

Introduction to Issue No. 4

This issue focuses on elite level athletes and psychological skills training for high level performance. Athletes' perspectives on recovery from injury, and a very interesting case study on mental training with children at risk are also included.

Colleen Hacker presents a comprehensive mental skills training program that she has implemented with the United States Womens' Olympic Soccer Team. Ulf Schmidt and Eric Schlieffmann discuss an intervention implemented with the German Womens' National Volleyball Team which reflects a different orientation from Colleen Hacker's program.

Dan Gould, Christy Greenleaf and colleagues discuss important lessons learned from the Olympic experiences of hundreds of American athletes who competed in recent summer and winter Olympic Games. Stilian Chroni, through interviews with elite level polo players, seeks to understand the nature of a term commonly used in the sport world, but which has not been well defined – competitiveness and how it relates to elite performance.

Off the field, Karen MacNeill and Cal Botterill share some views on the psychological and support needs of injured athletes.

To conclude the articles in this issue...Freida Hjartarson steps outside the bounds of sport in a discussion of her work with a unique and challenging population – young offenders and children at risk. Dr. Hjartarson emphasizes a theme that Dr. Hacker mentions in the opening article of this issue - that the trainer, teacher and consultant are also performers. As performers we must look reflectively at ongoing lessons learned to continue to improve our skills as a consultants, and grow as people. This perspective is supported in the final contribution in this issue - a reflective look at lessons learned: In Pursuit of Excellence by Kelly Doell and a group of graduate students in Sport Psychology.

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