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Using Benefits Based Models to Manage Sport Performance Enhancement Groups

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USING BENEFITS-BASED MODELS TO MANAGE SPORT PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT GROUPS

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INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE: Improving athlete performance has long been a goal of all coaches, and they depend on a variety of tools to do this. Athletic trainers, team physicians, strength and conditioning coaches, nutritionists, sport scientists, and others are often called upon to support the coach in his or her attempt to improve performance. This group of performance professionals is known as a sport performance enhancement group, or SPEG (Stone, 2009). Ideally, many professionals work together towards the common goal of athletic success, but in practice this is often difficult.

Coaches may want to incorporate sport science information into training, but they typically find it impractical to do so (Reade, Rodgers, & Spriggs, 2008). Feedback from coach education programs suggest coaches would rather learn from other coaches, and sport science is not the preferred knowledge source (Reade et al., 2008). When sport scientists and other professionals have the opportunity to work with coaches and athletes, issues with communication, trust, and perceived competency often arise. While sport scientists have accumulated a large knowledge base for coaches to examine, there is currently a strong disconnect between available knowledge and actual implementation of that knowledge by coaches (Stone, Stone, & Sands, 2004).

Reade et al. (2008) noted that in order to increase knowledge transfer between coaches and sport scientists it is important to provide data that are easy to understand and apply as well as increased communication. Therefore, integrating performance professionals to help increase communication and application of data is important for enhancing athlete and team success (see Figure 1). Unfortunately, as Williams and Kendall (2007) suggest, there has been little evidence of successful relationships between coaches and members of the scientific community (Stone, Stone, & Sands, 2004). The purpose of this poster presentation is to describe the creation of a SPEG using a benefits-based programming (BBP) model to increase member communication and dissemination of performance data to coaches.



Figure 1: Coach-SPEG member relationships

SPORT PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT GROUPS: Well planned and administrated Sport Performance Enhancement Groups are coach-driven and typically involve a five phase process (see Figure 2; Stone, 2009). Following the coach's input, a SPEG is formed with SPEG members working together to design and implement training plans. The next few phases are key in that they provide for monitoring, data collection/analysis and data return for the coach. This information can be utilized by the coach in making decisions about training and performance at both the individual and team level. Note that this is an ongoing process that provides continuous feedback to the coach. Potential benefits of the holistic approach utilized by SPEGs include increased communication, increased training effectiveness and efficiency, improved dissemination of research-evidence based techniques, and reduced injury rates (Stone, 2009).

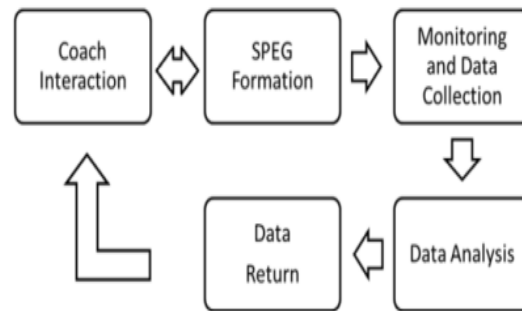


Figure 2: SPEG process (adapted from Stone, 2009)

BENEFITS-BASED PROGRAMMING (BBP): Despite the potential benefits available, the challenge to incorporate the SPEG formation and development process is still difficult. One way to address this challenge is through the application of the BBP model (Rossman & Schlatter, 2011), which has its roots in the field of recreation. The poor economy has led to an increased demand to justify financial support of recreation and sport programs. The BBP model has been used by organizations to measure the benefits of their programs with tangible evidence and confirm the quality of performance of the services (Ammons, 1996). After an initial three phase model (Allen, 1996; Allen & McGovern, 1997), Rossman and Schlatter (2011) changed to model to a four-stage iterative model (see figure 3).



Figure 3: Benefits-based programming model (adapted from Rossman and Schlatter, 2011)

DISCUSSION & PRACTICAL APPLICATION: As coaches learn and work together to maximize sport performance through the formation of SPEGs, it is anticipated that many sports can enjoy higher levels of performance and a reduction in injury. However, to do this requires a paradigm shift towards a holistic-coaching model which is what the BBP model was designed to do (see Figures 4 & 5 for an example of how the BPP model has been successfully applied to a SPEG).

The use of a BBP when implementing a SPEG can help coaches identify team and athlete needs, set goals and objectives and the related activities, conduct data collection and analysis, and report analyses

and make data-driven decisions. Coaches or coach education practitioners who are interested in applying the SPEG process or developing a SPEG may use a BBP model as a way to find common ground with athletes, coaches, scientists, administrators and other potential SPEG members. The BBP model may provide a unified direction for performance training and may also develop enthusiasm for learning in athletes, coaches and administrators.

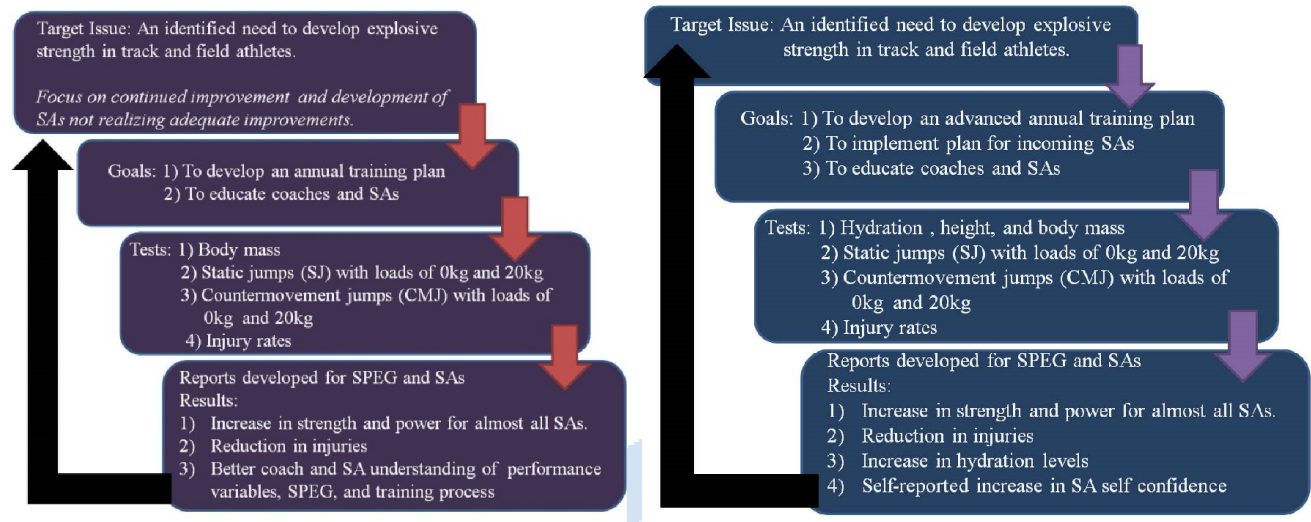


Figure 4: Case Study BPP Model: First Iteration

Figure 5: Case Study BPP Model: Second Iteration

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