Frey, Laguna, & Ravizza, 2003; Harmison, 2006; Mamassis & Doganis, 2004; Gallucci, 2008). The goal for athletes being not only peak performance, but also the ability to adjust quickly when needed. To perform at an optimal level consistently, it is important to use routines not only for competition, but also for practice, and to link the mental skills training to the physical training (e.g., Schack et al., 2005; Weinberg & Gould, 2007). This presentation will highlight the central benefits of creating routines, discuss the differences between routines and superstitions, and introduce our A-B-C Model of pre-performance routines. We will also highlight elements of the Peak Performance (PP) Checklist for Athletes, which is an assessment tool that helps athletes reflect on their past successful performances to help determine what mental elements are important to include for each person's routine.



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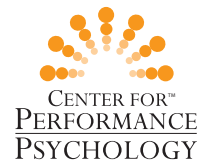
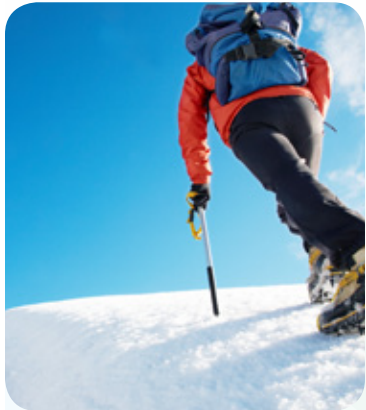


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11:10 – 11:25 a.m.: **Christine Rickertson, JFKU,** “Managing Emotional Perceptions Produces by Fear of Failure”

This presentation provides a practical theory-based perspective for mental skills trainers, sport psychologists, coaches, and athletes working toward overcoming negative emotional perceptions driven by a fear of failure. The fear of failure can be one of the most crippling hurdles for athletes as well as one of the most challenging to overcome. There has been much discussion in the research about what fear of failure is and the possible effects it can have on the athletes experiencing it. A common thread throughout related research shows that fear is an emotional reaction to a perceived threat that the athlete seeks to escape or avoid (Sagar, Lavalley, & Spray, 2009). In other words, athletes fear the consequences of failure if they perceive them to be harmful or painful, and the anticipation of such outcomes bring fear and anxiety. Learning to manage emotional responses that are driven by the fear of failure is challenging. Fear itself is emotionally driven, and therefore having a negative emotional response to the fear of failure is natural. However, developing strategies and skills for managing these responses to fear is imperative for optimal performance. Research suggests that athletes perform best when they concoct a uniquely personal recipe of emotions and thoughts to lead to their best performance (Vealey, 2008). With that perspective in mind, the key to helping athletes manage fear of failure is by helping them to identify and accept fear, thus enabling them to put fear in its place. In order to assist in combating these fears, strategies are suggested in this presentation for how to define and how to manage emotions that tend to exacerbate this fear of failure through specific management strategies. A series of steps are followed that are based within the athletes' belief in their ability to be successful even when faced with a potential failure situation. Steps include pinpointing and acknowledging the source of the fear, understanding the emotional perceptions driven by fear, and creating a unique plan of action for managing fear through specific forms of self-talk and goal setting. By furthering our understanding of the emotional toll that the fear of failure presents to athletes, we can be better equipped to manage these emotions in a manner most productive to optimal performance.



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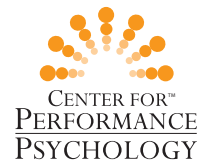
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11:30 – 11:45 a.m.: **Fernando Lopez**, *Private Practice*, “The Use of Video Feedback with Biofeedback as an Assessment Tool: A Case Study of a Collegiate Archer”

The sport of archery can be mentally taxing on an archer due to the time in between arrows, calculating the score and comparing it to other archers, emotional responses to good and bad shots, as well as shooting in the wind. Mental training techniques such as routines, breathing exercises, and imagery have been popular in the archery community and have shown positive results (Haywood, 2006). The current study focused on conducting an assessment to increase awareness of thoughts, behaviors and emotions in an experienced collegiate archer. The consultant combined two highly researched topics in the field of sport and exercise psychology, video feedback (Menickelli, 2004), and biofeedback (Gracz, Walczak, & Wilińska, 2007; Bar-Eli, Dreshman, Blumenstein, & Weinstein, 2002) to conduct the assessment. The research behind video feedback has found that it can be a useful assessment tool in sport psychology consulting, help modify behavior, and increase awareness of athlete’s behaviors (Ives, Straub, & Shelley, 2002). This tool was paired with the use of biofeedback to record the archer’s heart rate variability (HRV). Biofeedback research in sport and exercise psychology found that it can help in body and mind awareness, relaxation, concentration, and thought regulation (Solanky, 2010; Gracz et al., 2007). The data for this case study was collected during a friendly shoot between two Northern California universities. The biofeedback data was collected using EmWave, a portable device that records HRV. The archer in this case study was 23 years old with six years of experience, including five years in collegiate archery. The archer was video recorded and connected to the biofeedback device on her earlobe for the first scoring round. Once all data had been recorded, the consultant edited the data and created a video of the archer. The video incorporated both her shooting, as well as her HRV. This case study shows the results of using video feedback with biofeedback and highlights the benefits as well as the limitations behind it.



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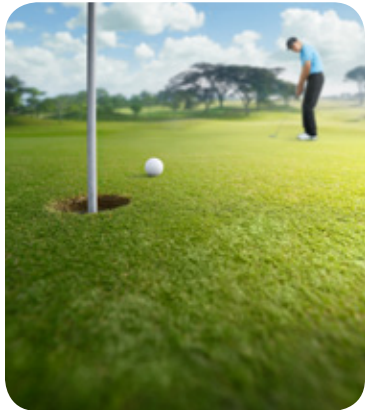


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11:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. - **LUNCH**

12:30 - 1:30 p.m. - **Themed Presentations #3: "Coaching Education and Diverse Populations"**

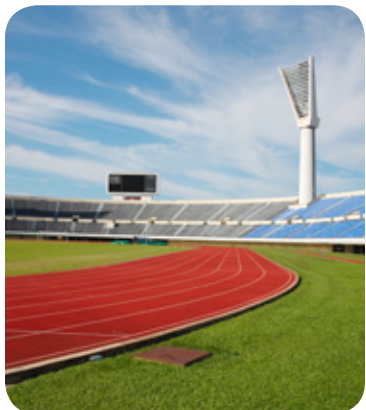


12:30 - 12:45 p.m.: **Angela Robles, Jeff Eyanson, and Malia Lawrence**, *Azusa Pacific University*, "Stories from the Field: White Athlete Experiences of Race"

The purpose of this study is to utilize the existential-phenomenological approach to investigate the experiences of current White student-athletes' in regard to race throughout their athletic careers. This study, is in-process, and focuses on the following three research questions: a) What situational contexts do current White student-athletes recognize in regard to specific episodes where race played an important role in their athletic careers?; b) What racial issues are recalled which current White student-athletes have experienced throughout their athletic careers?; and c) What relationships are central for current White student-athletes in their sporting environments? Current White student-athletes from various sports and competitive levels will be interviewed to obtain a deeper understanding of their experiences with race and how it played an important role in their academic and athletic careers. Interviews will be analyzed using phenomenological methods and will reveal themes. Conclusions for athletes, sport science researchers, athletic department personnel, and coaches will be articulated.

12:50 - 1:05 p.m.: **Chang-Yong Yang**, *University of Utah*; **Sangyeon Song, Dongduk**, *Woman's University*, and **Taeung Kim**, *Louisiana State University*, "The Determinants of Sport Character in Korean Athletes"

Athletes face sport character issues such as fairness, prosocial behavior, aggressive behavior, and sportsmanship. It is believed that sport builds character (Kavussanu & Roberts, 2001; Sage, 1990; Sage & Kavussanu, 2007). Moreover, sport is regarded as a vehicle for learning to cooperate with teammates, negotiate, and provide solutions to moral conflicts, and learn virtues such as fairness, sportpersonship, team loyalty, teamwork, responsibility, and subordination for the greater good (Kleiber & Roberts, 1981). While some researchers maintain that sport builds character, others counter the claim and suggest that sport builds 'characters'. It is easy to find use of drugs to enhance performance, antisocial behaviors, and cheating in

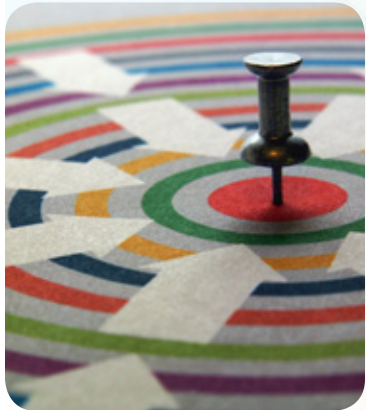
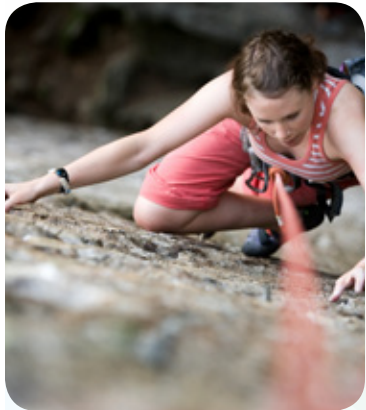


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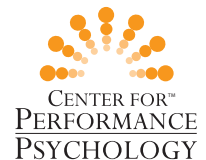


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the sport situation [Bredemeier, 1994; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995]. In addition, some criticize that competition in sport reduces prosocial behavior [Kleiber & Roberts, 1981] and increases antisocial behavior [Kohn, 1986], and an overemphasis on winning in competition generates moral problems [Orlick, 1990]. These divergent views exist relative to sport and character development and still, there have been questions whether and how sport builds the character of participants. Particularly, little is known about the concepts and components of sport character athletes in Korea. The purpose of this study is to: (a) explore the sources of sport character; and, (b) classify determinants that affect the sport character of Korean athletes. 127 Korean athletes (male=69, female=58; aged from 13-22 years), who were associated with a variety of sports (e.g., archery, track & field, judo, weight lifting, field hockey, rowing, tennis, shooting, table tennis, swimming, and boxing), participated in an open-ended questionnaire, which included 16 questions with four potential components (compassion, fairness, sportspersonship, and integrity), reflecting Shields and Bredemeier's theory. Each component consisted of four questions. One of the four questions indicating compassion was "Please describe your feelings toward opponents or an opposing team in a sport setting." Data were analyzed and categorized based on the frequency of similar answers. Results revealed detailed domains branching out from each component. The category of compassion showed three detailed domains: (a) valuing participants (e.g., respecting others, caring for each other), (b) game manners (e.g., being courteous, shaking hands), and (c) verbal expression (e.g., encouraging opponents, genuinely congratulating the winner). Fairness included five detailed domains: (a) following the rules, (b) judging equally, (c) doing the best they can, (d) not cheating, and (e) accepting the outcome. Sportsmanship was categorized into six detailed domains: (a) doing the best they can, (b) following the rules, (c) game manners, (d) verbal expression, (e) expressing emotions, and (f) accepting the outcome. Last, integrity was classified into six detailed domains: (a) doing the best they can, (b) following the rules, (c) accepting the outcome, (d) complying with the referee's decision, (e) game manners, and (f) verbal expression. The theoretical and practical implication will be discussed.



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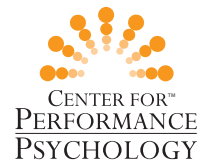
1:10 – 1:30 p.m.: **Sara Robinson, JFKU**, “Coach Education: A Partnering of JFK University’s LEAP (Life Enhancement through Athletic and Academic participation) and ACUSD (Acalanes Union School District).”

LEAP is a non-profit, community outreach program that was created by the graduate Sport Psychology Program at John F. Kennedy University in Pleasant Hill over 20 years ago. While the main mission is to help at-risk youth succeed in life, school, and sport, there are other aspects to the community outreach element of this program.

An ongoing part of the work that LEAP conducts is creating a partnership with a local school district in their ASEPP Coaching Course (American Sports Education Program Principles of Coaching Course). All Acalanes Union School District high school coaches are required to complete the two-day training, and LEAP provides the first two hours of these workshops. LEAP has been involved in the training for the last three years, participating in each of the three courses per year, prior to each sport season.

A LEAP representative begins the coaches’ workshop with time for the coaches to reflect on their past experiences as athletes and coaches. Self-reflection is a vital part of growth and change, and coaches are asked to think about their experiences of being coached as an athlete, and how this relates to how they coach now, specifically in relation to communication. LEAP helps them recognize the positive attributes to take from their experiences, while being open to other ways to communicate effectively with their athletes.

After an initial conversation, the LEAP representative moves onto providing suggestions for enhanced communication including: positive feedback, aiming for more positive feedback than negative; open and honest communication; how to communicate clearly; reminding the coaches about appropriate communication; understanding the role of body language in communication; taking into account different learning styles when

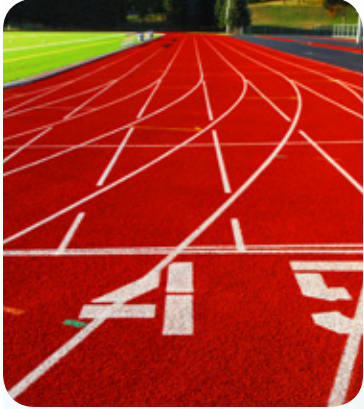


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communicating; and modeling through the way they communicate. Given the nature of technology, suggestions for avoiding Facebook and understanding how to keep emails and texts appropriate is also covered.

The work with the coaches provides a foundation for strong communication principles. All coaches are encouraged to try at least one of the ideas covered in the workshop, and are reminded that communication is a skill that can be developed.

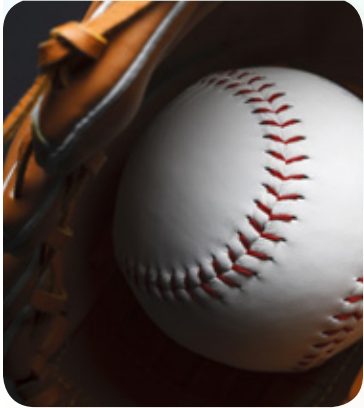
The presentation at the conference will outline the work that is done in the Acalanes Union School District and illustrate the partnership that JFKU Sport Psychology's LEAP Program has with the district, which allows for ongoing coach education to take place.

1:30 – 1:45 p.m. - **BREAK**

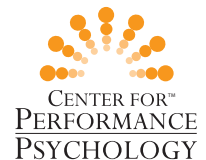
1:45 – 2:30 p.m. - **Featured Presentation:** Timmie A. Pollock, Ph.D., *Private Practice*, "An Introduction to Working with the Equestrian Athlete"

2:30 – 2:45 p.m. - **BREAK**

2:45 – 3:30 p.m. - **Featured Presentation:** Aimee C. Kimball, Ph.D., *UPMC Center for Sports Medicine*, "IRISH I was Mentally Tougher"



People's definitions of "sport" vary widely as do their opinions of what is considered a performance. As a mental training professional, I have been fortunate to work with athletes and performers from youth to professional levels across numerous domains (sport, dance, business, law, etc.). While the tasks they perform may differ, the need to be mentally tough does not. As such, the basic components of mental toughness—focus, confidence, and emotional control—need to be cultivated and enhanced regardless of the performance domain. This workshop will teach attendees how to apply the



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foundations of “sport” psychology to various performers, with Irish dance as the main focus. Attendees will learn 1) the importance of knowing the performance requirements and mental demands as perceived by the performers, 2) how “performer” needs differ from “athlete” needs, and 3) techniques that can be used to teach performers and athletes how to be mentally tough.

3 – 3:15 p.m. - **CLOSING REMARKS**

