

North American sport psychology pioneers

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The article describes the evolution of Sport Psychology in North America, from the very first pioneers, who planted the seeds but did not have immediate successors, to the boom of the 1980's and 90's.

The first part of the article is a historical recap, starting in 1895. The fast growth started in the 1980's follows, emphasizing the impact of the Sport Psychology associations that emerged then, as well as the growth in publications.

The section describing the work of the professionals who work as sport psychologists, opening fronts in a variety of performance arenas, both in the US and in Canada follows.

Some of the main issues that impact the way sport psychology has evolved in North America are discussed, including the lack of coordination between the professional associations, the absence of a clear educational pathway to become a sport psychologist, and the recent changes to certification credentialing.

KEY WORDS: Sport Psychology.

Today, sport psychology is flourishing with research and practice occurring in countries all over the world. Evidence for the interest in sport psychology is reflected by the fact that the latest World Congress of Sport Psychology held in 2017 in Sevilla, Spain had over 1000 participants representing over 70 countries. Numerous journals and books are also being published for both academic and applied audiences and sport psychology and mental training topics are well represented digitally in blogs, websites and on social media.

Given the popularity and growth of sport psychology around the globe and the ever-increasing number of individuals entering the field it can be easy for newcomers to think that it is a relatively new field. However, this is

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not the case and it is important for sport psychology professionals to understand the history of the field and the pioneers who laid the foundation that is allowing for the growth that is being witnessed today. History does not allow us to predict the future but it certainly allows us to understand the present. It provides us with a context to understand where we are today.

This article is designed to provide an overview of the history of sport psychology in North America by highlighting developments that occurred and contributions by influential individuals. Pioneers who conducted research, started journals and organizations, broke ground working with athletes and teams and made decisions that allow us to have the opportunities we have today. We begin by providing a brief history of the field of sport psychology in North America dividing it into two periods, the early years (1895 – 1960) and the later years (1960 – Present). Next, particular emphasis is placed on the development of psychological services to sport participants with a special emphasis on the pioneers who laid the groundwork for today's opportunities working with athletes and teams in applied sport settings. Special emphasis is then placed on historical developments in Canada, which has made strong contributions to the field not only within its borders but around the globe. We conclude the article with some general lessons gleaned from understanding the history of North American sport psychology.

A Brief History of North American Sport Psychology

Sport Psychology: The Early Years (1895-1960)

This history of sport psychology in the US dates back to the 1880's (Gould & Voelker, 2014; Kornspan, 2012). During those early days a number of athletes, journalists, educators and physicians wrote articles for the popular press with psychological themes focusing on such topics as the traits of elite athletes, the psychological factors involved in athletic performance (nerves, calmness, concentration, free will), the athletic endeavors of young adults and cultural issues like women in sport (King, Raymond & Simon-Thomas, 1995). However, while these articles focused on psychological issues they were based on personal accounts or subjective opinions. A few psychologists were beginning to conduct more scientifically based research on topics that parallel some contemporary sport psychology interests such as the psychological make-up of successful athletes, how sport skills are learned and character/personality development. There was little applied work and those studying the field did not specialize in it.

In 1893, Yale University psychologist Edward Scripture published some of the first studies in the field examining reaction and movement times in runners and fencers while also examining the transfer of physical training. In addition to his laboratory research, Scripture also conducted a series of case studies on young felons designed to discover if sports participation enhanced personality or character development (Kornspan, 2007). Scripture's work was notable because it reflected his efforts to establish what was called at the times the "new psychology" - a psychology less focused on philosophical arguments and more focused on conducting experiments and collecting data while also emphasized the application of scientific findings in the real-world settings. Finally, at Yale Scripture collaborated with one of the pioneer physical educators, William Anderson, establishing a link between physical education and psychology.

In the late 1890s, physical educator G. W. Fitz of Harvard, published a paper describing a multiple reaction time task that he developed and its possible uses (Fitz, 1895). He also wrote a paper describing how play prepared one for life (Fitz, 1897).

Perhaps the most cited research of this time period occurred in 1898 when psychologist Norman Triplett conducted the first American social psychology experiment in which he examined the influence that others had on cycling performance (Davis, Huss & Becker, 1995). Triplett first analyzed cycling records noting that cyclists performed better when cycling with others than alone. He then followed up on these observations, conducting the first experiment in social psychology. Children performing alone were compared to children performing with others on a fishing reel winding laboratory task, whereas, as they reeled a flag moved around a course. Triplett's finding that people performed better in the presence of others contributed to the development of social facilitation theory which was a major area of study by sport psychology researchers in the 1970's. While Triplett's research contribution was largely associated with his classic first social psychology experiment, Davis, Huss & Becker (1995) indicated that he maintained his interest in athletics over his 30 year career as the Kansas State Normal School in Emporia (now Emporia State University) where he mentored countless students who went on to pursue careers in psychology.

In the 1920s and 30s, a number of individuals continued to show interest in the psychological aspects of sport. For instance, in 1921 legendary baseball player Babe Ruth was brought to Columbia University and psychologically tested to determine the reasons for his exceptional hitting skills (Gould & Voelker, 2014). In 1926, psychologist Walter Miles of Stanford University conducted an interesting reaction time study on the influence of signal calling on charging times among the offensive line players. Working with a num-

ber of his students, Miles also went on to conduct studies looking at the maintenance of athletic abilities as athletes age and on the perceptual and motor abilities of athletes (Kornspan, 2007).

The greatest influence in this era was Coleman Griffith, a psychology professor at the University of Illinois who devoted a major part of his career to the field and who Kroll and Lewis (1970) labeled America's first sport psychologist. Griffith published over 25 sport psychology studies on topics ranging from motor learning to personality and character development. In 1925, under Griffith's direction, the Research in Athletics Laboratory was established at the University of Illinois and remained open until it was a victim of university budget cuts during the Great Depression in the 1930s.

What was especially impressive about Griffith's work was that he was interested in not only publishing his research in highly respected academic journals but was also interested in applying what he learned with athletes and coaches, whether through the University of Illinois summer coaches school or with his work with the Chicago Cubs in 1938. Unfortunately, Griffith's applied work is said to have been far from successful because of resistance from players and coaches (Green, 2003). Griffith is also credited with delineating the functions of the field, being receptive to multiple ways to studying sport psychology, advancing both research and practice, making contributions to both psychology and physical education, having positive but realistic expectations for the field, focusing on both performance enhancement and personal growth and being international in his focus (Gould & Pick, 1995). Finally, Griffith published two books, *Psychology of Coaching* (1926) and *Psychology of Athletics* (1928).

While Griffith's work is fascinating, he was characterized by Kroll and Lewis (1970) as a prophet without disciples, as many of his ideas may have been ahead of his times and he had few students who went on to build upon his work. His work does provide some excellent lessons for contemporary sport psychology specialists to follow. Griffith's work is exemplary, but the Great Depression of the 30's interrupted his work, and instead he became a successful university of Illinois Provost. World War II further interrupted the advancement of sport psychology, and with a few exceptions (e.g., Lawther, 1951) sport psychology in the US had to wait to the beginning of the 60's to substantively develop further.

Sport Psychology: The Later Years (1960s-Present)

From 1960 to 1990, the field of sport psychology made considerable advancements. The advancements were so profound that this period was

termed the formative years of sport psychology by Landers (1995). There was a tremendous expansion of the sport psychology literature, both review books (e.g., Cratty, 1964; Singer, 1968) and research articles. The 60's also saw the beginning of accepting the influence of social dynamics on behaviour. New terms were forged to reflect this new emphasis, social facilitation, social reinforcement, and group dynamics. Rainer Martens (1975) wrote a book on *Social psychology and physical activity* that garnered much attention to the influence of social dynamics. And it was also the beginning of the cognitive revolution that was to change the way psychology and sport psychology understood the conceptual mechanisms undergirding behavior. Instead of mechanistic explanations of behaviour, cognitive dynamics prevailed. Weiner's (1972) term for it was succinct: thoughts govern behaviour! It was the beginning of the investigation of social cognitive dynamics of behaviour and behaviour change that prevails to this day (e.g., Bandura, 1977).

The explosion of research activity in sport psychology in the early 60's led to two very important developments: Sport psychology societies were formed; and research journals devoted to sport psychology were formed. During the 1950's and 60's, a group of scientists from various countries used to meet informally at various conferences held in Europe to talk about sport psychology. It is worth noting who these individuals were: Antonnelli (Italy), Kane (Britain), Kunath (Germany), Olsen (Norway), Rudik (Russia), and Vanek (Czechoslovakia). Within many of the countries in Europe, small groups of scientists had informal sport psychology societies and met within the country to discuss issues pertinent to the emerging field. Many of these people were clinical psychologists, and the early history of sport psychology was dominated by clinical issues. One outcome of this group of scientists meeting informally was the organization of the First International Congress of Sport Psychology held in Rome, Italy, in April of 1965. This was the first ever major scientific congress devoted to sport psychology.

Warren Johnson (University of Maryland), because of his contacts with individuals in Europe, went to the Rome Congress with several colleagues from the US. In Rome, the European sport psychologists decided to found the International Society of Sport Psychology (ISSP) and on April 20th, 1965, ISSP was formally created. It was Johnson who suggested the possible formation of a national society for sport psychology in the US. Some interest was expressed, so the group decided to meet in Chicago during the 1966 American Alliance of Health Physical Education and Recreation (AAHPER) meeting. More people were contacted to interest them in meeting to talk about the formation of a sport psychology society.

A great deal of enthusiasm was generated by the Rome meeting and the

meeting scheduled for Chicago one day prior the AAHPER meeting in March 1966 was well attended. Slater-Hammel and Johnston had created interest in the concept. As a personal note, one of us (Roberts) attended the meeting as a graduate student. A business meeting was held where the issue of forming a national society was debated, and it was decided to form a society and meet at the next national convention of AAHPER in Las Vegas in 1967.

In the September of 1966, the Managing Council of ISSP met in Barcelona, Spain and pressure was put on the US contingent to host the second International Congress in Sport Psychology scheduled for 1968. It was agreed to host the Congress on behalf of the then non-existent North American Society of Sport Psychology and Physical Activity (NASPSPA)! It was a name they coined on the spot, in Barcelona, without too much thought one would imagine, and imported it back with them! On their return, they corresponded with the steering committee and arbitrarily declared NASPSPA to be in existence! Thus, NASPSPA was conceived! At least, conceived in the minds of the steering committee! However, the first official meeting of NASPSPA was held on March 8th, 1967 in the Star Dust Hotel in Las Vegas. Shortly thereafter, on March 13th, 1967, NASPSPA was formally incorporated as a non-profit corporation in the State of Indiana by President Slater-Hammel. Thus, NASPSPA was born! However, NASPSPA continued to meet with AAHPER through 1972. The sixth annual meeting was held at the Sheraton Hotel in Houston, Texas on March 23, 1972. The membership had grown weary of meeting at the same time as AAHPER, and many wanted to meet at a different time. Also, group discussions on the reorganization of NASPSPA occurred. It was decided to hold the next annual meeting separately to AAHPER. The membership decided to meet in May of 1973 at Robert Allerton Park, a convention facility of the University of Illinois in Monticello, Illinois. But to satisfy the doubters, it was decided to do this as an experiment and to meet the following year (1974) in Anaheim with AAHPER to evaluate the experience. Some felt that there was not enough interest for scientists to meet together just to talk about sport psychology without the additional attraction of a large national organizational meeting at the same time.

The seventh annual meeting thus proved to be pivotal to the development of NASPSPA. It was held over three days (May 14-16, 1973) in Allerton Park. Several changes were implemented that prevail to this day. The meeting lasted over several days so that the format of three keynote speakers, one for each area of concern, was formulated. The keynote speakers were Maehr (University of Illinois) in sport psychology, McNeilage (University of Texas, Austin) in motor learning, and Connolly (University of Sheffield, UK) in motor development. The meeting was such a resounding success that the

meeting held with AAHPER the following year (1974) was the last meeting held jointly.

The Canadian society of sport psychology SCAPPS was formed in 1969 and had a similar structure to NASPSPA. The impact these societies have had for North America is difficult to overestimate. "To say that the formation of NASPSPA and SCAPPS has had a significant influence on the development of sport psychology as a discipline in North America would be an understatement. Since the genesis of these two organizations, there has been a proliferation of systematic research conducted in sport psychology" (Wiggins, 1984, p. 21). In the US, NASPSPA became the bastion of conceptual and research excellence in sport psychology and its influence was unchallenged for two decades. But storm clouds were over the horizon.

This was also the period for the emergence of journals devoted to sport psychology. The *Journal of Motor Behavior* was the first journal created in 1969, then in 1970 the *International Journal of Sport Psychology* sponsored by ISSP appeared. Then the *Journal of Sport Psychology* appeared in 1979 (later changed to the *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*). These journals became the major outlets for sport psychology research in the US, and the world.

The storm clouds that gathered over NASPSPA came from its reluctance to fully embrace the development of psychological services to athletes. NASPSPA eschewed professional issues, it wished to remain a scientific organization and focus on the development of research evidence. As one past president put it: To present at NASPSPA, you must have data and a control group! This stance directly led to the development of the Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology (AAASP) in 1985. Several applied sport psychology practitioners, headed by John Silva, believed an organization was needed to focus on professional issues and the application of psychological research to sport organisations and athletes. The interest in applied sport psychology was such that separately, the American Psychology Association (APA) founded Division 47 which was devoted to sport and exercise psychology. Division 47, AASP and NASPSPA exist today and are the three main sport psychology organizations in the US

The Development of Psychological Services to Sport Participants

Applied sport psychology has a long history in the US but did not begin to flourish until the last several decades of the 20th century. There were some isolated applied work prior to the 1960s, most notably Dorothy Hazeltnine

Yates work with boxers and David Tracy work in professional baseball (Kornspan & MacGracken, 2001; Weinberg & Gould, 2019). While this brought some attention to sport psychology, consistent growth did not start to occur until the late 1960s.

Some of the first pioneers in the field in the 1960s were clinical psychologists, and foremost among those were Bruce Ogilvie and Thomas Tutko. They were professors at San Jose State University and together they published *Problem Athletes and How to Handle Them* in 1966. Coaches and sport organizations responded with great interest. Ogilvie and Tutko were very active in working with both athletes and coaches, but their work also reflected the research vs applied sport psychology controversy. Athletic coaches and teams were sent a questionnaire, the Athletic Motivation Inventory (AMI), for the athletes to fill out and Ogilvie and Tutko would score and interpret the results for the coaches and offer advice. This procedure was called into question, mainly because it violated APA guidelines on offering psychological advice by mail. Rainer Martens, then faculty at the University of Illinois, also denounced the lack of research evidence and data supporting their AMI. The authors sued Martens and after a lengthy trial, the court sided with Martens indicating that the authors had failed to provide evidence for their profile claims. In some ways the controversy remains alive. To this day, working with elite or professional athletes, national teams or Olympians, presents a unique challenge because there is very little research evidence with this population. What research there that exists is mostly descriptive because elite athletes are not very accessible as study participants. A further impediment is that the majority of tests and instruments have been validated with college students, a population which may differ in many essential ways to the target population.

In 1976, Bob Nideffer published *The Inner Athlete*, another book that generated a lot of crucial variables in sport psychology and performance. His work was much appreciated by coaches and he worked with numerous sports and teams. Nideffer developed the Test of Attentional and Interpersonal Styles (TAIS) in 1976, one of the first instruments designed specifically for sport. Nideffer has been a pioneer in many areas, opening doors that are now seen as central to the work of sport psychologists: He worked for over 10 years with the Navy Seals and nowadays the military is the largest employer of sport psychologists in the US. After that, Nideffer worked with business, applying the sport psychology knowledge to their performance, helping expand sport psychology into sport and performance psychology.

In the 70's and 80's, a number of influential professionals came from the Kinesiology world. Among them were Keith Henschen, who taught at the

University of Utah, worked with college teams and later with national teams (Ski and Track and Field) and had a very long tenure as sport psychologist for the Utah Jazz of the NBA. Bob Rotella, starting as faculty at the University of Virginia, specialized in working with golf and earned a huge following with his books and work with professional golfers.

Ken Ravizza had a degree in Philosophy and taught at California State University at Fullerton and was one of the first proponents of relaxation training, meditation and what we today call Mindfulness. Ken had an extraordinary ability to relate to coaches and players and worked with University of Nebraska Football, College Gymnastics, USA Softball, USA Waterpolo and was the reigning professional in Baseball. His book *Heads Up Baseball*, cowritten with Tom Hansen (1995), remains a staple of baseball interventions.

Women were among the pioneers in the applied world. In the kinesiology field, Dorothy Harris (1984) wrote a book for athletes and coaches and championed the cause of expanding the number of women in professional roles in sport, be it sport psychology, coaching or administration. Several other excellent books combining research and applied interventions were published in the 80s: In 1986 Diane Gill published *Psychological Dynamics of Sport and Exercise* and also in 1986 Jean Williams published *Applied Sport Psychology. From personal growth to peak performance*. Williams's book became a staple for applied sport psychologists and has had multiple editions. Gloria Balague was influential in Spain before coming to the US in the early 80's and carved a distinguished career with NGB's (Track and Field, Women's Field Hockey, Rhythmic Gymnastics) and lately worked with the Chicago Bears Football organization.

In the late 1980's some National Governing Bodies started requesting sport psychologists to work specifically with their sport. The US Olympic Committee initiated a sport psychology advisory board in 1980. USA Track and Field (then The Athletic Congress), under the guidance of Rick McGuire, set up a consulting team to work with coaches and athletes, from juniors to elite, attempting to provide consistency with a group of professionals who shared a common philosophy. The same group wrote the sport psychology part of the coach education curriculum and taught the classes, closing the circle of education and intervention. The sport psychologists involved were Keith Henschen, Ralph Vernacchia, Jim Reardon, Rich Gordin and Gloria Balague.

The growth of applied sport psychology in North America was further spurred by the television coverage of the 1984 Olympic Games when a number of segments were shown to a huge viewing audience and focused on the

role of psychology in Olympic athlete and team performance. Four years later in 1988 at the Seoul Olympics, for the first time a sport psychologist was part of the USOC delegation: Shane Murphy was the first professional hired by the USOC as a sport psychologist. He helped develop a highly respected department and edited an excellent book, tying interventions to theory (1995).

The 80's and 90's saw a proliferation of influential sport psychologists who gave direction to the field and were important for the sustained development of evidence based and ethical application of sport psychology. There were many, in addition to those named already, including Dan Gould, Ron Smith, Frank Smoll, Joan Duda, Robyn Vealy, Glyn Roberts, Bob Weinberg, Bob Singer, and others. Thus, the creation of AAASP (later changed to AASP, Association of Applied Sport Psychology) was founded on fertile ground. The first AAASP meeting in Jekyll Island in 1986 was well attended and participation at subsequent meetings grew until it is not unusual to have over a thousand participants in contemporary times. The 80's and 90's saw a remarkable growth in sport psychology research and practice. This growth was due to the acceptance and respect of the sport community and general public towards this area of study. This was also the time where departments of Kinesiology developed the scientific disciplines we are familiar with today. It was also the era where departments of Kinesiology developed strong graduate programmes to train both scientists and practitioners in sport psychology. Training in the field took a more professional approach, rules and regulations were introduced to ensure not just anyone could deliver psychological services to athletes. Following its stated goal of promoting the science and practice of applied sport psychology, AAASP worked to develop uniform standards of practice, highlighted by the development of an ethical code for its members in the 1990s. The development of the AAASP Certified Consultant (CC-AAASP) program helped bring standardization to the training required to practice applied sport psychology. Moreover, in 2018 AASP updated its certification program and launched the Certified Mental Performance Consultant (CMPC). AASP aimed to provide leadership for the development of theory, research and applied practice in sport, exercise, and health psychology. As mentioned earlier, 1986 saw over 500 members of the APA sign a petition to create Division 47 focused on Exercise and Sport Psychology. During this same time period, in 1986, over 500 members of the American Psychological Association (APA) signed a petition to create Division 47 which is focused on Exercise and Sport Psychology. Currently Division 47 has changed its name to the Society for Sport, Exercise & Performance Psychology to better reflect the broadening of its focus. Sport Psychology is not yet a Specialty but a Proficiency within the American Psychological Association. To be

labelled a specialty a clear academic training path is required and, so far, that has not yet been achieved in our field in the United States.

But the growth of AAASP meant that NASPSPA suffered somewhat in that many sport psychologists left NASPSPA for the new association. During the 80's and 90's sport psychology, both the scientific and professional aspects, was more likely to be found at AAASP than NASPSPA. NASPSPA had always had strong traditions in motor learning/control and motor development, but sport psychology languished a little. This continued until the beginning of the second decade of the new millennium. During the beginning of the 10's, AASP (name change in 2007) began to focus more on professional issues and less on scientific research. To the chagrin of many, AASP attempted to downgrade the exercise psychology aspect of AASP. The new direction of AASP meant that many of the scientist practitioners believed that AASP did not serve their interests to the same extent as in earlier years. NASPSPA benefitted in that the professionals who were more focused on science, scholarship, and the development of evidence for practice gravitated to NASPSPA. At the present time, sport psychology in NASPSPA is growing as more sport psychologists believe it is a better home for the scientist practitioner.

There were other notable developments characterizing the growth and acceptance of applied sport psychology. In 1987, *The Sport Psychologist* was launched and was designed to link research to professional practice. The publishing of *TSP* was followed by the *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* in 1989. Reflecting the continued interest and growth in applied sport psychology in 2007 the *Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology* focusing on disseminating knowledge regarding clinical issues and the psychological care of athletes, exercisers and other performers. Finally, the *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action* was begun in 2010 for the purpose of providing practitioners interested in sport psychology with practical guidelines and programs that can be implemented.

Around the turn of the century the US Olympic Committee sponsored a series of studies that examined the perceived importance, need for, and use of applied sport psychology services and information by Olympic athletes and coaches (Gould, Greenleaf, Chung & Guinan, 2002; Gould, Guinan, Greenleaf, Medbery & Peterson, 1999; Greenleaf, Gould & Dieffenbach, 2001). Lessons learned relative to using mental training services and techniques to enhance Olympic performance were also identified (Gould, Greenleaf, Guinan, Dieffenbach & McCann, 2001). The results of these studies were disseminated widely and did much to solidify the need for and importance of applied sport psychology for Olympic athletes and coaches with USOC and NGB administrators.

Today, applied sport psychology in North America is more popular and

accepted than ever before. Over 2000 individuals attended the 2019 AASP conference, many NGBs provide psychological services for their athletes and numbers books and journals exist. Consultants have also expanded their work from consulting solely with athletes to other high performers working in such settings as the military, firefighting, the arts, medical fields and business. However, this being said, the field is inhibited in some major ways. The lack of role clarity regarding what is sport psychology and who is a sport psychologist as is the territorial mistrust between professionals of different educational backgrounds (e.g., psychology versus kinesiology trained individuals). A lack of unified and concerted efforts between the three professional associations (NASPSPA, AASP and APA Div47) has not served contemporary sport psychology well in the US. Meanwhile there was no clear educational pathway to becoming a sport psychologist. That is still the present situation in the United States, although AASP has recently begun a more rigorous credentialing process that involves passing a certification test.

Pioneers in Canada

Canada has always had a more rigorous approach to sports credentials and education than the US. In sport psychology they have also been more organized than the United States. At the 1984 Olympic games, Wayne Halliwell was asked to work with the Canadian sailing team and he continued with them until after the 1988 games. Only France and Canada had sport psychologists with sailing at that time. Terry Orlick, faculty at the U. of Ottawa, one of the most prolific professionals, addressed many of the applied consulting issues in his publications with John Partington (1987). Orlick also expanded the field by addressing work with children as well as coaches' education (1975).

John Salmela entered the field through his work with gymnastics. He authored the first book exploring the field of Sport Psychology around the world (1981) and established connections with people and organizations in numerous countries. He was a professor at the University of Montreal, and addressed issues of talent detection, youth sport and coaches' education.

Cal Botterill, who has been full professor at the University of Winnipeg, has worked with Canada's athletes at 10 different Olympic Games, and has consulted for five NHL teams (including the 1994 Stanley Cup Champion New York Rangers). When asked about his pathway, he mentioned that he sought mentorship from most of the established professionals at the time including Bruce Ogilvie, Robert Nideffer, Ken Ravizza, Terry Orlick, Lars-

Eric Unestahl, Keith Henschen, and Richard Gordin. He also spent 4 years in International Sports Administration with the Coaching Association of Canada & Sport Canada. Always focused on excellence, Cal has now focused on Health & Performance Psychology, and has enjoyed opportunities to contribute in medicine, business, health, education, emergency professions, creating a course labeled "High Performance Physician" for medical professionals.

Conclusions

Our review of sport psychology in North America provides a context for helping us understand where we are in the field today. First, sport psychology has a long history with individuals from both the field of psychology and physical education/kinesiology making strong contributions. Moving forward it is best to look at the benefits those trained in each area bring to the sport psychology and not fall prey to arguing about whose training is the best. Second, both researchers and practitioners have helped advance the field to where it is today. Researchers and practitioners must respect each other's contributions and work together adopting a research to practice and practice to research orientation. Third, pioneers who made the largest contributions to sport psychology devoted significant portions, if not all of their time to the field and worked consistently across time. Fourth, while there were true pioneers who helped move the field forward, we should be careful not to fall prey to the great man or women approach to history. The field really took off in North America when large numbers of researchers, teachers and consultants started working in the field forward, often with some anonymity. Finally, the field has been and will be influenced by larger social and cultural events such as economic downturns, wars and pandemics as well as changes in educational and sport organizations (e.g., emphasis placed on grants at major universities, Safe sport legislation to protect youth from sexual predators). Those specializing in the field in the future must discover how to keep the values and lessons learned from the pioneers in mind that have allowed for growth while also adapting to these larger cultural and institutional changes.

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