

## Psynopsis: “Call for Sport/Exercise Psychology Interest”

Last year, a psychology colleague questioned the credibility of sport and exercise psychology since it was not listed as a section with CPA. More often than not, I have encountered non-psychologists and sports personnel questioning this specialization and have spent a great deal of time educating on the importance of psychological processes associated with sport and exercise. I was surprised that even those whom had a better understanding of psychology were also relatively unaware of its application in this area. As a result, I inquired why such a division did not currently exist and how come it disappeared after being with CPA for a short duration more than ten years ago.

Sport and Exercise psychology has been a rapidly growing area in the field of psychology. Various organizations have included it in their structure (eg. APA- Div 47) and/or formed independently (eg. AAASP) to support the needs of sport and exercise psychologists and counselors. However, no organization exists, as of yet, to accommodate the needs of Canadians in this area. Additionally, there has been a lower opportunity to promote and highlight the work of many esteemed and established sport and exercise psychologists and students in Canada.

CPA, as a governing body for psychology, can offer a viable opportunity for sport and exercise psychologists to develop their specialized interests, and educate coaches, parents, athletes, organizations, and sport science professionals on the many facets associated with this area. Additionally, this section can provide an avenue to communicate the services of licensed psychologists, as distinguished from non-licensed professionals, as well as provide information about current activities, research, and practice developments in the area.

The proposed section in Sport and Exercise psychology aims to provide a forum for psychologists and psychology students working with athletes, coaches, parents, sports organizations, and/or other sport science professionals in clinical/counselling, research, and/or teaching/educational roles.

There are three main initiatives that this Interest group/future section wishes to begin with:

- 1) To provide a formal body through which individuals can communicate and disseminate the specialized interests of sport and exercise psychologists in Canada, in addition to providing a forum in which psychological issues relevant to the sport and exercise in Canada can be communicated. Within this communication, the section will aim to align with other non-Canadian specific sport and exercise organizations (APA, AAASP), collaborate with new Canadian initiatives, and provide information to the community and non-psychologists regarding the practice of psychology in Canada. In this regard, the section will provide a means to develop professionally and elicit the mentorship of sport psychologists and programs through-out Canada.

2) To educate and inform the public, sports community, and psychologists in other disciplines about the practice and delivery of psychological services provided to athletes and other sports professionals, while liaising with non-psychology specific organizations whom regulate the practice of services to athletes that are not otherwise governed by the profession of psychology. This section will aim to distinguish the specialized services, issues, and training required by psychology-track students and practitioners whom are regulated by the various laws and ethical principles outlined in the CPA and in provincial psychological organizations across Canada.

3) To advocate, educate, and provide resources for sport, exercise, coaches, athletes, sports organizations, and sport science professionals regarding specialized issues or for the preservation of the human rights of individuals associated with sport and exercise. This section will aim to align with the Canadian Center for Ethics in Sport (CCES) and the Sport Dispute Resolution Center of Canada (ADRSPORTRED) in efforts to ensure that the rights and fair treatment of individuals within the sporting context in any capacity are protected and act as an advisor to national, provincial or local sports organization or personnel on issues relevant to sport and exercise psychology.

These initial goals may be adapted with input from its members to ensure that the needs of interested individuals are served. With a minimum of 15 CPA members or associate members, an interest group can be formed and provide a basis towards developing a formal section with CPA. Any members who are interested in joining with others who have become part of this emerging Interest Group for sport and exercise psychology are asked to contact one of the coordinators below. There is no cost to join the group or any obligation of any kind. We simply ask you to send your name, email and/or address, and affiliation to indicate to CPA the members that are interested in having such a group or section. If you have any specific items that you would like to see occur in this group's development and/or you would like to nominate someone for a formal position or to potentially become involved in a committee related to any of the group's goals, please contact us at the address below.

An Interest Group meeting is being scheduled for the CPA conference in Calgary, Alberta, June 6-10, 2006 to further discuss the goals and structure of a future Sport and Exercise psychology Section with CPA. We welcome you to take part in this exciting project to develop the interest of sport and exercise psychologists, researchers, and educators across Canada.

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