



# CSPA NEWSLETTER

## CHAIR UPDATE

Welcome to our CSPA Winter Newsletter! We hope you will find our articles and featured topics to be useful, informative and provocative, as we all work towards increased awareness and the highest possible degree of professionalism in our fields of practice.

Editor Lori Dithurbide has done a great job pulling together topics that are of interest for all of us in our sector, from detailed synopses from conference presentations, to recommended reading and book/article reviews, as well as updates in our regions across Canada.

We know you cannot be everywhere, and the fall is a time that has an abundance of professional development and academic conferences throughout North America. We have a wide variety of reviews and “direct from the field” synopses from CSPA members.

You will be able to add to your reading list with a diverse compilation of sport and non-sport specific works to add to your expertise – if there is something missing on this list that you would like to add to a future newsletter, we want to hear from you!

Finally, no matter where you are in Canada, we have a CSPA Managing Council regional lead who is your contact with our Association and is working hard to pull together meaningful connection (in person and virtual) to add to your development and engagement in our mental performance and mental health community.

We hope you enjoy our latest newsletter edition as some holiday reading, and we hope you are inspired to get more involved in our association or our field at large. We are here for YOU: if there is an area that you are interested in growing or supporting, your Managing Council would love to hear from you!

All the best to you as we look forward to more great things to come in 2020.

Sincerely,

Dr. Shaunna Taylor, PhD, MPC CCC  
Chair, Managing Council, CSPA

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT **Conference Recaps**

Fall brings along many conferences, so we have asked some of our members to provide us with recaps of their attendance at a handful of conferences from Fall 2019.

### **Association of Applied Sport Psychology**

Portland, OR

October 23 - 26, 2019

By Cassandra M. Seguin, M.H.K., Ph.D. Candidate

Being an MPC today carries with it a lot of challenges, a few of which were presented (implicitly and explicitly) at the 2019 AASP Conference held in the beautiful city of Portland, Oregon. For one, discussions in and outside of the structured conference setting surrounded topics of ethical practice (e.g., to have “success” as an MPC, do we need to promote our work with well-known athletes; how does this conflict with our code of ethics and confidentiality practice), counseling theories (e.g., ACT or CBT), and gaps (e.g., what research backs our approach; how does practice inform research). That being said, I believe the AASP Conference this year promoted a lot of debate, critical discussions, and thoughtful reflections.

As the conference went on, some trending topics took centre-stage, including ACT and mindfulness. Of note, keynotes George Mumford and Dr. Tobias Lundgren provided thought-provoking speeches on the applications of ACT and mindfulness in a variety of settings, including elite sport and personal development. Backed by research and practical experience, these two keynotes shared insights, provided challenges, and certainly identified opportunities for future research endeavours. In line with this theme of being present, accepting experiences for what they are, and seeking development and excellence through applied practice, Coach Karch Kiraly highlighted how the USA Women’s Volleyball Team has actively engaged in mindful practice and presence of mind in the face of a multitude of challenging situations. Of note, Kiraly emphasized his approach of going into competitions and events with no expectations and training athletes to respond to stress and adversity quickly and (ideally) effectively.

Beyond keynote presentations, a number of interesting topics emerged through lectures and panels. In particular, Dr. Ross Wadey of St. Mary’s University provided a number of insightful presentations regarding his research in the areas of psychology of sport injury and growth following adversity. Dr. Wadey’s presentations emphasized the importance of taking value-based approaches and asking Socratic-type questions. Personally, I believe this type of approach is necessary as it could enable us as MPCs and other sport psychology practitioners to better support our athletes through trials and tribulations. Additionally, Dr. Wadey highlighted connections between emotional responses to injury and levels of adversity, but emphasized that promoting experiences of adversity is not his goal, nor should that be the case for others. Rather, supporting individuals during and post-adverse events should consider taking a Socratic/values-based approach to help the athlete reconnect with their own identity to allow separation from the injury or adverse event.





Overall, the AASP conference this year created a lot of discussion about the future directions of our field, some of the challenges we are experiencing now, and the importance of research-informed-practice.

As representatives of the CSPA and MPCs around the world, we have a responsibility to positively represent the profession, act ethically, and commit ourselves to life-long learning. It was great to see a number of CSPA members and Canadian representatives yet again this year; truly an inspiring group of people.

**By Scott Illroy, M.H.K. Student**

The 2019 AASP conference held in Portland (OR) was well organized and provided a rich learning opportunity for a novice consultant. I intended to be a sponge at this conference and absorb as much information as possible. I was interested in hearing what the speakers had to say, of course, but also how they conducted themselves in front of an audience. Mission accomplished.

One of my key takeaways was that a good consultant has to ground their practice in science and apply it by building strong relationships, listening, and asking good questions. On several occasions, consultants would bring up this notion of planned spontaneity. The idea is that consultants strategically go to places they think/expect they will run into a particular performer, either pre or post competition. Sometimes the athlete will engage in conversation and other times the presence of the MPC is enough. I found this to be very interesting and something I plan on implementing with the teams I work with. Its apparent that consultants who work in the trenches of organizations/teams who aren't provided with formal office spaces use this strategy often.

I also had the privilege of beginning my time at AASP attending a panel on culture in sport. I learned that when trying to change a team or organizational culture it is crucial to know exactly what the current behavioural norms are. From there your role as a MPC is collaboratively setting out what the desired behavioural norms will be and then managing the change. I'm sure this is easier said than done.

I really like analogies as they paint clear pictures in our mind. Dr. Hacker, who worked with the U.S. Women's Ice Hockey team for the Sochi Olympics, said, "the electric lightbulb was not created by trying to improve the candle". This stuck out to me as a way of thinking about the discomfort and change of perspectives athletes must face when pursuing excellence.

Attending the AASP conference also provided a nice opportunity for myself and other University of Ottawa students to engage in social learning. The speakers were very informative and so was the experience of reflecting and discussing my thoughts and feelings with other consultants. The entire experience was extremely rewarding and facilitated my growth as a mental performance consultant, and I would strongly recommend attending next year.

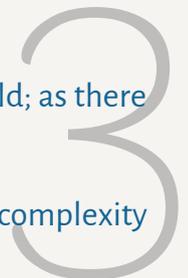
## **Association of Sport Performance Centres bi-annual conference**

Barcelona, Spain  
October 9 - 11, 2019

**By Adrienne Leslie-Toogood, Ph.D.**

This conference was well attended by Canadians, and it was a privilege to learn from the world; as there were 32 countries in attendance.

I was certainly struck by the importance of our role in developing human potential and the complexity of the services we provide.





I will highlight a few personal takeaways from the Netherlands that I feel are important for our field and profession. Maurits Hendricks from the Netherlands did an excellent job of outlining several questions that we must consider as we develop sport science centers. They included:

- Who determines what is good?
- What does the future athlete look like?
- Are we making it hard enough?
- Is there enough variability in their environment?

He spoke about the fact that rules are necessary but can make it dull and that in the end it is a human business and to maximize potential, we must use the unique greatness of every person in the system to maximize our ideas and performance. How do we get the most out of us? We must ensure that we are in constant communication.

I will now turn my focus to a second presenter from the Netherlands, Dr. Wylleman. Dr. Wylleman utilized a complex developmental model across several domains including athletic, psycho-social, psychological, academic/vocational, financial and legal domains. He explored potential challenges athletes will face in each area with a) developing athletes, b) elite level athletes, and c) post-career athletes.

Dr. Wylleman spoke about the sophisticated system they use in the Netherlands to meet the performance, developmental and mental well-being needs of their athletes. He also differentiated between mental health, mental illness and mental ill-health. He felt this was an important continuum of mental well-being to consider in identifying the best service provider for the athlete's needs.

Dr. Wylleman outlined the many types of service providers utilized within the system in the Netherlands including elite sport lifestyle coaches, sport psychologists, health psychologists, clinical psychologists, and psychiatrists. A main lesson was that it is important to define scope and work collaboratively to meet athlete needs.

Some of his overall takeaways include:

- Psychology of excellence and high performance is more than 'mental coaching'
- Do not only address performance, but also development and mental health
- Provide proactive support to coaches to strengthen their competencies
- Tools and supports are available which can be used by centres
- Employ experts who are appropriately educated and trained with applied experience at the elite level

This was certainly a conference in which I took in many things. I truly believe it will take time to digest all that I learned. I am so grateful for the opportunity to attend and learn from others.



## Canadian Society for Psychomotor Learning and Sport Psychology

Vancouver, BC  
October 17 - 19, 2019  
By Barbi Law, Ph.D.

The annual Canadian Society for Psychomotor Learning and Sport Psychology/Société Canadienne d'Apprentissage Psychomoteur et de Psychologie du Sport (SCAPPS) was held October 17-19th in Vancouver, BC. The program included keynote addresses by Dr. Joan Duda (University of Birmingham; Sport & Exercise Psychology) and Dr. Alan Kingstone (University of British Columbia; Motor Learning & Control). The Wilberg lecture was delivered by Dr. Timothy Welsh (University of Toronto) and the Carron lecture was presented by Dr. John Spence (University of Alberta). Verbal and poster presentations reported on findings from both qualitative and quantitative studies covering a wide range of applied sport psychology topics, including: experiences of diverse populations within sport (e.g., Indigenous athletes, individuals with a disability, Masters athletes, LGBTQ2+ athletes); effectiveness of mental skills, and psychosocial and environmental influences (e.g., athlete identity, parents, coaches) on sport experiences and mental health. Overall, key messages that emerged throughout the conference included the need to integrate knowledge and theoretical perspectives from across various disciplines to better understand and create change in physical activity and sport experiences; and the importance of engaging with individuals, organizations, and communities to inform research and reduce the knowledge to practice gap. The next SCAPPS conference will be held in Montreal, QC in Fall 2020.

## Sport Innovation Summit (Own the Podium)

Toronto, ON  
October 28 - 30, 2019  
By Sharleen Hoar, Ph.D.

SPIN Summit is a meeting for sport science professionals working in high performance sport. Own the Podium is responsible for the summit and works in partnership with Canadian Olympic Committee, Canadian Paralympic Committee, and the regional COPSIN institute in the host city. Features of this conference include: Sport Science discipline meeting that is open to all practitioners, not just practitioners from COPSIN centres and institutes; a welcome reception and poster presentations; research presentation sessions; invited speakers for workshops and key note addresses; and Gord Sleivert Young Investigator awards (voted on by the delegation of the conference). The content of the presentations consists of cutting edge research & innovation with a slant on application for high performance athletes. Additionally, the organizers of this conference make sure that there is ample time to connect with colleagues for meaningful and inspired exchange of ideas. You can find information about the SPIN SUMMIT on the Own the Podium webpage: <https://www.ownthepodium.org/Initiatives/Sport-Science-Innovation/SPIN-Summit-2019>.

The theme of the 2019 Summit was "The Brain Game: Neuroscience and Athlete Performance". In this article I will present my top five 'big rocks' or 'take aways' from the conference for my practice. I attended these presentations:

- Dr. Robert Gray; "Movement variability and representative design in skill acquisition: Applications for practice design"
- Alex Hutchinson; "Meet the resistance: What elecCtric brain stimulation means for sport innovation"
- Dr. Stephen Chung & Dr. Sharleen Hoar; "Psychological interventions in heat management"



- Dr. Jenn Sygo & Dr. Trent Stellingwerff; “Still the White Elephant – RED-S impact on athlete health and performance”
- Dr. Nicola Hodges; “Neurocognition and expert performance in sport”
- Dr. Heather Wheeler; “Controlling the dimmer switch: Working with perfectionism in athletes using mindfulness”
- Cindy Ouellette; “Resilience”

As you can imagine from reading the titles of the presentations, there was a lot of great content.

1. Near v. Far transfer of training. This concept was presented by Dr. Gray. The work that we do in mental skills training requires FAR transfer. It is not good enough to be able to better skilled after immediate practice. We should be incorporating tests of mental skill learning that demonstrate change in behavior after a period of time has passed. For example, what is the athlete’s ability to reframe a ‘bad referee call’ a month after learning how to ‘reframe’?

2. ‘Brain Training’ devices and apps. Little science exists that suggests that apps such as Luminosity and technology such as Neurotracker produce increased sport performance.

(see <http://longevity3.stanford.edu/blog/2014/10/15/the-consensus-on-the-brain-training-industry-from-the-scientific-community-2/>)

3. Relative Energy Deficiency Syndrome (RED-S). This is an expansion of the Female Athlete Triad literature. High performance athletes and parathletes are a risk for this health status. RED-S has significant consequences for performance in addition for health. Mental Performance consultants have the expertise to change the conversations and culture surrounding ‘body’ in high performance sport.

4. The role of psychology in heat adaptation. Physiologists have been exploring the impact of psychology on physiological adaptation in extreme environmental conditions (including heat). The 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo is predicted to be the hottest and most humid games on record. It is imperative that athletes are taught mental tools that enable psychophysiological adaptation. As a field, we need to do more research using mental performance tools in extreme environments with elite athletes and para athletes.

5. What perfectionists need to learn. Dr. Wheeler suggested that perfectionistic athletes need to strengthen the following skills: Asking for help, saying no, acting as-if, doing things while unsure of the outcome, relaxing/meditating, accepting compliments, chunking activities.



## WHAT IS HAPPENING ACROSS CANADA? **Saskatchewan**

The Prairie region currently has a relatively small membership, with 6 professional members, 5 student members, and 1 academic member.

Some members attended the Alberta regional meeting in May, as well as the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) conference in October.

Due to the small membership and the size of the region, the primary method of communication has been electronic.

## WHAT TO READ? **Managing Council Recommendations**

We asked members of our Managing Council to recommend some books that may not be traditional Sport Psychology books and here is what they've provided!

- [The Danish way of Parenting: What the Happiest People in the World Know About Raising Confident, Capable Kids](#) by J.J. Alexander and I. Sandahl.
- [The Passion Paradox](#) by B. Stulberg and S. Magness
- [Range](#) by D. Epstein
- [The Big Disconnect](#) by C. Steiner-Adair & T.H. Barker
- [The Price of Privilege: How Parental Pressure and Material Advantage Are Creating a Generation of Disconnected and Unhappy Kids](#) by M. Levine
- [Mindset: The New Psychology of Success](#) by C. Dweck
- [Endure: Mind, Body, and the Curiously Elastic Limits of Human Performance](#) by A. Hutchinson
- [What Made Maddy Run: The Secret Struggles and Tragic Death of an All-American Teen](#) by K. Fagan
- [Better: A Surgeon's Notes of Performance](#) by A. Gawande
- [An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth](#) by C. Hadfield
- [Open: An Autobiography](#) by A. Agassi
- [The Power of Habit: Why We DO What We Do in Life and Business](#) by C. Duhigg



## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE **New with CSPA**

The Canadian Sport Psychology Association WELCOMES its newest Professional Members!



Karl Bicamumpaka  
Mark Bruner

Andrei Mandzuk  
Lan-Anh Phan

Joseph Leszner  
Cristina Leonardelli

Lior Doron  
Jeff Caron

Jelle Kooijman  
Wesley Kwok



**Congratulations to Dr. Natalie Durand-Bush for AASP President-Elect!**

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity  
(NASPSPA)  
Vancouver, BC  
June 11 - 14, 2020  
<https://www.naspspa.com/2020-conference/>

Eastern Canada Sport and Exercise Psychology Symposium (ECSEPS)  
St. Catharines, ON  
March 27-28, 2020  
<http://www.ecseps.ca/>

SSI 2020 - Sport-'Aide  
Quebec, QC  
April 15-17, 2020  
<https://ssi2020.sportaide.ca/>

