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Toward a Deeper Understanding of Peer Athlete Mentoring in Sport: A Comprehensive
Investigation

By

Matt D. Hoffmann

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Department of Kinesiology
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2018

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Investigation

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DECLARATION OF CO-AUTHORSHIP / PREVIOUS PUBLICATION

I. Co-Authorship

I hereby declare that this thesis incorporates material that is result of joint research, as follows: Chapter 2 of the thesis was co-authored with Dr. Gordon A. Bloom, and Chapter 4 with Dr. Jeffrey G. Caron, both under the supervision of Dr. Todd M. Loughead. In both cases, the key ideas, primary contributions, data collection, data analysis, interpretation, and writing were performed by Matt D. Hoffmann, and the contribution of co-authors was primarily through the provision of critical feedback to enhance the quality of the research. Drs. Bloom and Caron provided feedback on the refinement of ideas and interpretation of study results, and assisted with the editing of the manuscripts.

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II. Previous Publication

This thesis includes three original papers that have been previously published/submitted for publication in peer reviewed journals, as follows:

Thesis Chapter	Publication title/full citation	Publication status*
Chapter 2	Hoffmann, M. D., Loughead, T. M., & Bloom, G. A. (2017). Examining the experiences of peer mentored athletes competing in elite sport. <i>The Sport Psychologist, 31</i> , 134-146. doi:10.1123/tsp.2016-0052	Published
Chapter 3	Hoffmann, M. D., & Loughead, T. M. (2017). Preliminary development of a questionnaire to assess peer athlete mentoring functions: The Athlete Mentoring Questionnaire (AMQ).	Submitted
Chapter 4	Hoffmann, M. D., Loughead, T. M., & Caron, J. G. (2017). Mentoring identity and the motivation to mentor: A case study of a former highly-regarded peer athlete mentor.	Submitted

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ABSTRACT

The benefits of mentoring for those who are mentored are well-documented in the organizational psychology literature (e.g., Eby et al., 2013). To a lesser degree, there is also evidence from organizational settings indicating that mentors benefit from being involved in mentoring relationships (e.g., Ghosh & Reio Jr., 2013). Despite the apparent advantages associated with mentorship, the explicit examination of peer mentoring relationships between athletes has only recently begun (e.g., Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016). Consequently, the central purpose of this dissertation was to gain a deeper understanding of peer athlete mentoring in sport. Three empirical research studies were conducted to address this objective. In Chapter 2, the experiences of elite, self-reported peer mentored athletes were explored via individual semi-structured interviews. The primary purpose of Chapter 2 was to identify the mentoring functions exhibited by athlete mentors. Briefly, the results pertaining to this purpose suggested that athlete mentors provided an assortment of specific mentoring functions to facilitate protégés' progression through sport (instrumental mentoring) and development from a personal standpoint (psychosocial mentoring). The secondary purpose of Chapter 2 was to investigate the outcomes related to protégés' mentoring experiences, the results of which highlighted that protégés benefitted in terms of enhanced performance and confidence, and also demonstrated a willingness to provide mentorship to their peers. The general objective of Chapter 3 was to develop a psychometrically sound questionnaire to measure peer athlete mentoring functions, using the results from Chapter 2 as the basis for the development of questionnaire items. The newly created 34-item, six-factor Athlete Mentoring Questionnaire (AMQ) was developed using a multi-phase approach that included a series of robust statistical analyses. Finally, using a case study design, the experiences of one former highly-regarded peer athlete mentor were explored

in Chapter 4. Over multiple interviews, this individual indicated that he felt mentoring played a key role in an athlete's ability to rise to elite sport. He suggested that he was motivated to mentor his protégés for their benefit but also for his own personal gains. Moreover, he described having an unwavering belief in and allegiance to his protégés and shared his views concerning the complexity of the 'mentoring identity' that he adopted. Overall, this former peer athlete mentor's accounts suggest that he was involved in relational mentoring relationships. The findings from this dissertation shed light on the nature of peer athlete mentoring, have theoretical and practical implications, and offer several future research directions.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION OF CO-AUTHORSHIP / PREVIOUS PUBLICATION	iii
ABSTRACT.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	xi
CHAPTER 1: Introduction	1
References.....	7
CHAPTER 2: Examining the Experiences of Peer Mentored Athletes Competing in Elite Sport	12
Method	16
Results.....	22
Discussion.....	34
References.....	41
CHAPTER 3: Preliminary Development of a Questionnaire to Assess Peer Athlete Mentoring Functions: The Athlete Mentoring Questionnaire (AMQ)	46
Method	50
Results.....	60
Discussion.....	66
References.....	71
CHAPTER 4: Mentoring Identity and the Motivation to Mentor: A Case Study of a Former Highly-Regarded Peer Athlete Mentor	78
Method	83
Results and Discussion.....	89
Conclusion.....	107
References.....	111
CHAPTER 5: Discussion and Conclusions	118
References.....	125

TABLES	128
APPENDICES	135
VITA AUCTORIS	165

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Characteristics of Protégés and their Mentoring Relationships (Chapter 2)	129
Table 2: Summary of Higher-Order and Lower-Order Categories Pertaining to Protégés' Mentoring Experiences (Chapter 2)	130
Table 3: Descriptions of General (Higher-Order) and Specific (Lower-Order) Mentoring Functions Identified in Hoffmann et al. (2017) (Chapter 3)	131
Table 4: Descriptive Statistics and Latent Variable Correlations for ESEM and CFA Solutions (Chapter 3)	132
Table 5: ESEM and CFA Factor Structures for 34-item, 6-Factor Model (Chapter 3) ...	133
Table 6: Measurement Invariance Testing (Chapter 3)	134

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Guide (Chapter 2)	136
Appendix B: Letter of Informed Consent (Chapter 2).....	138
Appendix C: Recruitment Script (Chapter 2)	141
Appendix D: Athlete Mentoring Questionnaire (Chapter 3)	142
Appendix E: Letter of Informed Consent (Chapter 3; Phase 2, Stage 2).....	144
Appendix F: Letter of Informed Consent (Chapter 3; Phase 2, Stage 3).....	147
Appendix G: Letter of Informed Consent (Chapter 3; Phase 3)	150
Appendix H: Recruitment Script (Chapter 3; Phase 2, Stage 2).....	153
Appendix I: Recruitment Script (Chapter 3; Phase 2, Stage 3)	155
Appendix J: Recruitment Script (Chapter 3; Phase 3)	156
Appendix K: Interview Guide (Chapter 4)	158
Appendix L: Letter of Informed Consent (Chapter 4).....	161
Appendix M: Recruitment Script (Chapter 4)	164

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring is broadly defined as a process whereby an experienced mentor supports a less experienced protégé, with the purpose of assisting the protégé as he/she progresses through their career (Ragins, 2016; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999). Mentoring relationships can emerge spontaneously and informally or they can develop in a formal manner due to organizational assignment/assistance (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). The explicit investigation of mentoring originated in the field organizational psychology nearly four decades ago when Kram (1980) qualitatively studied the experiences of individuals involved in 18 mentor-protégé dyads at a large American corporation. Since then, mentoring research in organizational settings has flourished, with hundreds of studies highlighting the benefits of being involved in mentoring relationships. The positive impact of mentoring has also been recognized in other domains including education, medicine, and sport (Bloom, 2013; Jones, Harris, & Miles, 2009). This has led some researchers to conclude that mentoring relationships, at their best, can be life-altering, enrich careers, and lead to mutual growth and development (e.g., Ragins, 2016; Ragins & Kram, 2007). Before detailing the mentoring research that has been conducted in sport, a brief review of the mentoring literature from organizational contexts is offered. It should be noted that the terms *organizational contexts* and *business contexts* will be used interchangeably throughout this document to refer to commerce-related institutions (e.g., banks, law firms, engineering firms).

Kram's (1980) research in a business setting indicated that mentors provide two general mentoring functions to their protégés: instrumental (also called career or vocational) and psychosocial. Instrumental mentoring is utilized to help protégés attain their career goals and advance through the ranks of their organizations. Kram identified that mentors provided *specific*

instrumental functions that included nominating protégés for advancement (i.e., sponsor), tutoring protégés (i.e., coaching), exposing protégés to senior group members (i.e., exposure), shielding protégés from harmful group members/situations (i.e., protect), and appointing challenging tasks to protégés (i.e., challenging assignments). Psychosocial mentoring is utilized to help protégés develop from a personal standpoint both within and outside organizational walls, as well as enhance their perceptions of competence and clarify their identities. Kram reported that mentors exhibited *specific* psychosocial functions, including serving as a role model (i.e., role modeling), displaying unconditional acceptance (i.e., acceptance-and-confirmation), acting as a trusted councillor (i.e., counselling), and having work and non-work related social exchanges with protégés (i.e., friendship).

Many researchers including those having conducted meta-analytic reviews have highlighted the positive effects of mentoring functions for those who are mentored (e.g., Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004; Dickson et al., 2014; Eby et al., 2013). As one example, Eby et al.'s (2013) comprehensive interdisciplinary meta-analysis, in which roughly two-thirds of the 173 samples included were from the organizational setting, showed that instrumental and psychosocial functions were positively related to factors such as protégé motivation, performance, satisfaction, socialization, social capital, and sense of affiliation. Moreover, the advantages associated with mentoring are apparent through the research that has compared mentored individuals to those without mentors. For example, when compared to their non-mentored counterparts, mentored individuals in organizational contexts have reported greater organizational commitment (Aryee & Chay, 1994), career success (Riley & Wrench, 1985), career motivation (Day & Allen, 2004), job satisfaction (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992),

intentions to stay with their current employer (Viator & Scandura, 1991), and have expressed that they are more willing to mentor others in the future (Ragins & Cotton, 1993).

Like the business setting, sport is a performance-driven domain where success is a primary concern (Weinberg & McDermott, 2002). Consequently, it is not surprising that sport researchers have shown an interest in mentoring and the potential impact it can have on the overall performance and well-being of coaches and athletes. However, relative to the wealth of mentoring research in organizational psychology, there is limited research explicitly investigating mentoring in sport. Early mentoring research in sport primarily focused on coaches' mentorship toward other coaches (e.g., Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, & Salmela, 1998) or the athletes they train and support (e.g., Miller, Salmela, & Kerr, 2002). More recent coach mentoring research has explored the importance, effectiveness, and complexities of formalized coach mentoring programs (e.g., Koh, Bloom, Fairhurst, Paiement, & Kee, 2014; Sawiuk, Taylor, Groom, 2017). Interestingly, the majority of coach mentoring research is only loosely grounded in Kram's (1980) work.

Apart from the coach mentoring literature, there is also research indicating that athletes are involved in mentoring relationships. Perna, Zaichkowsky, and Bocknek (1996) conducted a study with a sample of male intercollegiate athletes and found that they were mentored by coaches, professors, academic advisors, and alumni. More contemporary research has identified that athletes also perceive some of their peer team members as occupying a mentor role (Benson, Surya, & Eys, 2014; Cope, Eys, Beauchamp, Schinke, & Bosselut, 2011). Building on the above mentioned descriptive findings, Hoffmann and Loughead (2016a, 2016b) took a more in-depth approach to the investigation of peer-to-peer mentoring relationships between athletes by asking protégés to reflect upon their experiences during which they were supported by their best-ever

athlete mentor. These studies were conducted with intercollegiate athletes who indicated they were primarily involved in mentoring relationships that developed naturally and informally, as opposed to mentoring relationships whereby protégés and mentors were formally paired together by coaches. In one study, the authors examined the extent to which peer mentored and non-peer mentored athletes were satisfied with their overall athletic experience (Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016a). Peer mentored athletes were significantly more content than non-peer mentored athletes with respect to personal satisfaction, satisfaction with the leadership of their coach, and satisfaction with team members. The authors also investigated peer mentored athletes' perceptions of the functions provided by athlete mentors (Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016b). To assess mentoring functions, they used the Mentor Role Inventory (MRI; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990) from organizational psychology and revised some items to reflect a sport environment. The results of a confirmatory factor analysis did not support a first-order factor structure representing Kram's (1980) specific mentoring functions, but did support a higher-order factor structure wherein the specific functions underpinned the two broad categories of instrumental and psychosocial mentoring. Further analyses revealed that the higher-order factor of psychosocial mentoring was positively related to protégés' satisfaction levels in terms of personal dedication and individual performance. Though these findings gleaned initial insight into the two broad mentoring functions utilized by athlete mentors, they also suggested the MRI was not appropriate when the goal is to examine the full array of specific mentoring functions potentially displayed in peer athlete mentoring relationships. Taken together, these findings suggested that Kram's specific mentoring functions may not be relevant to an athlete population and underscored the need for a sport-specific measure to assess peer athlete mentoring functions.

It is also important to note that the few studies examining peer athlete mentoring (i.e., Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016a, 2016b) have focused solely on the perspectives of protégés. That is, no known research has considered the experiences of athletes who have served as peer mentors to other athletes. Coincidentally, the tendency to focus on protégés' experiences, while largely overlooking mentors' perspectives of mentoring relationships, is also a trend found in the organizational psychology and career development literature (Allen, 2007). Nonetheless, some researchers in these domains have found that mentors select protégés who remind them of themselves, with whom they have a lot in common, who exhibit a strong work ethic, who take initiative, and who are motivated to succeed (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997). Mentors also report selecting their protégés because they have high ability/potential rather than because their protégés are in need of support (Allen, Poteet, & Russell, 2000). Similar findings have been reported in research using fictional vignettes, where individuals have indicated that they would be less willing to mentor low ability protégés than high ability protégés (Allen, 2004), and average performing protégés than high performing protégés (Olian, Carroll, & Giannantonio, 1993). From a purely theoretical standpoint, it has been argued that individuals may be motivated to mentor because they adopt generic ('I am a mentor') and/or particular ('I am Rebecca's mentor') relational mentoring identities (Ragins, 2009; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Thus, it is important to fully consider why mentors may be motivated to guide and support others. To this end, gaining an understanding of how and why athlete mentors engage in peer mentorship is a necessary future endeavor which would significantly advance the literature on peer athlete mentoring. Further, exploring athlete mentors' experiences might yield information that would assist coaches and sport psychology consultants wishing to facilitate the development of high-quality peer athlete mentoring relationships.

Overview of Research Studies

The overarching purpose of this dissertation is to gain a more in-depth and complete understanding of peer athlete mentoring in sport. This objective is accomplished through three separate yet inter-related research studies. In Chapter 2 the experiences of elite, self-reported peer mentored athletes are explored via individual semi-structured interviews. This research is grounded in Kram's (1980) classification of mentoring functions and identifies *what* mentoring functions are provided by athlete mentors, as well as the outcomes related to protégés' mentoring experiences. Building off the results of Chapter 2, in Chapter 3 the development of a psychometrically sound, sport-specific questionnaire to measure peer athlete mentoring functions is reported. The newly created Athlete Mentoring Questionnaire (AMQ) is developed using a multi-phase approach that includes a series of robust statistical analyses. Finally, using a case study design, the experiences of one former highly regarded peer athlete mentor are explored through multiple interviews in Chapter 4. This dissertation includes qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and examines the nature of peer athlete mentoring relationships through the lens of both the protégé (Chapters 2 and 3) and the mentor (Chapter 4). This broad approach makes significant contributions to the literature on peer athlete mentoring and allows one to offer several future research directions.

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CHAPTER 2
EXAMINING THE EXPERIENCES OF PEER MENTORED ATHLETES COMPETING IN
ELITE SPORT¹

The following quote from then rookie National Hockey League player Alex Chiasson illustrates a young athlete who viewed an experienced teammate as a valued peer mentor:

For me, Pevs [Rich Peverley] was someone I sat next to in the locker room, was someone that took care of me on the road and was the first one to text me to see if I wanted to go to dinner. For the young guys, it's always hard to open up and ask questions and he was the guy I leaned on for that type of thing throughout the year. (Heika, 2014, para. 10)

Despite anecdotal evidence emphasizing the importance of mentoring relationships between athletes (see quote above), empirical research investigating peer athlete mentoring is limited (Loughead, Munroe-Chandler, Hoffmann, & Duguay, 2014). Recent studies in this area have indicated there are benefits to being peer mentored (Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016a, 2016b), however little is known regarding what transpires in these athlete mentoring relationships. The present study sought to expand upon our understanding of peer athlete mentoring by examining the experiences of elite level athletes who reported being peer mentored by other athletes during their sporting careers.

Mentoring is generally defined in organizational contexts as a process whereby a more knowledgeable and experienced person (the mentor) supports a developing individual (the protégé), serves as a role model to that individual, and guides him/her in their development (Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999). Mentoring relationships can emerge

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informally and spontaneously or be formal in nature where the mentor and protégé are assigned to each other (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Regardless as to how mentors and protégés are paired, Kram (1980) found that mentors in organizational contexts provided both instrumental (also referred to as career or vocational in the literature) and psychosocial mentoring functions to their protégés. Mentors provided instrumental mentoring by supporting a protégé's development, advancement, and goal attainment within an organization (Kram, 1980). In contrast, mentors used psychosocial mentoring to enhance a protégé's personal growth and perception of competence, and to clarify his/her identity within and outside of the organizational setting (Kram, 1980). Not surprisingly, mentors' use of these functions has been found to benefit protégés. For instance, the results of an interdisciplinary meta-analysis revealed that both instrumental and psychosocial mentoring were positively associated with numerous correlates including but not limited to protégé performance, motivation, satisfaction, sense of affiliation, and socialization (Eby et al., 2013). In sum, it is well-established that the study of mentoring has its roots in organizational and industrial psychology. However, mentoring relationships have been investigated in other areas such as education, medicine, and sport (see Bloom, 2013 for a review).

Compared to other disciplines, there is relatively little research explicitly examining mentoring in sport (e.g., Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, & Salmela, 1998; Miller, Salmela, & Kerr, 2002; Perna, Zaichkowsky, & Bocknek, 1996). Bloom et al. (1998) were among the first to investigate mentoring in sport when they interviewed current and former expert coaches regarding their mentoring experiences. Coaches believed they were mentored by other coaches throughout their careers, first as athletes, and then in the earlier stages of their coaching tenures. In particular, coaches noted they were taught technical and tactical skills, along with their

mentors' philosophies and values regarding the coaching profession. In a similar manner, Miller et al. (2002) queried intercollegiate coaches about their perceived role in mentoring athletes. The results indicated that coaches mentored athletes in many aspects of their lives, with a particular emphasis on developing them from both an academic and personal standpoint. Finally, Perna et al. (1996) investigated male intercollegiate athletes who were mentored by various individuals including professors, coaches, and academic advisors. Findings showed that athletes who received greater instrumental and psychosocial mentoring, regardless from whom, also reported more comfort expressing emotions and committing to relationships.

Recently, Hoffmann and Loughhead (2016a, 2016b) examined another type of sport mentoring relationship by focusing on peer-to-peer mentoring between athletes—a relationship considered beneficial for effective team functioning (Cope, Eys, Beauchamp, Schinke, & Bosselut, 2011). Given the similarity of peers in terms of age, appearance, and life circumstances (Petosa & Smith, 2014), it is not surprising that experienced athletes are particularly well-suited to serve as mentors to their less experienced counterparts. Hoffmann and Loughhead (2016a) sampled intercollegiate athletes who reflected on their experiences being mentored by their best-ever peer athlete mentor. The majority of athletes were informally mentored, younger than their mentors and were the same sex as their mentors. Further, the findings demonstrated that protégé receipt of psychosocial mentoring was positively related to protégé satisfaction with respect to personal dedication and individual performance. Building on these results, Hoffmann and Loughhead (2016b) compared the satisfaction levels of athletes in high quality mentoring relationships with those who were not peer mentored. Those athletes in high quality mentoring relationships were significantly more satisfied than their non-peer mentored counterparts in

terms of personal satisfaction, satisfaction with their team, and satisfaction with their coach's leadership.

Although research has highlighted the benefits of peer-to-peer mentoring between athletes (Cope et al., 2011; Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016a, 2016b), our understanding of what is provided by a peer athlete mentor to his/her protégé in sport is limited, and has primarily relied on mentoring research in organizational domains. As noted earlier, Kram's (1980) research in a business setting showed that mentors utilized instrumental and psychosocial mentoring functions. In particular, Kram identified that mentors provided *specific* instrumental functions that included nominating the protégé for advancement (i.e., sponsor), tutoring the protégé (i.e., coaching), exposing the protégé to senior group members (i.e., exposure), shielding the protégé from harmful group members/situations (i.e., protect), and appointing challenging tasks to the protégé (i.e., challenging assignments). Similarly, mentors were found to exhibit *specific* psychosocial functions, including serving as a role model (i.e., role modeling), displaying unconditional acceptance (i.e., acceptance-and-confirmation), acting as a trusted councillor (i.e., counselling), and having work and non-work related social exchanges with the protégé (i.e., friendship). However, an examination of these specific mentoring functions from a business context raises questions as to their relevancy with an athlete population. For instance, it may be inappropriate to assume that an athlete mentor's role would encompass assigning challenging tasks to his/her protégé. Conversely, it is not surprising that a mentor in an organizational context would assign difficult work to his/her protégé, because many protégés in this domain reported their supervisors as their mentors (e.g., Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Scandura & Williams, 2004).

Beyond the suggestion that Kram's (1980) specific functions from a business setting may not be relevant to an athlete population, there is empirical research highlighting the need for

further investigation of these functions in sport. Specifically, Hoffmann and Loughhead (2016a) explored the factor structure of Ragins and McFarlin's (1990) Mentor Role Instrument (an inventory that assesses Kram's specific mentoring functions in an organizational setting) with a sample of peer mentored athletes. While the results of their analysis did not support the factor structure involving the specific functions proposed by Kram, the results did support a higher-order factor structure representing Kram's two global dimensions of instrumental and psychosocial mentoring. Taken together, the results provided initial validation for Kram's general categorization of instrumental and psychosocial mentoring with a sample of athletes. At the same time, the findings underscored the importance of (re)examining the *specific* instrumental and psychosocial functions utilized by peer athlete mentors in sport.

To this end, the general objective of the present study was to explore the experiences of elite level athletes who reported being peer mentored by other athletes during their sporting careers. Using Kram's (1980) classification of mentoring functions as a guiding theoretical framework, the primary purpose was to identify *what* mentoring functions are provided by athlete mentors. The secondary purpose was to examine the outcomes related to protégés' mentoring experiences. The overall objective of the present study was accomplished via interviews with protégés (i.e., peer mentored athletes), the results of which may be used to enhance the effectiveness of peer mentoring relationships between athletes.

Method

Participants

The sample comprised 14 (7 males, 7 females) Canadian elite mentored athletes ranging from 20 to 34 years of age ($M = 26.36$, $SD = 3.43$). These protégés competed in either independent or interdependent sports and participated in their respective sports for, on average,

16.36 years ($SD = 5.57$). All protégés were currently competing at elite levels of sport that included the Olympics ($n = 7$), professional ($n = 3$), Commonwealth Games ($n = 2$), National U-20 team ($n = 1$), and Major Junior Hockey ($n = 1$). All protégés competed in the same sports and at the same levels of competition as their mentors. Further, all protégés indicated they were involved in mentoring relationships that emerged informally. Additional descriptive information concerning the protégés and their mentoring relationships is presented in Table 1.

Procedure and Data Collection

Prior to data collection, ethical clearance to conduct the current study was obtained from the lead author's institution. Purposive maximum variation sampling (Sparkes & Smith, 2014) was used to recruit current elite level male and female athletes who competed in a variety of sports. A convenience sample of athletes who trained in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec (Canada) and the state of Michigan (USA) were identified through the research team's professional network of contacts. Participants were emailed a recruitment script outlining the nature of the study and invited to participate (see Appendices B and C). Based on a criterion sampling approach (Patton, 2002), athletes who considered another athlete as a peer mentor at some point in their athletic career and were currently competing at an elite level (e.g., National team, professional) were eligible to participate. To assist participants in determining whether they had been or were being mentored by another athlete, a definition of a peer athlete mentor similar to the one used by Hoffmann and Loughhead (2016a) was provided in the recruitment email that read: "A more experienced and knowledgeable athlete who acts as a role model for you, provides guidance and support to you, and assists in your sport and/or personal development. This athlete cannot be a family member or an individual with whom you have a romantic relationship." Participants were also informed that they could have more than one

athlete who served in a mentorship position. The recruitment process was continual until saturation of information was reached. In total, 17 athletes were contacted throughout the recruitment process, with three declining to participate because they had not considered another athlete as a peer mentor.

Individual semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with the participants. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), this type of interview permits the researcher to have a conversation within a specific subject area and to establish a conversational style regarding a predetermined topic. Moreover, a semi-structured interview approach allows the participants to thoroughly discuss the meanings attached to their experiences, thus providing the researcher with a deeper understanding about participants' perceptions than could be uncovered from a more rigid interview (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Interviews were conducted face-to-face and ranged between 60 to 90 minutes ($M = 67.32$). Each interview occurred in the city where the protégé resided at a mutually agreed upon location, day, and time. The participants were informed that their identities would be protected through the use of a coding system which would replace their names with a code (P1-P14). With the exception of three participants who each commented on two athlete mentors (P1, P8, and P11), all participants described their experiences in relation to one mentor.

Interview Guide

An interview guide comprising four sections was developed by the research team (see Appendix A). The first section consisted of opening questions designed to build a discussion around the protégé's career progression within their sport (e.g., Briefly describe your athletic career and how you got to where you are today in your sport). The second section comprised main questions that were based on the mentoring literature, including Kram's (1980)

conceptualization of instrumental and psychosocial mentoring (e.g., In what ways does [Mentor] give you advice that affects your improvement in sport and your advancement in your sporting career? In what ways does [Mentor] give you advice that affects your personal growth and development, both in and outside the sport environment?). These questions explored the support protégés received from their athlete mentors. The third section contained summary questions that related to the subject area and were tied to previous responses (e.g., Reflecting back on your relationship with [Mentor], how would you say this mentoring relationship has affected you as an athlete and a person?). Finally, the fourth section consisted of a concluding question which allowed the participant to further comment on their mentoring experience(s) and/or elaborate on previous responses (i.e., Are there any questions or comments regarding your mentoring experience(s) that you would like to ask or share?). All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim by the lead researcher, which resulted in 181 pages of single-spaced transcribed text. Transcripts were subsequently sent electronically to participants for verification purposes. Of the 14 participants, two made minor edits which were due to grammatical errors during the interviews. Finally, transcripts were imported into NVivo 10, a computer software program in which qualitative data can be categorized and stored.

Data Analysis

The present study utilized a social constructivist approach to understand the participants' views and interpretations related to their own experiences rather than trying to find a universal truth that is independent of human interpretations and social meanings (Creswell, 2013). The research was grounded in ontological relativism (i.e., social reality is constructed and multiple) and epistemological constructionism (i.e., knowledge is subjectively created) (Smith & Caddick, 2012). For the current study, the researchers were interested in understanding the experiences of

elite level athletes who reported being peer mentored by other athletes during their sporting careers. All data were examined using a hierarchical content analysis, a commonly utilized form of analysis which allows researchers to identify and coherently describe patterns in the data (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The research team used a combination of inductive and deductive approaches, known as an abductive analysis (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), throughout the coding of data that pertained to the study's first purpose (i.e., athlete mentoring functions). This abductive approach, which Taylor, Ntoumanis, and Smith (2009) described as a dialogue between theory and data, has been adopted by scholars in the field of sport and exercise psychology (e.g., Eys, Loughead, Bray, & Carron, 2009; Taylor et al., 2009). The first step of this analysis involved scanning the transcripts sentence-by-sentence and dividing relevant responses into meaning units. Tesch (1990) described a meaning unit as a "segment of text that is comprehensible by itself and contains one idea, episode, or piece of information" (p. 116). The second step involved assigning each meaning unit to either a higher-order instrumental or psychosocial mentoring category which were created deductively based on research pertaining to the broad classification of mentoring functions in organizational (Kram, 1980) and sport (Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016a) settings. Next, lower-order categories consisting of meaning units representing similar themes (i.e., specific mentoring functions) were formed either deductively or inductively. That is, lower-order categories were created in a deductive fashion if they aligned with Kram's (1980) specific instrumental functions including sponsor, coaching, exposure, protect, and challenging assignments and psychosocial functions including role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counselling, and friendship. Following this deductive process, lower-order categories were formed inductively to represent novel/unanticipated themes (i.e., new specific mentoring functions) not previously identified in organizational mentoring research.

The data pertaining to the study's second purpose (i.e., mentoring outcomes) were coded through an inductive analysis (Côté, Salmela, Baria, & Russell, 1993). An inductive approach was chosen given this particular phase of the analysis was not grounded in any pre-existing theoretical framework (Patton, 2002). Following suggestions by Côté et al. (1993), this inductive process first involved combining meaning units sharing similar information into lower-order categories. Lower-order categories with similar meanings were subsequently clumped together to represent a higher-order category.

Tracy (2010) noted that *sincerity* and *credibility* are two criteria for assessing the quality of qualitative research. Sincerity, which refers to notions of genuineness and authenticity, can be achieved through self-reflexivity (Tracy, 2010). Self-reflexivity occurs when a researcher makes attempts to become self-aware about how his/her own perspectives and biases may influence the analysis, interpretation, and reporting of the results (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Three methods were utilized to enhance self-reflexivity in the present study. First, the lead researcher participated in a bracketing interview (Allen-Collinson, 2011) wherein his assumptions of peer mentoring were explored from two perspectives: a) a former athlete who had been peer mentored and, b) a current mentoring researcher. The researcher was interviewed by an experienced qualitative scholar who was not involved in the project. This bracketing interview occurred before the researcher conducted any interviews and provided him with an opportunity to reflect on any preconceived notions regarding the subject area. Second, the lead researcher conducted a pilot interview with a former intercollegiate soccer player who had been peer mentored while playing varsity sport. After the interview, the researcher obtained feedback about whether the questions posed were driven by particular biases or motivations (Tracy, 2010). Finally, the lead researcher regularly sought the assistance of a "critical friend" (i.e., second author) who acted as

a sounding board and provided an alternative perspective throughout the coding process (Sparkes & Smith, 2014).

Credibility was established through thick descriptions and multiple-analyst triangulation (Tracy, 2010; Zitomer & Goodwin, 2014). In-depth descriptions detailing participants' experiences being mentored, including the context surrounding those experiences, are provided in the results section. These rich descriptions help to *show* the reader the meaning behind the data, rather than *tell* the reader what to believe (Tracy, 2010). Further, by seeking the perspectives of several researchers, multiple-analyst triangulation was achieved (Tracy, 2010). Specifically, the first and second authors consulted with the third author, an experienced qualitative researcher familiar with the mentoring literature, who accepted and agreed with the interpretations of the data.

Results

The hierarchical content analysis resulted in three higher-order categories (i.e., *instrumental mentoring*, *psychosocial mentoring*, and *mentoring outcomes for protégés*). A summary of the higher-order and lower-order frequency counts in each category can be seen in Table 2. It should be noted that the inclusion of these frequency counts does not imply that particular themes are more important or of greater value than others. The higher-order categories and their associated lower-order categories are discussed below.

Instrumental Mentoring

Protégés described how they received mentoring that facilitated their performance, goal attainment, and advancement in sport. In particular, protégés noted their mentors used specific functions including mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, and career assistance. These specific functions were formed inductively.

Mental guidance. Protégés noted their mentors acted much like personal sport psychology consultants by providing guidance that enhanced the psychological component of their games, which in turn helped them remain focused and perform optimally. For instance, protégés described receiving advice that helped them concentrate:

I remember I wasn't skating very well and I said, 'I don't know what I'm doing wrong, I'm getting freaked out.' She stopped me and said, 'You have no control over those things. You have no control of anyone but yourself. Yeah you might be in a little rut right now, let's scale it back and concentrate on the things that you have control over.' (P8)

Similarly, mentors often engaged in discussions with protégés concerning mental preparation for competition and/or practice. Protégés felt the various suggestions offered by mentors regarding the use of mental strategies had a positive effect on their performance:

I was struggling with my game and my shots weren't falling. He came up to me and said, 'Listen, keep doing what you're doing', but he also gave me some advice about mental preparation.... His big thing was always visualizing before games, even if it's five or 10 minutes.... So I started visualizing. You know, I was struggling with my free-throw shot. He said every night to visualize myself making 10 free-throws before going to bed. All of a sudden, 'wow', my free-throws are starting to improve. (P3)

Finally, protégés indicated their mentors offered guidance about coping in high-pressure, stressful situations: "If I got scored on three times right away I would ask her like, 'How do you deal with that pressure?' So then we would discuss that pressure situation." (P7) As another example, one protégé described how her mentor supported her when she felt nervous before a race:

I remember we were at a major international competition. I was like, '[Mentor] I'm getting so nervous for my race' and he was like, 'Oh don't get nervous, I don't get nervous anymore.' He said, 'Why are you nervous?' And I was like, 'I don't know, it's my first international competition, I've never raced these girls.' He said, 'Don't get nervous, you're fine...' So I went into that race with a completely different attitude. (P4)

Coach relations. Mentors played an important role in facilitating positive relations between protégés and their coaches. Specifically, mentors used this function to ensure that protégés were continually having constructive interactions with their coaches that assisted them in achieving their task-based goals. For example, protégés described how their mentors involved themselves in coach-protégé conversations, so as to act as a liaison between the two:

[Mentor] was really helpful in taking both concerns of coach and athlete when they arose and were maybe hindering my training or the relationship. He was able to take both sides and be that middle-man, and just buffer the situation, so that we could move forward in a positive direction in terms of my progression in track. (P5)

My coach made a decision that I was uncomfortable with.... So I talked to [Mentor] about it and I was like, 'What do you think I should do?' She said, 'Okay listen I can come help you with the conversation with coach, help facilitate it.' She kind of backed up my point. (P13)

In addition, mentors supported their protégés when they received criticism and non-constructive feedback from coaches. Protégés discussed how their mentors instructed them to focus on their own performances rather than the negative comments of coaches:

She said, 'A coach will give you feedback, and yes you have to listen, but sometimes don't worry or don't think too much about what they're thinking. You kind of have to

focus on what you're doing and not so much on what the coach is saying. If it's constructive feedback, take it, but if it's not, then don't.' That suggestion helped me moving forward with coaches. (P6)

Task instruction. Protégés described the various types of task-specific knowledge they acquired from their mentors. Specifically, mentors were able to translate their own experiences in sport into tangible advice for protégés. For instance, protégés noted how they received technical and tactical instruction that supported their sport-specific development:

Because we had a relationship, and because of his position, I got his perspective. I'm a forward and I'm going up against a defenseman, I don't know what they see.... Let's say we did a drill, a 1-on-1 type of situation and it didn't go to my liking or I felt like I could have done more, after practice I would go up to him. He would basically show me, 'cause we would always have like 30 minutes to an hour after practice to do whatever we wanted. He would play the forward and show me what he didn't like to encounter in the corner or when guys come down the wing on him [as a defenseman]. (P2)

Protégés also emphasized that their mentors provided constructive feedback and did not hesitate to correct them from a technical or tactical standpoint when it was required:

There wasn't anything that he really told me that got me upset, but there were things that he told me that I was doing wrong, but that benefitted me in the long run. So basically I remember throwing javelin with him and throwing it the wrong way. And he's like, 'You got to stop that. You can't throw the javelin that way. If you continue to do that then something's going to happen to your elbow and then you're done.' (P10)

Furthermore, mentors' insights helped protégés understand how aspects related to training, nutrition, and recovery had a significant impact on their ability to excel in sport:

He'd say, 'Add greens to your smoothie here, try a smoothie there.' It would have been more recovery tools that he would have given me. You know things to stay loose and to be ready for the next workout, like compression gear, ice bath, massage therapy once a week...he made it clear to me why this stuff was so important. (P4)

Career assistance. Mentors drew upon their own experiences and contacts within elite sport to guide protégés' athletic careers. Specifically, protégés indicated that their mentors informed them of the politics/dynamics of their sport:

He was talking to me about how figure skating is all rigged in its politics. I was like, 'Oh, what do you mean? If you skate the best then you should win!' He enlightened me by saying that figure skating is a very personal interpretation and how I had to be on my best at times that I didn't think that I had to. Not just on the ice, but when I'm around judges, when I'm around organizers, so that people would see me in a positive light. (P14)

Mentors also shared knowledge concerning factors that did not directly enhance on-field performance (e.g., talking to the media, travelling effectively to competitions), but that had implications for an athlete's overall career success: "We travelled to Puerto Rico and he showed me what to bring with me to travel. He also showed me things like signing up for Aeroplan. He taught me the essentials of travel...because I had never travelled before." (P10)

Protégés further described how their mentors would discuss and/or recommend other individuals within the sporting environment that could assist with career advancement: "I kind of made connections through [Mentor]. Sponsorship-wise he helped with getting my name out there and building a brand in order to further myself in the sport." (P5) As another example, one protégé noted:

I would say that he uses other references more than himself. They are people or other runners that he looks up to.... He shares his experiences that he's had with other runners and other training groups that can be useful in helping you make decisions in your own career. He just has so many people that he can easily draw upon who can help you. (P12)

Additionally, mentors used their personal and professional connections to gather information that would be useful to protégés regarding future athletic opportunities:

He's always asking me what my next move is. Actually before I signed with (name of team) in (name of country), he had a friend of his who played for the team, and I kind of wanted the run down on the team. You know, how they treated their players and what the housing situation is. He'd ask his buddy and relay the information back and let me know honestly how it was. It's just good to have somebody who has so many connections. (P3)

Psychosocial Mentoring

According to the protégés, the psychosocial mentoring they received facilitated their personal growth, enhanced their perceptions of competence, and clarified their identities, both within and outside of the sport setting. That is, unlike instrumental mentoring which was limited to influencing a protégé's advancement in sport, psychosocial mentoring targeted a protégé's personal development as an athlete *and* an individual. Protégés described how their mentors used specific functions including role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counselling, and friendship. These specific functions were formed deductively.

Role modeling. Protégés overwhelmingly discussed how their mentors acted as role models by exhibiting desirable values, attitudes, and behaviors. Protégés felt their mentors did not simply “talk the talk”, but would “walk the walk” in terms of setting a good example:

I'm more of a 'show me' sort of person. You can tell me whatever you want and I'll take it for what it is. But if you show it to me and you're a good example, it means more to me. And that's what [Mentor] did. (P1)

Mentors also carried themselves in ways that were appealing and impressive to protégés. As an example, one protégé admired the way her mentor was a role model in sport and in life more generally. This protégé wanted to emulate her mentor's athletic characteristics:

She never really took me aside and said, 'You should do this, you should do that.' It was more that her actions spoke much louder than her words on the ice.... Like I said, it was really her presence and the way she carried herself that kind of made me like, 'That's what I want to be.' (P7)

Similarly, this protégé aspired to be like her mentor outside of the sport domain:

Now she has a family, she has kids. So now I see her acting with her kids and that's a new kind of role model that I have, or a new type of mentoring. Because it doesn't change who she is, she's still always that great person. You know, she's experienced different things. She always has her way to deal with them in a very nice fashion. So I just see her act with her kids and that's who I want to be. (P7)

Furthermore, protégés noted how they related to certain aspects of their mentors, which helped them solidify their own identities:

In terms of his personality, I like that he's confident and like I said, he's weird. He probably knows that he's weird, but he doesn't care. That's on and off the ice. He respects everyone but he's not going to change his behavior. It touches me in a particular way because I don't view myself necessarily as the 'standard hockey player'. I

don't want to either. It's nice to see someone like that, an example of someone who is able to do both. It gives me hope that I can stay who I am and be a hockey player. (P2)

Acceptance-and-confirmation. Mentors consistently supported their protégés by accepting them as valued athletes and individuals. Unlike some other veteran athletes, protégés felt their mentors were receptive and non-judgmental towards their feelings or opinions: “She would come from a place of like non-judgment when you brought stuff up. I always felt like that when I would have discussions with her. Obviously that made me feel comfortable.” (P13)

Protégés also described that mentors were welcoming, approachable, and interested in their pursuits. Mentors often showed interest in their protégés through timely attention and/or praise: “She kept reminding me that I have what it takes to succeed and just to do what I do best. So it was basically just reassuring me of that, that I could do it.” (P6)

Likewise, protégés discussed how their mentors highlighted their strengths and abilities. For instance, one protégé noted that his mentor continued to accept him unconditionally as the relationship progressed:

One thing still sticks in my mind today. I wrestled really well once and ended up squeaking out a win against [Mentor]. I was so happy about it, and nothing was like broken in our relationship or any of that.... He was mad he lost but after that we still trained together and he told me, ‘You’re going to be a world medalist someday.’ What he said stuck with me ever since. (P11)

Taken together, this function was used to confirm protégés’ personal and athletic identities, which in turn enhanced their sense of self-worth:

We talk fairly regularly on the computer and he kind of congratulates me and always reminds me of things he’s told me in the past about being ‘who I am’ and representing

myself in a positive way. He keeps reminding me and saying, 'I've said since day one you're going to be this person and you're moving in the right direction.' And he keeps telling me that, 'I knew since day one that you're the best athlete in the world... ' (P10)

Counselling. Protégés indicated that their mentors acted as trusted confidants with whom non-performance related personal concerns within or outside of the sport setting could be discussed. Thus, mentors often served as sounding boards for protégés' struggles or doubts:

After [name of event] she struggled with depression. She won a medal and thought that it would make her life perfect, and it really didn't. So we've both been able to connect and talk about our struggles and communicate. We have a therapeutic friendship in that sense. There's a lot of trust and openness where I can divulge my struggles.... She's had a lot of emails from me saying, 'I'm down and I'm struggling.' She would always bring it back to finding that inner peace and inner calm, whether that's on or off the ice. (P8)

Additionally, mentors engaged in active listening and offered feedback to influence protégés' outlooks on different situations. In particular, protégés noted that their mentors used their own experiences to offer perspectives on issues:

I had a girlfriend from Canada and we broke up my second year. It was tough being over there by myself. Me and [Mentor] talked about all that. He had just married his wife and had a young daughter. He told me how it was and broke it down. He said, 'There's always somebody else. Don't stress about it too much. You have to concentrate on basketball. Obviously she was important to you but over time, everything will heal.

Anytime you need to talk I'm here.' He knew how important a support system was. (P3)

Despite the fact he sought guidance from his mentor regarding personal difficulties, one protégé remarked that he did not equate counselling with mentorship:

I would say daily I would talk with him. Whether our talking was always necessarily mentoring or if it was more of like a counselling relationship, I'm not sure. I look at it more like that. If there were personal issues I could talk about them with him. (P1)

Regardless, protégés reported that their mentors played an invaluable and supportive role in their growth as individuals, particularly during times of need.

Friendship. Mentors and protégés engaged in sport and non-sport related social interactions. That is, mentors had enjoyable “everyday” discussions with protégés while in the sporting context, over meals, or during social gatherings:

I would say a few days a week we would definitely discuss sport-specific or even life stuff. We'd hang out, watch a movie, play X-box, go to the mall, and have something to eat. As you're spending time together you're always having those conversations. (P3)

As a person she was also really nice to me. Usually foreign players have a car so she offered to give me rides to the gym, even though she didn't have to do that. She also took care of me. For example, she'd cook for me. That kind of stuff. We were spending lots of time together. We became good friends actually. Our personalities kind of clicked right away and we felt comfortable discussing different topics. (P9)

Further, protégés appreciated how their mentors informally shared personal stories and moments with them. One protégé described a memorable experience he had with his mentor:

This one time he invited me to go with him, so we spent like a solid two-three hours in the car. We talked pretty much about everything, about hockey, girlfriends, family. I would say that was maybe another defining moment in the relationship...because he opened up a bit more. I think in the beginning he didn't want to show any I guess signs of

weakness. But I think at that point he knew that I respected him enough that he could open himself up.... I guess we were able to just discuss whatever was on our minds. (P2)

While these conversations were often face-to-face they also occurred through technology-based mediums (e.g., Skype, text messages, and telephone calls), particularly for those protégés and mentors involved in long distance relationships.

Lastly, protégés believed that the friendship function became more pronounced as the relationship progressed where the sharing of support became more mutual: “Once I moved here full-time we remained friends and training partners. And over time its turned into a more dynamic, more mutual relationship.” (P12)

I gained playing time and I got better. So I would still ask her things or she would give me advice, but maybe I had less to improve on or talk about with her in that sense...I was probably getting closer to her level. Now I see her more as a friend. I guess its evolved in that she is now both a mentor and friend at the same time. (P9)

Mentoring Outcomes for Protégés

Protégés noted a number of outcomes that resulted from their mentoring experiences, ranging from increased confidence, to improved performance, and a willingness to serve as mentors to other athletes.

Sport confidence. Protégés described how the guidance they received from their mentors was instrumental in increasing their confidence in their athletic abilities. Moreover, protégés felt their mentors made them believe they could achieve great feats and become champion athletes:

It’s given me confidence. Like, ‘Oh, this guy thinks I’m that good?’ When I was young I didn’t even think I would ever make it to the World Championships. Then he told me

what he thought of me and I was like, ‘Oh, maybe I could be that good or maybe I could do this?’ So it pushed me a lot...it built my confidence when it needed to be built. (P11)

I think he made me believe in what I was doing. He made it become a reality. You know there was never any negative with [Mentor], there still isn’t. It was always positive and everything was to work towards that one dream of making the Olympic team. I guess that support just makes you more well-rounded as an athlete because you believe in yourself that you can reach those dreams. (P4)

Sport performance and development. According to the protégés, the guidance from their mentors contributed to skill development, resulting in better performance:

Once I got here my skills started developing so fast ’cause I had mentors like [Mentor1] and [Mentor2] in the room all the time, teaching me so many things and pushing me to work harder.... I probably wouldn’t be the wrestler I am today without them. (P11)

It’s extended the longevity of my career sports-wise because I’ve been able to develop those skills at such an earlier age.... I was able to develop those key skills like preparation, visualization, mental ability, and little nuances [Mentor] showed me within basketball. I was able to learn those a lot earlier and still put them into my game before it’s too late. (P3)

Similarly, protégés felt they developed athletically at a faster rate due to their mentors: I think learning from [Mentor] when I was younger helped me be at that high level and gave me that drive to be better and have that passion to push myself. If I didn’t have that mentorship then I would have progressed at a level that would have maybe been slower or maybe I wouldn’t have progressed at all, you know? (P14)

Willingness to mentor. As they gained experience, the protégés reported a willingness to provide mentorship to teammates or other athletes, something which they attributed to their previous positive experiences with their own athlete mentors:

I try to give to others the confidence and the encouragement that my mentor gave to me.

He kind of taught me how to bring people under my wing and show them the ropes.

[Mentor] showed me the ropes, so now I need to return it. (P4)

I try to put myself in situations where I can help out others now that I've been helped. I feel like the effect that [Mentor] had on me, maybe I can give that to somebody else and help them get to that next level...because his experience with me certainly helped me take those next steps. (P10)

I feel like everyone's path is different, but I try to give others advice that will help them along their paths. I try to make that conscious effort because I know that when I was younger that support and mentorship helped me. So I want to help others in the same way. (P14)

In sum, protégés felt they were well-suited to take on the role of peer athlete mentor, and were keen to do so given their prior experiences receiving guidance in mentoring relationships.

Discussion

The general objective of the current study was to examine the experiences of elite level athletes who reported being peer mentored by other athletes. Specifically, the central purpose was to identify the mentoring functions exhibited by athlete mentors. The results indicated athlete mentors provided a variety of specific functions that facilitated protégés' progression through sport (instrumental mentoring) and development from a personal standpoint (psychosocial mentoring). Although instrumental and psychosocial mentoring are separate

dimensions, the quotes from participants in the current study illustrated that there was at times some overlap between and within these two global types of mentoring functions. This finding was not unexpected as mentoring functions are fundamentally rooted in support and guidance and thus are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Beres & Dixon, 2014; Kram, 1988). The secondary purpose was to explore the outcomes related to protégés' mentoring experiences. Protégés felt they benefitted in terms of enhanced performance and confidence, and also indicated an enhanced willingness to provide mentorship to their peers. The findings of the present study and their implications for researchers and practitioners warrant further discussion.

The findings pertaining to the first purpose underscored several insights on the mentoring functions utilized by peer athlete mentors. According to the participants, athlete mentors provided assistance that helped them perform, attain their goals, and advance in their sporting careers, which is consistent with the notion of instrumental mentoring as described by Kram (1980). However, protégés described receiving specific instrumental functions that were unique to an athlete population and therefore different than those outlined in Kram's (1980) research in an organizational setting. That is, protégés felt they received support regarding the mental component of their games, their relations with their coaches, their task-based knowledge, and career assistance. The finding that athlete mentors used different instrumental functions than mentors in business contexts is not surprising because individuals' behaviors in mentoring relationships are influenced by various organizational aspects, including the hierarchical levels that exist within organizations (Kram, 1988). Kram (1988) highlighted two levels of mentoring relationships in organizations—peer and superior-subordinate. Kram (1988) noted that the superior-subordinate relationship can create an unequal distribution of power in the hierarchical structure between protégés and mentors, which can interfere with the development of a

supportive relationship. However, in the present study, participants discussed their athlete mentors who were their peers. This peer dynamic flattens the hierarchical nature of the relationship between protégés and mentors, creating different [task] responsibilities for mentors (Kram, 1988). Consequently, the flattened structure of peer athlete mentoring relationships is a plausible explanation for the emergence of instrumental mentoring functions more relevant to an athlete population.

In contrast to the results highlighting the presence of unique instrumental functions within the sport realm, protégés in the present study described receiving specific psychosocial functions that closely resembled those in organizational contexts (i.e., Kram, 1980). Indeed, athlete mentors facilitated protégés' personal growth and development within and outside of sport by serving as positive role models, praising and accepting their protégés, attending to their protégés' personal concerns, and engaging socially with their protégés. These results support the theory that peers can fulfil the same types of psychosocial functions as traditional mentors (McManus & Russell, 2007). Additionally, regarding the results of the present study, protégés felt the friendship function became more pronounced as the relationship evolved and the talent and experience gap dividing mentors and protégés became less apparent. This finding suggests that peer athlete mentoring relationships likely become more reciprocal with time, which sheds some light on the dynamic nature of these relationships.

As it relates to the first purpose of the current study, the findings concerning the instrumental and psychosocial functions provided by athlete mentors can also be used to develop a sport-specific definition of peer athlete mentoring. Therefore, based jointly on the results of the present study and the definition of mentoring from organizational psychology presented at the onset of this paper (i.e., Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999), it is proposed that

peer athlete mentoring is a dynamic process in which a more experienced and knowledgeable athlete (i.e., mentor) serves as a trusted role model to another athlete (i.e., protégé), assists him/her in their pursuit of goal achievement and advancement in sport, and/or supports his/her personal growth and development. Athletes involved in the process have a non-familial and non-romantic relationship. It is hoped this definition will offer clarity on the nature of this construct and spur additional research.

The results pertaining to the current study's second purpose provided evidence concerning the consequences of peer athlete mentoring relationships. Specifically, protégés reported that the guidance and support from athlete mentors had an impact on their performance and sport confidence. While it is not clear which mentoring functions per se had an effect on protégés' performance and confidence levels, the results of an interdisciplinary meta-analysis by Eby et al. (2013) may provide some insight. Eby et al. found that both instrumental and psychosocial mentoring were positively related with protégé performance. As such, both types of mentoring may play a role in helping protégés develop their sport skills and achieve peak performance. Eby et al. further showed that only psychosocial mentoring was positively associated with protégé self-efficacy. Thus, it is plausible that psychosocial mentoring, particularly athlete mentors' use of "acceptance-and-confirmation" to praise and confirm protégés' abilities, is primarily responsible for enhancing confidence in peer mentored athletes. Finally, as a result of their own experiences being peer mentored, the protégés in the current study reported a willingness to support and mentor other athletes. This finding demonstrates that the benefits of peer athlete mentoring can extend beyond protégés themselves, and also mirrors research in the domain of organizational psychology that showed mentored employees were more willing to mentor others compared to those without a mentor (Ragins & Cotton, 1993).

Overall, the positive experiences of protégés supports and extends previous research showing a link between being peer mentored as an athlete and greater satisfaction levels (Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016a, 2016b).

The results of the present research have implications for practitioners (e.g., sport psychology consultants, coaches) interested in fostering mentoring relationships between athletes. Practitioners may be able to promote and facilitate the development of effective peer mentoring relationships via workshops where athletes are introduced to the *specific* mentoring functions they can provide to their teammates. For instance, workshops have been effectively implemented to teach intercollegiate athletes how to exhibit specific leadership behaviors (see Duguay, Loughead, & Munroe-Chandler, 2016). The results of season-long workshops resulted not only in an increase in the use of leadership behaviors by the athletes but also in an increase in athlete satisfaction, task peer-motivational climate, and a reduction in ego peer-motivational climate. Similarly, the use of this type of workshop could be a promising strategy to inform elite athletes about the use of mentoring functions in sport. Further, by highlighting the positive outcomes associated with peer mentorship (e.g., enhanced protégé performance), veteran athletes may be more willing to support developing team members. The crucial role that coaches play in fostering peer athlete mentoring relationships must also be briefly acknowledged. It has been suggested that coaches should create a team climate which promotes peer mentoring between team members (Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016a). In fact, intercollegiate coaches have integrated newcomers into their teams by either formally pairing veterans with rookie athletes or by creating situations that naturally encourage a culture of veteran mentorship (Benson, Evans, & Eys, 2016). Consequently, coaches and practitioners should explore different avenues to facilitate positive connections between potential athlete mentors and protégés.

The current study's strengths and limitations should be noted. Our sample included male and female protégés, who competed in a variety of independent and interdependent sports, and who ranged from 20 to 34 years of age. Consequently, by recruiting individuals with diverse backgrounds, a broad range of experiences were examined. Although no differences were detected with respect to the gender, age, or sport of the participants in the current study, future research could explore how or if these factors affect the nature of peer athlete mentoring relationships. For instance, quantitative research in an organizational domain showed that, regardless of gender, protégés felt they received the same degree of instrumental mentoring from male and female mentors; however, they reported receiving more psychosocial mentoring from female mentors (Tharenou, 2005). In contrast, when mentors were surveyed, male mentors believed they provided more instrumental mentoring to protégés than did female mentors, while female mentors believed they provided more psychosocial mentoring than did male mentors (Allen & Eby, 2004). Thus, the gender composition of mentor-protégé dyads among athletes may be one avenue for future investigation. The protégés in the present study were also elite level athletes. This represents a population that has yet to be examined in sport mentoring research, and thus offers scholars and practitioners with unique insights into the lived experiences of talented mentored athletes. Investigating how mentoring experiences contribute to the development of adolescent athletes or other youth cohorts is a potential research direction for scholars in the area of positive youth development. Despite the present study's strengths, we did not concurrently examine the experiences of peer athlete mentors. Understanding the perspectives of individuals who provide athlete mentoring functions is an area worth exploring in future research. In particular, it would be interesting to uncover athlete mentors' motivations to engage in peer mentoring. Recent sport research revealed that intercollegiate athletes were

motivated to contribute to others' well-being for reasons that satisfied their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deal & Camiré, 2016). Gaining insight into athletes' motives for contributing to their peers' development would be a useful addition to the literature. Finally, all protégés in the current study described their mentoring relationships as having developed naturally and organically. Consequently, we were not able to examine the perceptions of athletes who were formally assigned to their mentoring relationships and determine whether these were perceived to be equally beneficial. Investigating the nature of formal mentoring relationships between athletes could offer important information, especially since there is evidence in organizational contexts suggesting these types of relationships can at times be problematic for protégés and their mentors (e.g., Eby & Lockwood, 2005).

In conclusion, the current study offers both practical and theoretical contributions concerning the specific functions that are provided in athlete mentoring relationships, as well as the positive outcomes that result from these mentoring experiences. These findings expand upon recent research that has examined peer mentorship in an athlete population. It is anticipated these results can be used to enhance the effectiveness of peer mentoring relationships between athletes, resulting in more positive experiences for those being mentored.

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CHAPTER 3

PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT OF A QUESTIONNAIRE TO ASSESS PEER ATHLETE MENTORING FUNCTIONS: THE ATHLETE MENTORING QUESTIONNAIRE (AMQ)

Peer athlete mentoring is defined as:

A dynamic process in which a more experienced and knowledgeable athlete (i.e., mentor) serves as a trusted role model to another athlete (i.e., protégé), assists him/her in their pursuit of goal achievement and advancement in sport, and/or supports his/her personal growth and development. Athletes involved in the process have a nonfamilial and nonromantic relationship. (Hoffmann, Loughead, & Bloom, 2017, p. 143-144)

Research on peer athlete mentoring has been slow to develop and pales in comparison to the body of mentoring literature spanning nearly four decades in organizational psychology. One potential explanation for the paucity of research examining peer athlete mentoring is the absence of a measurement tool to assess the mentoring functions provided by athletes serving as peer mentors. Thus, the general purpose of the present study was to develop a psychometrically sound, sport-specific questionnaire to measure peer athlete mentoring functions.

Mentoring in Organizational Psychology

Kram's (1980) pioneering research showed that mentors in organizational settings exhibited two broad types of mentoring functions: instrumental and psychosocial. Mentors used instrumental mentoring to support protégés' goal attainment and career advancement in an organization. In particular, mentors provided instrumental mentoring through five specific functions (i.e., sponsor, coaching, exposure, protect, and challenging assignments). In contrast, mentors employed psychosocial mentoring to facilitate protégés' personal growth, development, and perception of competence, and provided this general function through four specific functions

(i.e., role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counselling, and friendship) that extended beyond the confines of an organization. Overall, there is an abundance of research including several meta-analytic reviews highlighting the positive effects of mentoring functions for those who are mentored (e.g., Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004; Dickson et al., 2014; Eby et al., 2013). As one example, Eby et al.'s (2013) interdisciplinary meta-analysis, in which roughly two-thirds of the 173 samples included were from the organizational setting, showed that instrumental and psychosocial functions were positively related to factors such as protégé motivation, performance, satisfaction, socialization, social capital, and sense of affiliation.

Despite the wealth of mentoring research in organizational psychology, there is no “gold standard” inventory to assess mentoring functions in this context. According to Godshalk and Sosik (2007), the body of literature examining mentoring is fraught with multiple instruments including the Mentoring Functions Scale (MFS; Noe, 1988), the Mentor Role Instrument (MRI; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990), and revised versions of the Mentoring Functions Questionnaire (MFQ; Castro & Scandura, 2004; Scandura, 1992; Scandura & Ragins, 1993). Specifically, the MFS measures two global factors representing instrumental and psychosocial mentoring. The MRI is a detailed inventory and assesses the specific instrumental and psychosocial mentoring functions identified by Kram (1980). Finally, the MFQ measures three factors representing an instrumental function, a psychosocial function, and a role-modeling function. Though these inventories vary in their assessment of mentoring functions, they share similar theoretical underpinnings in that they are grounded in Kram's general classification of instrumental and psychosocial mentoring.

Mentoring in Sport

To date, the majority of mentoring research in sport has qualitatively investigated coaches' mentorship toward their peers (i.e., other coaches) and athletes (e.g., Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, & Salmela, 1998; Koh, Bloom, Fairhurst, Paiement, & Kee, 2014; Miller, Salmela, & Kerr, 2002), and generally has not been grounded in Kram's (1980) mentoring functions. As one exception to this trend, Schempp, Elliott, McCullick, Laplaca, and Berger (2016) explored the mentoring functions provided in coach-to-coach mentoring relationships. Given no inventory existed to assess coach mentoring functions, the authors modified the MRI (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990) to make it suitable for their sample of high school and college basketball coaches. The results indicated that mentored coaches felt they received a high degree of both instrumental and psychosocial mentoring. Specifically, these protégés reported their mentors were particularly effective in accepting them (i.e., acceptance-and-confirmation function), challenging them (i.e., challenging assignments function), and providing them with friendship (i.e., friendship function). However, it should be noted that little evidence was provided to support the reliability of the revised instrument's scores with the sample of coaches.

A small number of studies have also provided evidence that athletes are involved in mentoring relationships. Perna, Zaichkowsky, and Bocknek (1996) reported that male intercollegiate athletes were mentored by coaches, professors, academic advisors, and alumni. Protégés who reported receiving greater instrumental and psychosocial mentoring, as measured by the MFS (Noe, 1988), also reported they were more comfortable expressing their emotions and committing to relationships. Unfortunately, Perna et al. failed to provide evidence concerning the reliability of the MFS scores with the sample of athletes. Beyond the finding that athletes consider individuals including coaches as mentors, researchers have identified that athletes perceive some of their peer team members as occupying the mentor role (Benson, Surya,

& Eys, 2014; Cope, Eys, Beauchamp, Schinke, & Bosselut, 2011). In fact, there is evidence suggesting that elite snowboarders often value support from peer mentors (i.e., other snowboarders) more so than from coaches (Ojala & Thorpe, 2015).

Building on this knowledge, Hoffmann and Loughead (2016a, 2016b) explored peer mentoring relationships between athletes in greater detail by asking protégés to reflect upon their experiences during which they were supported by their best-ever athlete mentor. These studies were conducted with intercollegiate athletes who indicated they were primarily involved in mentoring relationships that developed naturally and informally, as opposed to mentoring relationships whereby protégés and mentors were formally paired together by coaches. In one study Hoffmann and Loughead (2016a) examined the extent to which peer mentored and non-peer mentored athletes were satisfied with their overall athletic experience. The findings showed that peer mentored athletes were significantly more content than non-peer mentored athletes with respect to personal satisfaction, satisfaction with the leadership of their coach, and satisfaction with team members. Further, Hoffmann and Loughead (2016b) investigated peer mentored athletes' perceptions of the functions provided by athlete mentors. Similar to Schempp et al. (2016), they assessed mentoring functions by revising the MRI (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990) to reflect the sport environment. The results of a confirmatory factor analysis did not support a first-order factor structure representing Kram's (1980) specific mentoring functions, but did support a higher-order factor structure wherein the specific functions underpinned the two broad categories of instrumental and psychosocial mentoring. Further analyses revealed that the higher-order factor of psychosocial mentoring was positively related to protégés' satisfaction levels in terms of personal dedication and individual performance. Though these findings gleaned initial insight into the two broad mentoring functions utilized by athlete mentors, they also suggested the MRI

was not appropriate for use when the goal is to examine the full array of specific mentoring functions potentially displayed in peer athlete mentoring relationships.

The Current Study

It has been argued that “a significant way to move the science and practice forward in any field is to develop effective measurement tools” (Scanlan, Chow, Sousa, & Scanlan, 2016, p. 233). In line with this perspective, and to refine and expand upon our understanding of peer mentoring relationships between athletes, the overarching purpose of the current study was to develop a psychometrically sound questionnaire to measure peer athlete mentoring functions. This objective was accomplished through a multi-phase approach typically utilized in the development of sport questionnaires (e.g., Benson & Eys, 2017; Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985; Paradis, Martin, & Carron, 2014). In phase 1, the experiences of peer mentored athletes in elite sport were explored through individual semi-structured interviews. The findings from phase 1 have been published elsewhere (see Hoffmann, Loughhead, & Bloom, 2017), however a brief overview of the results are provided below (see Method section). Based on the results of phase 1, phase 2 consisted of three stages related to item development and assessment of content validity evidence. Lastly, in phase 3, peer mentored athletes completed an initial version of the Athlete Mentoring Questionnaire (AMQ) and its factor structure was examined using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), exploratory structural equation modeling (ESEM), and hierarchical ESEM (ESEM-within-CFA) approaches. Measurement invariance across groups (e.g., gender) was also investigated in phase 3 using ESEM. Ethical clearance to conduct all three phases of the research was obtained from the authors’ institution.

Method

Phase 1: Experiences of Peer Mentored Athletes in Elite Sport

Using Kram's (1980) categorization of mentoring functions as a guiding framework, the primary purpose of phase 1 was to identify the mentoring functions provided by peer athlete mentors. Mentoring functions were identified via interviews with 14 Canadian peer mentored athletes who competed at elite levels (e.g., national team, professional) and reported being involved in mentoring relationships that evolved informally. The results of the interviews indicated that athlete mentors provided both instrumental and psychosocial mentoring to their protégés. However, protégés reported they received specific instrumental functions that did not align with the functions identified in Kram's (1980) research from organizational psychology. Rather, these functions were uniquely relevant to an athlete population and they were labelled mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, and career assistance. By contrast, protégés expressed they received specific psychosocial functions that aligned closely with those identified by Kram (i.e., role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counselling, and friendship). Brief descriptions of the lower and higher-order functions are provided in Table 3. Further information about phase 1 is found in a separate publication (see Hoffmann et al., 2017).

Phase 2: Item Development and Content Validity

Stage 1: Item development. Based on the results of phase 1, a large pool consisting of 96 items was generated to represent the eight (lower-order) dimensions of mentoring functions listed in Table 3. Specifically, 88 items were developed by the research team that included key terms and descriptors used by athletes in phase 1. Following a review of the literature from organizational psychology an additional eight items that pertained to psychosocial mentoring and were deemed relevant to peer athlete mentoring were added to the item pool. These eight items were taken verbatim or adapted from the MRI (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; $n = 4$), MFS (Noe, 1988; $n = 3$), and 15-item MFQ (Scandura & Ragins, 1993; $n = 1$).

In the AMQ, the stem preceding each item is “My peer athlete mentor...” and participants are to rate each item on a 7-point Likert scale anchored at 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*). Thus, higher scores reflect a greater degree of mentoring. This 7-point Likert scale is used in the MRI and it has been adopted in previous athlete mentoring research (i.e., Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016b).

Stage 2: Think-aloud interviews. Evidence for the content validity of the initial item pool was assessed via individual think-aloud interviews with six athletes (4 females, 2 males; $M_{\text{age}} = 25.17$; $SD = 2.56$) who reported they had been peer mentored by other athletes. Given our goal of developing a mentoring questionnaire that would be suitable for elite level athletes, including intercollegiate athletes, we conducted think-aloud interviews with three Canadian National team athletes and three intercollegiate athletes. Consistent with previous research (see Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016b), each athlete was asked to complete the questionnaire while reflecting on their best-ever peer athlete mentor; that is, the athlete who provided the highest quality mentorship. All athletes indicated their mentoring relationships with their best-ever peer athlete mentors developed informally. Following informed consent (see Appendices E and H) and prior to commencing the think-aloud interview, the lead researcher provided each participant with the following instructions adapted from McCorry, Scullion, McMurray, Houghton, and Dempster (2013) and Gardner and Tang (2014):

I am interested in what you think about when completing the following questionnaire. In order to do this, I am asking you to THINK ALOUD as you answer all questions. What I mean by “think aloud” is that I would like you to tell me EVERYTHING you are thinking from the time you read the questionnaire’s instructions until the time you answer the last question. I don’t want you to plan out what you say, just act as if you are alone in

the room speaking to yourself. It is important that you keep talking. If you are silent for a long period of time, I will probably ask you to talk. Please try to speak as clearly as possible, as I will be recording you as you speak.

Interviews were digitally recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim. Using the coding framework developed by McCorry et al. (2013), each verbal response corresponding to an item was assigned one of the following five codes: “no problems” (participant experienced no problems with the item), “different question” (participant interpreted item differently than intended), “confusion” (participant expressed difficulty understanding the meaning of the item), “repeated item” (participant repeated the item due to initial difficulty understanding it or its structure), and “too long” (participant noted the item was unnecessarily lengthy). With the exception of “no problems” every code represented a problematic response. Any item considered to be problematic by two or more participants was either removed or revised. When an item was considered to be problematic by only one participant the research team discussed the matter and agreed upon a course of action (i.e., leave item as is, revise, or remove).

The removal and revision of items resulted in a pool consisting of 67 items. Based on participant feedback and the authors’ own conclusions, an additional six items deemed to be redundant were also removed. Finally, two new items were created based on participant feedback. Thus, the item pool following this entire process consisted of 63 items.

Stage 3: Expert rating panel. Evidence for the content validity of the revised item pool was then evaluated via an expert rating panel. The expert rating panel consisted of six individuals (none of whom had any prior involvement in the current study), which satisfied Lynn’s (1986) recommendation that at least five judges be included to control against chance agreement. All of the experts held a doctorate and had experience conducting and publishing group dynamics-

related research in sport. Following informed consent (see Appendices F and I), participants completed an online survey (<http://fluidsurveys.com>) where they were asked to rate the degree to which each item corresponded to each of the proposed lower and higher-order dimensions. Participants were provided with brief descriptions of the proposed dimensions but, to reduce potential rating bias, were not told which items were thought to correspond to which dimensions. Following the protocol employed by Dunn, Bouffard, and Rogers (1999), participants rated each item on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 (*poor match*), 2 (*fair match*), 3 (*good match*), 4 (*very good match*), and 5 (*excellent match*). Participants were also given the opportunity to provide qualitative feedback.

Judgments on whether to retain, revise, or remove items were based jointly on Aiken's (1985) Validity (V) Index and the qualitative feedback obtained from the experts. V coefficients can range from 0-1, with coefficients closer to 1 providing evidence of greater levels of agreement among experts. In the current study V coefficients were compared to Aiken's right-tailed probabilities table, and coefficients larger than .79 were considered statistically significant at the .05 level. Fifty-nine of the 63 items evaluated had significant V coefficients that ranged from .79-1 on their intended lower-order dimensions, with generally narrow 95% confidence intervals (see Penfield & Giacobbi, 2004) that ranged from .59-1. Further, V coefficients associated with these items never exceeded .38 on non-intended lower-order dimensions. Thus, four items were initially removed for statistical reasons. Another three items were removed and four were revised due to the qualitative information gathered from the experts. In particular, the experts perceived that some of the words included in these items were not commonplace for athletes.

As noted above, participants also rated the extent to which each item corresponded to each of the two higher-order dimensions, although we were less concerned with these ratings than those corresponding to the lower-order dimensions. With the exception of one item, all items thought to represent mental guidance, task instruction, acceptance-and-confirmation, counselling, and friendship had significant V coefficients that ranged from .79-1 on their intended higher-order dimension, with 95% confidence intervals that ranged from .59-1. Further, V coefficients associated with these items never exceeded .33 on their non-intended higher-order dimension. Therefore, the above-mentioned item was removed.

One item thought to represent role modeling did not significantly map onto either instrumental or psychosocial mentoring. The remaining items hypothesized to represent role modeling did significantly map onto their intended higher-order dimension (i.e., psychosocial), yet also had moderate (albeit non-significant) V coefficients on instrumental mentoring. Given that mentoring functions naturally overlap to some degree (Beres & Dixon, 2014; Hoffmann et al., 2017; Kram, 1988), we ascertained that it would be inappropriate to revise or remove any items at this stage of the research based on experts' views that they did not clearly align with psychosocial mentoring only.

Although the items thought to represent coach relations had consistently larger V coefficients on their intended higher-order dimension (i.e., instrumental) than their non-intended higher-order dimension, none of the items significantly mapped onto instrumental mentoring. Based on feedback from the expert rating panel, we revised the coach relations items where possible to emphasize the task-based nature of protégés' interactions with their coaches.

Finally, three items hypothesized to represent career assistance had significant V coefficients that ranged from .83-.92 on their intended higher-order dimension (i.e.,

instrumental), with 95% confidence intervals that ranged from .64-.98. Additionally, V coefficients associated with these items did not exceed .33 on their non-intended higher-order dimension. However, the remaining three items thought to represent career assistance did not significantly map onto instrumental mentoring. One of these items was revised based on expert feedback, while the other two were not modified as no discernable difference in terms of content could be identified between these two items and the three items that significantly mapped onto instrumental mentoring. In summary, stage 3 led to the removal of eight items and the revision of 10 items, resulting in an item pool comprising 55 items that was used for phase 3.

Phase 3: CFA, ESEM, Hierarchical ESEM, and Measurement Invariance

In phase 3 athletes completed an initial 55-item version of the AMQ through an online survey platform (<http://fluidsurveys.com>). The psychometric properties of the AMQ were first explored using both CFA and ESEM approaches. Though CFA has long been used for the evaluation of latent variables in the field of sport and exercise psychology, its highly restrictive nature (i.e., forcing cross-loadings on non-intended factors to be exactly zero) tends to be unrealistic for applied research (Myers, Ntoumanis, Gunnell, Gucciardi, & Lee, 2017). ESEM (see Asparouhov & Muthén, 2009), however, allows items to load on all non-intended factors while still producing model fit statistics. Myers et al. (2017) recommended that researchers use ESEM for instruments with correlated factors; thus, this approach was considered ideal given mentoring functions have been known to overlap in various settings (Beres & Dixon, 2014; Hoffmann et al., 2017; Kram, 1988). It should be noted that while an ESEM model with better fit statistics should be favored over a CFA model, in cases where ESEM and CFA models have similar fit, the CFA model should be favored due to parsimony (Marsh, Morin, Parker, & Kaur, 2014). Given the results favored the ESEM model (see Results section below), the hierarchical

structure of the AMQ was subsequently explored using hierarchical ESEM (ESEM-within-CFA; see Marsh et al. 2014; Morin, Marsh, & Nagengast, 2013 for an overview of this relatively novel approach). Briefly, in this approach the parameter estimates from the first-order ESEM solution are used as starting values to estimate the hierarchical ESEM model (Marsh et al., 2014). Finally, using ESEM, configural, metric, and scalar invariance was examined to determine if the underlying factor structure of the AMQ was the same across groups. Marsh, Parker, and Morin (2016) noted that these three tests of measurement invariance are fundamental for latent variable models and the assessment of latent means.

Participants. The participants were 377 (217 females, 160 males) Canadian varsity-level ($n = 266$) and National team ($n = 111$) athletes who self-identified as having been peer mentored by other athletes. Participants ranged from 17-51 years of age, with an average age of 21.68 years ($SD = 4.87$). These athletes competed in a wide variety of sports and, based on Evans, Eys, and Bruner's (2012) typology of sport team types, could be classified as members of either integrated (e.g., ice hockey), segregated (e.g., baseball), collective (e.g., varsity-level cross-country), cooperative (e.g., varsity-level swimming), or contrient (e.g., national level boxing) sport teams.

Procedure. A total of 1,984 varsity-level athletes from five Canadian universities (not including the authors' institution) were individually emailed by the lead author and invited to complete an online mentoring survey. These particular athletes were invited because their contact information was made publicly available by their respective universities.² Additionally,

² Due to institutional ethics board policies, varsity-level athletes from Canadian universities (not including those competing for the lead authors' university) could only be recruited to participate in the current study through direct invitation from the lead author. Thus, requesting that university coaches or athletic directors forward along a recruitment email to their athletes was not an option under the clearance that was granted.

approximately 380 varsity-level athletes from the authors' institution were invited to participate through a recruitment email that was forwarded along to athletes by the institution's Athletic Director. Finally, roughly 1,800 Canadian National team athletes were invited to participate through a recruitment email that was forwarded along to athletes by AthletesCan (an organization that supports Canada's National team athletes).³ Thus, the total number of athletes invited to participate in the study was approximately 4,164 (see Appendices G and J). Athletes were informed that they needed to be a minimum of 17 years of age to participate in the study. Seventeen is the youngest age at which an individual can compete in Canadian intercollegiate athletics.

Of the 4,164 athletes that were invited to participate, 542 electronically consented to partake in the study (response rate of roughly 13%). Athletes were asked if they had ever considered another athlete as a peer mentor at some point in their athletic careers. Based on Hoffmann et al.'s (2017) definition, the following description of a peer athlete mentor was provided to athletes: "A peer athlete mentor would be considered a more experienced and knowledgeable athlete who served as a trusted role model to you, assisted you in your pursuit of goal achievement and advancement in sport, and/or supported you in your personal growth and development. A coach, family member, or someone with whom you have a romantic relationship would not be considered a peer athlete mentor." Ninety-eight athletes reported they had never been peer mentored and they were redirected to a different survey that was not related to the present study. The remaining 444 athletes indicated they had been peer mentored and they completed the initial version of the AMQ while reflecting on their best-ever peer athlete mentor. A screening of the responses resulted in the removal of 67 athletes whose data were unusable

³ It should be noted that a relatively small portion of these athletes would have been ineligible to participate in the current study due to age restrictions (i.e., being under the age of 17).

(i.e., athletes exited the online survey shortly after starting it). Thus, the final sample consisted of 377 peer mentored athletes. On average, these participants took 14.64 minutes ($SD = 29.37$) to complete the survey.

Analyses. Main analyses were performed in *Mplus* 8.0 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2017) and were conducted using the robust maximum likelihood estimator (MLR), which generates model fit statistics and standard errors that are robust against non-normally distributed data. We used oblique target rotation for the first-order ESEM analyses and “targeted” non-intended factor loadings to be close to 0 (i.e., ~ 0). We selected the target rotation criterion because it is more effective than the often used geomin rotation when models contain three or more factors (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2009). For the first-order ESEM analyses, each item was required to have a factor loading $\geq .32$ on its intended factor and could not have a cross-loading $\geq .32$ on non-intended factors (Rathwell & Young, 2016; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

We used several indices to evaluate model fit: chi-square statistic (χ^2); comparative fit index (CFI); standardized root mean square residual (SRMR); and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). It is well documented that the χ^2 good-of-fit-index is sensitive to sample size (e.g., Kline, 2005; Marsh, 2007), thus obtaining a non-significant ($p > .05$) χ^2 statistic in the present study was unlikely. Based on commonly adopted recommendations (e.g., Browne & Cudeck, 1992; Marsh, 2007), we therefore employed the following criteria as indication of acceptable model fit: CFI $\geq .90$; SRMR $\leq .08$; and RMSEA $\leq .08$. The more stringent criteria of Hu and Bentler (1999) were adopted as evidence of good model fit: CFI $\geq .95$; SRMR $\leq .08$; RMSEA $\leq .06$. To compare the CFA and ESEM approaches (following all post-hoc modifications) we employed the Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 difference test (SBS $\Delta\chi^2$; Satorra & Bentler, 2001) and considered Akaike’s information criterion (AIC), Bayesian

information criterion (BIC), the sample-size adjusted BIC (BIC_{SSA}), and changes in the CFI, SRMR, and RMSEA. A statistically significant $SBS\Delta\chi^2$ and smaller AIC, BIC, and BIC_{SSA} values suggest a better fitting model (Gucciardi & Zyphur, 2016). There is support for a more constrained model when the CFI decreases by less than .010, the SRMR increases by less than .030, and the RMSEA increases by less than .015 (Chen, 2007). We similarly considered the $SBS\Delta\chi^2$ and changes in the CFI, SRMR, and RMSEA for the testing of measurement invariance. Because the $SBS\Delta\chi^2$ is even more problematic than the χ^2 (Marsh et al., 2016), we primarily relied on Chen's (2007) guidelines for the comparison of models during the testing of measurement invariance. Finally, given the criticisms surrounding the use of Cronbach's alpha (e.g., Martin, Beasley, & Guerrero, in press), we computed composite reliability (CR) scores (Raykov, 1997) to estimate the reliability of latent factors for the CFA and ESEM solutions.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Inspection of the data revealed one missing data point (.005% of the dataset), and it was handled with the MLR estimator. Although the MLR estimator is robust against non-normally distributed data, we identified and removed two items that had severely non-normal distributions (item 1: skewness = -2.50, kurtosis = 8.04; item 2: skewness = -2.19, kurtosis = 6.47). Severely non-normal data have skewness and kurtosis values above ± 2 and ± 7 , respectively (In'nami & Koizumi, 2013). All remaining items had skewness values that did not exceed -1.98 and kurtosis values that did not exceed 5.89. We continued item-level analyses through the examination of inter-item correlations (i.e., examination of item redundancy). Based on Tabachnick and Fidell's (2013) recommendations, inter-item correlations for each of the proposed eight latent factors were required to be between $r = .30$ and $r = .70$. This criterion led to the removal of 11 items that

had inter-item correlations ranging from $r = .71$ to $r = .78$. Therefore, we proceeded using a total of 42 items for our analyses.

Descriptive Statistics

Ninety-one participants (24.1%) reported that they considered four or more athletes as peer mentors over the course of their athletic careers, 60 (15.9%) considered three athletes as peer mentors, 139 (36.9%) considered two athletes as peer mentors, and 87 (23.1%) considered only one athlete as a peer mentor. Regarding their best-ever peer athlete mentors, 316 participants (83.8%) indicated that they were involved in informal mentoring relationships with this individual, while 61 (16.2%) reported they were involved in formal mentoring relationships with this person. One hundred and thirty-eight participants (36.6%) reported they were currently being mentored by their best-ever peer athlete mentors and 239 (63.4%) indicated they were mentored in the past. The majority of participants ($n = 344$; 91.2%) reported that their athlete mentors were the same gender as them; thirty-three (8.8%) indicated their athlete mentors were the opposite gender to them. Most participants ($n = 344$; 91.2%) were younger than their athlete mentors, with few indicating that they were the same age ($n = 25$; 6.6%) or older ($n = 8$; 2.1%). Those who were younger were, on average, 3.82 years ($SD = 4.00$) younger than their mentors; those who were older were, on average, 4.25 years ($SD = 5.31$) older. The majority of participants ($n = 363$; 96.3%) reported they competed in the same sports as their athlete mentors, with only 14 (3.7%) indicating they competed in different sports. Finally, 234 participants (62.1%) indicated they played the same positions as their athlete mentors and 134 (37.9%) reported they played different positions. Descriptive statistics and latent variable correlations for the factors measured by the AMQ (following post-hoc modifications) are presented in Table 4.

Main Analyses

Eight-factor CFA and ESEM analyses. We tested a 42-item, eight-factor model (i.e., mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, career assistance, role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counselling, and friendship) using both CFA and ESEM approaches. The CFA model fell short of acceptable model fit, $\chi^2(791) = 1656.80, p < .001, CFI = .891, SRMR = .057, RMSEA = .054$. The ESEM model indicated better fit than the CFA model, $\chi^2(553) = 1277.34, p < .001, CFI = .909, SRMR = .023, RMSEA = .059$. However, the a priori factor structure was not supported. Mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, career assistance, role modeling, one uninterpretable factor with no loadings $\geq .32$, a counselling factor comprising some intended items and one friendship item, and a factor comprising all friendship items, two acceptance-and-confirmation items, and two counselling items emerged. Further, one acceptance-and-confirmation item cross-loaded (i.e., .36) on mental guidance and one mental guidance item cross-loaded (i.e., .32) on career assistance. Consequently, and following Rathwell and Young's (2016) approach, post-hoc modifications were conducted through a series of ESEM analyses.

Post-hoc modifications. Acceptance-and-confirmation was deemed a problematic factor, thus we tested a seven-factor (35-item) ESEM model with this factor (3 items) removed, with the two non-significantly loading and cross-loading counselling items removed, with the cross-loading friendship item removed, and with the cross-loading mental guidance item removed. The revised model yielded improved model fit statistics, $\chi^2(371) = 714.19, p < .001, CFI = .944, SRMR = .022, RMSEA = .050$. All items significantly loaded on their intended factors, but one factor was uninterpretable with no loadings $\geq .32$ and one factor comprised all counselling and friendship items.

Next, we tested a six-factor (35-item) ESEM model (i.e., mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, career assistance, role modeling, and a factor composed of counselling and friendship items). Theoretically, counselling and friendship items should be closely related as they represent the psychosocial aspect of mentoring and share an underlying focus on personal and emotional support. The six-factor model produced acceptable-to-good fit statistics, $\chi^2(400) = 785.86$, $p < .001$, CFI = .937, SRMR = .025, RMSEA = .051. Nonetheless, inspection of the standardized factor loadings revealed that one mental guidance item cross-loaded (i.e., .52) on the counselling/friendship factor (hereafter called friendship).

A revised six-factor (34-item) ESEM model with the cross-loading mental guidance item removed produced good fit statistics, $\chi^2(372) = 698.96$, $p < .001$, CFI = .944, SRMR = .025, RMSEA = .048. All items had significant ($p < .01$) loadings of .32 or above on their intended factors and cross-loadings on non-intended factors below .32. The same model using a CFA approach suggested acceptable-to-good model fit, $\chi^2(512) = 1029.38$, $p < .001$, CFI = .911, SRMR = .055, RMSEA = .052. A comparison of the ESEM and CFA approaches indicated that the ESEM solution resulted in a significantly better fitting model, $SBS\Delta\chi^2(140) = 335.20$, $p < .001$. The AIC and BIC_{SSA} values supported this conclusion (AIC [ESEM] = 37743.58, AIC [CFA] = 37961.75; BIC_{SSA} [ESEM] = 37938.77, BIC_{SSA} [CFA] = 38050.61), as did the changes in the CFI ($\Delta = -.033$) and SRMR ($\Delta = +.030$), whereas the BIC (BIC [ESEM] = 38754.17, BIC [CFA] = 38421.83) and changes in the RMSEA ($\Delta = +.004$) favoured the more parsimonious CFA solution. CR scores for both the CFA and ESEM solutions are reported in Table 4. A visual of the CFA and ESEM factor structures is presented in Table 5. The final version of the AMQ can be found in Appendix D.

Hierarchical ESEM (ESEM-within-CFA). To gain insight into the hierarchical structure of the six latent factors, we also tested a hierarchical ESEM model where a higher-order instrumental factor exerted direct effects on mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, and career assistance and a higher-order psychosocial factor exerted direct effects on role modeling and friendship. This structure aligned with our qualitative results (phase 1) and the instrumental-psychosocial distinction conceptualized in the area of organizational psychology (i.e., Kram, 1980). The model fit statistics for the hierarchical ESEM model were nearly identical to those from the first-order ESEM model, $\chi^2(380) = 700.01, p < .001, CFI = .945, SRMR = .026, RMSEA = .047$. Mental guidance (.80), coach relations (.69), and task instruction (.53) loaded significantly ($p < .001$) on the higher-order instrumental function, but career assistance (.37) just failed to reach statistical significance ($p = .076$). Role modeling (.70) and friendship (.67) loaded significantly ($p < .001$) on the higher-order psychosocial function. Given the results pertaining to career assistance, we tested an alternative model where a higher-order instrumental factor exerted direct effects on mental guidance, coach relations, and task instruction and a higher-order psychosocial factor exerted direct effects on career assistance, role modeling, and friendship. Model fit statistics were virtually the same as those from the original hierarchical ESEM model, $\chi^2(380) = 701.00, p < .001, CFI = .945, SRMR = .026, RMSEA = .047$, and career assistance loaded to a lesser degree (.34; $p = .119$) in this model compared to the original model.

Measurement invariance. Measurement invariance was examined using ESEM with target rotation. In the first step, we examined configural invariance, which tests the fit of the factor structure when no invariance constraints are imposed across groups (Marsh et al., 2016). In the second step, we examined metric invariance, which tests the invariance of factor loadings across groups (Marsh et al., 2016). In the third step, we examined scalar invariance, which tests

the invariance of factor loadings and item intercepts across groups (Marsh et al., 2016). Metric invariance was tested once configural invariance was established, and scalar invariance was tested once metric invariance was established. Strong measurement invariance is implied when all three tests demonstrate invariance across multiple groups. All three tests were conducted with respect to level of competition (i.e., national team vs. varsity level), mentoring status (i.e., currently mentored vs. mentored in the past), and gender (i.e., male vs. female). It was important to assess level of competition to ensure that the AMQ was suitable for use with both Canadian National and varsity-level athletes. It was also vital to assess mentoring status to ensure that those athletes who were peer mentored in the past viewed the underlying factor structure of the AMQ in a similar way to those athletes who were currently involved in peer mentoring relationships. Finally, we assessed gender because it is considered a potentially influential variable in both the mentoring (e.g., Eby et al., 2013) and group dynamics in sport (e.g., Benson & Eys, 2017) literature. Findings are discussed below and summarized in Table 6.

Competition level. The model fit statistics for models 1a, 1b, and 1c indicated generally acceptable model fit. Though the CFI value for model 1a (i.e., configural invariance) was .896 and fell just short of the acceptable cut-off of .900, the SRMR (.030) and RMSEA (.071) values had good and acceptable fit statistics, respectively. The $SBS\Delta\chi^2$ was non-significant for model 1b (i.e., metric invariance), but was significant for model 1c (i.e., scalar invariance). All changes in fit indices fell within acceptable ranges as suggested by Chen (2007). In sum, we found support for configural, metric, and scalar invariance.

Mentoring status. The model fit statistics for models 2a, 2b, and 2c indicated acceptable model fit. The $SBS\Delta\chi^2$ for models 2b (i.e., metric invariance) and 2c (i.e., scalar invariance) was

non-significant. All changes in fit indices fell within acceptable ranges as suggested by Chen (2007). Taken together, we found support for configural, metric, and scalar invariance.

Gender. The model fit statistics for models 3a, 3b, and 3c indicated acceptable model fit. The $SBS\Delta\chi^2$ was non-significant for model 3b, but was significant for model 3c. All changes in fit indices fell within acceptable ranges as suggested by Chen (2007). Overall, we found support for configural, metric, and scalar invariance.

Discussion

Using a multi-phase approach, the general objective of the present study was to develop a psychometrically sound, sport-specific questionnaire to measure peer athlete mentoring functions. Despite evidence from phases 1 and 2 pointing to an eight-factor model, the results of phase 3 indicated that a six-factor model was most appropriate. It may be that the initially hypothesized eight-factor model is simply not empirically distinguishable under robust statistical analyses (i.e., ESEM and CFA). Regardless, the 34-item, six-factor AMQ is a significant contribution to the literature and provides researchers and practitioners with a viable measurement tool to assess peer athlete mentoring functions.

Previous research failed to support the first-order factor structure of a mentoring inventory (i.e., MRI; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990) from organizational psychology with a sample of intercollegiate athletes (i.e., Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016b), which led to the suggestion that some of Kram's (1980) specific mentoring functions were not relevant to an athlete population. Fortunately, the findings of the present study offer preliminary construct validity evidence for the AMQ's scores. The AMQ measures six specific peer athlete mentoring functions including mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, career assistance, role modeling, and friendship. Mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction and career assistance are newly

identified functions that were understandably not pertinent to Kram's classification of mentoring functions for organizational contexts, yet appear to be important mentoring functions amongst athletes. These four functions are briefly described in Table 3. The role modeling function, which was identified through Kram's research, serves as a distinct factor in the AMQ and is also described in Table 3. Finally, the friendship function emerged as a result of the grouping of two of Kram's mentoring functions: counselling and friendship. These functions both share an explicit focus on the personal well-being of the protégé, which reasonably explains why they merged to form one factor in the AMQ. We describe the newly developed friendship function as a type of mentoring where the mentor acts as a trusted friend to the protégé, assists the protégé with any personal, non-performance related matters, and has enjoyable social interactions with him or her within or outside of the sport context.

Our results also stay true to mentoring research from organizational psychology and suggest that five of the six first-order factors measured by the AMQ are represented by two higher-order factors. Indeed, the instrumental-psychosocial distinction conceptualized by Kram (1980) has served as the favored theoretical foundation for mentoring research and questionnaire development in organizational settings for several decades (e.g., Eby et al., 2013; Noe, 1988; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). One noteworthy finding from our hierarchical ESEM analysis was that career assistance did not fall under the instrumental function, nor the psychosocial function. Although this finding did not align with the a priori factor structure, it was not necessarily unexpected given the expert panels' views that some career assistance items did not significantly correspond to instrumental mentoring (see phase 2, stage 3). Additional research is needed to understand the role of career assistance as it relates to instrumental and psychosocial mentoring. Future research may determine that career assistance is in fact an instrumental function;

however, it is also possible that this specific function is distinct from both higher-order functions. This certainly presents an interesting avenue for future research.

While it is important to acknowledge the existence of two higher-order factors (i.e., instrumental and psychosocial), we strongly encourage researchers to examine the six first-order factors measured by the AMQ. It is important to investigate all six of the specific functions because they can shed greater light on the intricacies of peer mentoring relationships between athletes than can the two general mentoring functions alone. Unfortunately, due to the structure of measurement tools often used in organizational psychology (e.g., MFS; Noe, 1988), the bulk of mentoring research in this area has been limited to understanding the extent to which mentors provide general instrumental and psychosocial mentoring to their protégés (e.g., Allen et al., 2004; Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). It is our hope that the specific functions identified in the present study will spur research in the area of peer athlete mentoring.

From a statistical perspective the more flexible and realistic ESEM approach used for our analyses resulted in significantly better model fit compared to the traditional CFA approach. Moving forward, researchers should adopt an ESEM approach when using the AMQ. However, further comparing and contrasting of ESEM and CFA approaches with this inventory is encouraged. On a related note, we also used ESEM to conduct measurement invariance testing and provided support for configural, metric, and scalar invariance across multiple groups (i.e., competition level, mentoring status, and gender). Marsh et al. (2016) noted that sport science researchers often fail to consider whether the underlying factor structures of questionnaires are the same for different groups or over time. Thus, providing evidence of strong measurement invariance is a strength of the present study and highlights the versatility of the AMQ.

Future Considerations

Gathering evidence for the criterion validity of the AMQ's scores is a logical future direction. To date, there is quantitative research indicating that receipt of psychosocial mentoring is positively related to protégé satisfaction (Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016b). There is also qualitative research suggesting that being peer mentored as an athlete leads to elevated sport confidence and performance levels, and enhances protégés' willingness to mentor their peers (Hoffmann et al., 2017). Consequently, gaining insight into whether the mentoring functions assessed by the AMQ serve as antecedents to the aforementioned variables and other theoretically-related constructs such as athlete motivation and athlete commitment is a key consideration for future research.

As indicated earlier, the vast majority of participants in the current study were involved in peer mentoring relationships that emerged naturally and informally. Therefore, it is possible that the underlying factor structure of the AMQ is predominantly relevant to those athletes engaged in informal peer athlete mentoring relationships. Determining if the factor structure of the AMQ can be replicated with a sample of athletes who have been formally placed in mentoring partnerships with other athletes would be a worthwhile endeavour for future researchers. However, recruiting large numbers of athletes from formal peer mentoring programs presents a challenge for researchers. Initiatives such as the CIBC Team Next program, where promising Canadian amateur athletes are paired with high-profile athletes in partnership with AthletesCan, might provide fruitful research opportunities in the future.

In the current study, we present preliminary construct validity evidence for the AMQ's scores with a sample of Canadian National team and varsity-level athletes aged 17 years or older. Testing the factor structure of the AMQ with samples of elite athletes from other countries or cultures would provide further support for the factorial validity of this questionnaire. With

respect to culture, for instance, it has been noted that individuals' attitudes, behaviours, and values can be a function of whether they are members of individually or collectively oriented societies (e.g., Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). In contrast to individualistic societies such as Canada and the United States where independence from others is valued and autonomy is emphasized, collectivist societies such as Japan and China value interdependence with others and aim for cohesive social relationships (Ponnusamy, Martin, & Guerrero, in press). Viewed through this lens, it is conceivable that athletes from collectivist societies may interpret peer athlete mentoring functions differently than those from individualistic societies. Future research addressing this subject is certainly warranted.

Conclusion

There is a small but growing body of literature highlighting the benefits of being peer mentored as an athlete (e.g., Hoffmann et al., 2017). However, the examination of peer athlete mentoring is in its early stages compared to the extensive body of research from the domain of organizational psychology. The absence of a sport-specific questionnaire to measure peer athlete mentoring functions is a potential explanation for the lack of research in sport. Hence, the development of the AMQ is a necessary addition to the peer athlete mentoring literature and may stimulate empirical research in this area. From a practical standpoint, coaches and sport psychology consultants may find the AMQ to be a valuable tool to measure the degree to which their athletes provide mentoring functions to one another. The AMQ could be used to assess the mentoring provided amongst team members over the course of a season or from season-to-season and could also be used to identify experienced athletes who are capable of effectively serving in mentorship roles to newcomers.

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CHAPTER 4

MENTORING IDENTITY AND THE MOTIVATION TO MENTOR: A CASE STUDY OF A FORMER HIGHLY-REGARDED PEER ATHLETE MENTOR

According to Ragins (2016), the “mantras that ‘Everyone who makes it has a mentor,’ ‘Good managers are good mentors,’ and ‘Mentor for excellence!’ permeate the workplace” (p. 228). These mantras highlight the intuitive appeal of mentoring in today’s world. Indeed, at their best, mentoring relationships can be transformative and enrich people’s lives and careers (Ragins, 2016). For this reason, it is not surprising that mentoring has been empirically investigated in contexts such as business, education, medicine, and sport (see Bloom, 2013 for a review).

In short, mentoring is defined as a process whereby a more experienced individual (i.e., the mentor) supports a less experienced individual (i.e., the protégé), with the purpose of assisting the protégé as he/she progresses through their career (Ragins, 2016; Weaver & Chelladurai, 1999). Mentoring relationships can emerge spontaneously and informally or they can develop in a formal manner due to organizational assignment/assistance (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). The examination of mentoring relationships originated in the field of organizational psychology, where Kram’s (1980) research in a business setting indicated that mentors supported their protégés through the use of two general mentoring functions: instrumental and psychosocial. Instrumental mentoring refers to helping protégés attain their career goals and advance through the ranks of their organizations. Mentors provide instrumental mentoring through five specific functions that include sponsor, coaching, exposure, protect, and challenging assignments. In contrast, psychosocial mentoring is used to help protégés develop from a personal standpoint both within and outside the organization. Mentors provide

psychosocial mentoring through four specific functions including role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counselling, and friendship. Suffice to say there is an extensive body of literature from organizational contexts highlighting the benefits of mentoring functions for protégés (e.g., job and career satisfaction, performance, motivation, sense of affiliation; Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004; Eby et al., 2013).

Relative to the abundance of mentoring research in organizational psychology (see Ragins & Kram, 2007 for an overview), there is limited research explicitly investigating mentoring in sport. The studies that do exist in sport have primarily focused on the mentoring practices of coaches (e.g., Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, & Salmela, 1998; Sawiuk, Taylor, Groom, 2017). However, there is emerging research pointing to the importance of peer-to-peer mentoring relationships between athletes (e.g., Cope, Eys, Beauchamp, Schinke, & Bosselut, 2011; Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016a, 2016b). Peer athlete mentoring is defined as:

A dynamic process in which a more experienced and knowledgeable athlete (i.e., mentor) serves as a trusted role model to another athlete (i.e., protégé), assists him/her in their pursuit of goal achievement and advancement in sport, and/or supports his/her personal growth and development. Athletes involved in the process have a nonfamilial and nonromantic relationship. (Hoffmann, Loughhead, & Bloom, 2017, p. 143-144)

Using a mentoring questionnaire from organizational psychology (i.e., Mentor Role Inventory; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990), research with peer mentored intercollegiate athletes who reflected on their experiences with their best-ever peer athlete mentor showed that protégé receipt of psychosocial mentoring was positively related to protégé satisfaction in terms of personal dedication and individual performance (Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016a). That is, protégés who felt they received greater psychosocial mentoring also reported greater satisfaction with their

commitment and performance. Another study examining the satisfaction levels of intercollegiate athletes indicated that those engaged in high quality peer mentoring relationships were more personally satisfied, more satisfied with the leadership of their coach, and more satisfied with their team members compared to those not involved in peer mentoring relationships (Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016b). In a qualitative study, the results of individual semi-structured interviews with 14 peer mentored athletes who competed at elite levels (e.g., Olympics) showed that protégés felt they benefitted from enhanced performance and confidence, and also indicated a willingness to mentor their peers, as a result of their mentoring experiences (Hoffmann, Loughhead, & Bloom, 2017). Further, using Kram's (1980) work from business as a theoretical framework, the results of the above study suggested that eight specific mentoring functions were relevant to peer athlete mentoring relationships. Specifically, it was found that peer athlete mentors provided four specific instrumental functions (i.e., mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, career assistance) and four specific psychosocial functions (i.e., role modeling, counselling, acceptance-and-confirmation, friendship) to their protégés. These findings were then used as the basis for the development of a questionnaire that assesses six peer athlete mentoring functions: mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, career assistance, role modeling, and friendship (Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2017).

The interviews with elite peer mentored athletes in the Hoffmann et al. (2017) study unexpectedly indicated that three of the 14 protégés considered the same individual as their peer athlete mentor. That is, despite never having been formally assigned to a mentoring partnership with this individual, these three Canadian National team track and field athletes (i.e., 2 females, 1 male) perceived that the same person (i.e., male) provided them with excellent support and guidance over their athletic careers. This unanticipated finding served as the impetus for

conducting the present study, wherein the purpose was to explore the experiences of this one former highly-regarded peer athlete mentor (i.e., the mentor identified by three athletes in Hoffmann et al., 2017). Examining the mentor's experience in a peer mentorship role is timely given that, to date, sport researchers have focused solely on protégés' perceptions of peer athlete mentoring relationships (i.e., Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016a, 2016b; Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2017; Hoffmann et al., 2017). Relying merely on protégés' perspectives highlights a significant gap in the peer athlete mentoring literature, particularly since there is some evidence from organizational contexts showing that mentors and protégés have different accounts of their mentoring relationships (e.g., Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Waters, 2004).

Coincidentally, the tendency to focus on protégés' experiences, while largely overlooking mentors' perspectives of mentoring relationships, is also a trend found in the organizational psychology and career development literature (Allen, 2007). Nonetheless, there is a body of research aimed at understanding mentoring from the mentor's point of view. Kram (1988) was among the first to report that some mentoring relationships are mutually enhancing. Specifically, beyond the benefits accrued by protégés, Kram found that some mentors experienced deep satisfaction and a heightened sense of self-worth from passing on wisdom and knowledge to others, as well as respect and recognition from peers for their contributions to their companies. More recently, Ghosh and Reio Jr. (2013) conducted a meta-analysis of subjective career benefits associated with mentoring for mentors. Mentors who provided: (a) greater instrumental mentoring reported greater job performance and career success, (b) greater psychosocial mentoring reported greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and career success, and (c) greater role modeling mentoring reported greater job satisfaction and

performance. Moreover, mentors reported greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment than those who had not mentored.

While the benefits accrued from mentoring highlight the advantages of being a mentor, they shed only partial light on the reasons *why* individuals may be motivated to mentor others. Given the finding in both organizational (e.g., Ragins & Cotton, 1993) and sport settings (i.e., Hoffmann et al., 2017) linking previous experience as a protégé with a willingness to mentor, it is possible that individuals are motivated to mentor because they appreciate the benefits of mentoring and are eager to give back to their respective discipline. Other research in the organizational setting has pointed to the role that positive affectivity, altruism, opportunities for interaction in the workplace, and employee development reward systems enact in one's desire to mentor others (Aryee, Chay, & Chew, 1996). Allen (2003) showed that mentors were motivated to engage in mentorship to benefit others (i.e., protégé, organization), but were also motivated to mentor for reasons related to self-enhancement (extrinsically-oriented) and self-gratification (intrinsically-oriented). Through interviews with formal mentors in organizational contexts, Janssen, van Vuuren, and de Jong (2014) expanded upon Allen's findings by deductively grounding mentors' 'self-focused motives' for mentoring in self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Thus, the authors reported that mentors' motives ranged along a continuum from intrinsic motivation to subtypes of extrinsic motivation (i.e., external, introjection, identification, integration). The results also showed that mentors were motivated to support protégés for reasons that benefitted protégés and their organizations, and because of the gains associated with this type of relationship. Finally, it has been proposed that mentors may be motivated to assist protégés because they adopt relational 'mentoring identities' (Ragins, 2009). Given that relational identities can be particularistic or generalized (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007), Ragins (2009)

noted that mentors might hold generic ('I am a mentor') and/or particular ('I am Rebecca's mentor') relational mentoring identities, which may underlie one's motivation to mentor. To this end, and based on the extant literature, it is conceivable that experienced athletes may be motivated to mentor their peers for a host of reasons, including for personal gains, for the benefit of protégés, and because they embrace one or more mentoring identities.

Consequently, the purpose of the present study was to explore the experiences of one former highly-regarded peer athlete mentor. Specifically, using a case study design, we focused on one individual's constructed stories about his experiences peer mentoring athletes in sport. The main research questions guiding this study were: (a) What kind of mentoring identities, if any, were constructed and adopted by this former peer athlete mentor? (b) Why and how did he support and mentor other athletes? (c) What did he gain from mentoring these athletes? It is our hope that the results of the present study will extend mentoring research by shedding light on what it means to be a peer athlete mentor—a perspective that has yet to be explored in the literature. Further, these results may be used to help explain why athlete mentors engage in peer mentoring relationships in sport.

Method

Philosophical Assumptions and Design

The philosophical assumptions that underpinned this study were ontological relativism and epistemological constructionism. That is, all stages of this study adhered to the assumption that social reality is multiple and knowledge is subjectively constructed. Because we were interested in gaining an in-depth understanding of one former highly-regarded peer athlete mentor, we followed Stake's (2005) guidelines for conducting an intrinsic case study. As noted by Stake, an intrinsic case study is undertaken because of a special interest in a particular case

rather than a desire to advance knowledge about a generic phenomenon. In the present research, we were interested in the particularity, complexity, and lived experiences of one individual considered by several elite athletes as a former peer athlete mentor.

Examining a single case does not lend itself well to claims of generalization. However, our goal in conducting the present research was not to generalize the results to other cases. Flyvbjerg (2006) has argued that formal generalization is but one effort to generate knowledge or understanding. He contended that a purely descriptive case study is valuable to scientific innovation even when no attempt at generalization is made. According to Flyvbjerg, “the advantage of large samples is breadth, whereas their problem is one of depth. For the case study, the situation is the reverse. Both approaches are necessary for a sound development of social science” (p. 241). Indeed, a number of sport psychology researchers have adopted single case study designs to make advancements in their respective areas of research (e.g., Gibson & Groom, 2017; Rathwell & Young, 2015).

Participant

At the time of data collection, Nick (a pseudonym) was in his early-to-mid thirties and resided in Canada. He had been retired from competitive track and field for several years and was currently employed in a non-sport sector. Nick’s achievements in track and field were extensive, including having won a gold medal at a major international sporting event. We have intentionally provided limited demographic information about Nick so as to not reveal his identity through deductive disclosure.

Procedure and Data Collection

Ethical clearance to conduct the present study was obtained from the lead author’s institution. The lead author sent Nick a recruitment email inviting him to participate in the

present study (see Appendices L and M). Nick was informed that three athletes had named him as their peer athlete mentor in a previous study (see Hoffmann et al., 2017) and that we were interested in understanding his perspective and experience serving in a mentorship role. The identities of the three athletes were not provided to Nick at this time for confidentiality reasons. Once Nick agreed to participate in the current study, the lead author contacted the three peer mentored athletes (described below) and requested their permission to reveal their identities to Nick. All three athletes agreed to this request. Gaining permission from the three peer mentored athletes to reveal their identities to Nick was pivotal for the present study because it allowed us to inquire more deeply into Nick's mentoring experiences (i.e., in relation to each of the three protégés), which undoubtedly yielded richer information.

The three athletes who noted they considered Nick as their athlete mentor included one male (Phillip) and two females (Amy and Alisha). Each protégé was assigned a pseudonym to protect their confidentiality. These three athletes were currently in their late twenties and had achieved tremendous success in track and field. All three of these athletes represented Canada at the 2016 Rio Summer Olympics, in addition to numerous other international sporting events. Amy and Alisha were once members of the same intercollegiate team as Nick and had developed close, personal friendships with him over time. Nick, Amy, and Alisha competed in different events from one another. Phillip competed in the same event as Nick and developed a relationship with him as a result of training camps/sessions they both attended. Nick, Phillip, Amy, and Alisha all competed in individual track events⁴.

We followed the 'three-interview series' approach described by Seidman (2006) to collect our data. The advantage of conducting multiple interviews is that "each interview

⁴ For confidentiality reasons, neither Nick's event nor the protégés' events are reported here. In particular, revealing Nick and Phillip's event would likely expose Phillip's identity.

provides a foundation of detail that helps illumine the next” (Seidman, 2006, p. 19). The interviews themselves were semi-structured and open-ended in nature, an approach that was selected with the intention of yielding a richer account of Nick’s experiences than what would be gleaned from a more structured interview format (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). An interview is effective because it can induce a conversation between two or more individuals that allows participants to tell their stories (Smith & Sparkes, 2016); thus it was considered an appropriate method of data collection given the current study’s purpose and assumptions that knowledge is co-constructed between the interviewer and interviewee. Interviews were conducted face-to-face at a mutually agreed upon location and time, and occurred over a four-week period. Altogether, the interviews totaled 4hrs and 50min of dialogue. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim by the lead author, resulting in 81 pages of single-spaced text.

We created an interview guide comprising three sections (see Appendix K). The first section (interview 1) consisted of opening questions designed to gain insight into Nick as a person, his experiences in sport, and his potential experiences being mentored by others (e.g., “Tell me how you progressed through your athletic career.”). The second section (interview 2) contained main questions that focused on Nick’s experiences mentoring his protégés, his motives for mentoring them, and understanding whether he adopted a ‘mentoring identity’ (e.g., “Do you believe being a mentor was part of who you were as an athlete?”). The third section (interview 3) included main and summary questions that focused on what Nick gained from his mentoring relationships and how his relationships with his protégés changed as he transitioned out of sport (e.g., “What did you gain from these mentoring relationships?”). Probe questions (Patton, 2002) were used during the interviews to elicit further detail when necessary. The researcher began interviews 2 and 3 by summarizing the previous interview and offered Nick the opportunity to

elaborate on his earlier comments. Further, all three interviews ended with a question that gave Nick the opportunity to share any concluding thoughts (e.g., “Would you like to add anything else before we end our interview today?”). Although we created an interview guide to provide some structure to the conversations, it should be noted that we did not place restrictions on the direction or flow of conversation between the interviewer and Nick. That is, some topics were covered earlier or later in the interview process than originally anticipated and the reader should not assume that all questions in the interview guide were discussed in the order presented.

Data Analysis

We followed Smith’s (2016a, 2016b) recommendations for conducting a thematic narrative analysis, which aligned with the epistemological (i.e., social constructionism) and ontological (i.e., relativism) assumptions that underpinned this study. We adopted the stance of ‘story analyst’ (as opposed to ‘storyteller’), whereby we focused on the ‘whats’ of Nick’s stories; that is, the content within stories (Smith, 2016b). With this type of analysis, like other forms of narrative analysis, the researcher is encouraged to guard against over-coding the data (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). As such, the goal of the analysis is not to fragment the data but rather to keep the larger story, and the detail contained within it, intact.

The inductive thematic narrative analysis in this study was lead by the lead author. First, MH fully immersed himself in the data over the four-week period in which the interviews were conducted. Transcribing, preliminary note taking and continuous writing of the research report occurred over this period. Second, MH participated in narrative indwelling in which the transcripts were read several times and further impressions of the data were generated and recorded. Third, narrative themes were identified. Narratives themes can be thought of as patterns that flow through stories. Fourth, each theme was labelled and a description of the

content within each theme was created. Themes were then compared and contrasted with relevant theory and research to further enhance interpretations of the data.

Quality Standards

In line with our philosophical assumptions, we used a relativist approach to selecting criteria that we feel can be used by the reader to assess the quality of our research (Burke, 2016; Smith & McGannon, 2017). Researchers who adopt a relativist approach use criteria that are not “fixed, rigid, or predetermined before the study, but rather are open-ended” (Smith & McGannon, 2017, p. 16), which provides them with flexibility to apply criteria that best represent their study. We chose the following criteria that readers can use to judge the quality of this work: worthy topic, sincerity, credibility, and coherence.

First, we feel this research is a *worthy topic* because there are no known studies exploring peer athlete mentoring from the mentor’s perspective, a point that was also highlighted in the review of literature. Moreover, we studied Nick, a former athlete who was identified by three of his peers as being an excellent mentor. Thus, providing a thorough description of Nick’s perceptions of and experiences with peer athlete mentoring appears to be a strong starting point for this line of inquiry. Second, this work attempted to demonstrate *sincerity* through reflexivity, which involved the assistance of a critical friend (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). JC served as the critical friend in this study. JC had not previously conducted research on peer mentoring between athletes, which was a strength of this study given that frequent collaborators are often theoretically homogenous with respect to their backgrounds and interests (Smith & Sparkes, 2016), which can lead to unintentional bias. MH and JC met seven times throughout the conceptualization of the study and collection and analysis of data to help ensure that findings were not being overlooked or overemphasized. Third, MH spent considerable time conversing

with Nick over the course of the three meetings, as well as with the protégés he mentored (in another study; Hoffmann et al., 2017), which enhances the *credibility* of this study. Moreover, MH invested a great deal of time transcribing and listening to the interviews, as well as analyzing and interpreting the data. All of these steps demonstrate MH's in-depth knowledge of the topic, participant, and data, which adds to the credibility of the study and conclusions that can be drawn from it. Fourth, and finally, we achieved *coherence* by conducting a philosophically aligned study, which spanned the epistemological and ontological underpinnings, methodology, methods of data collection and analysis, as well as the criteria selected for judging the quality of this study. That is, all decisions made in this study stemmed from our philosophical assumptions, which improved the coherence of our paper and also responds to recent calls from expert researchers to construct better aligned qualitative research in sport and exercise psychology (Smith & McGannon, 2017).

Results and Discussion

We present our findings under five inter-related themes. The first theme relates to the importance Nick placed on mentoring in sport. A second theme depicting Nick's motives for mentoring and how these motives centered on protégé gains is then presented. This is followed by a third theme which highlights that Nick's motives for mentoring were grounded in shared mentor and protégé gains. Nick's unwavering belief in his protégés and allegiance to them is subsequently offered as a fourth theme. Finally, we describe a fifth theme illuminating the complexity through which Nick viewed himself as adopting a 'mentoring identity' as an athlete.

Importance of Mentoring

Nick's years of experience in sport led him to conclude that mentoring played a crucial role in an athlete's development and ability to reach elite status. When asked to comment on the

people he felt contributed to his success as an athlete, Nick did not hesitate to list and describe numerous individuals. He began by describing former coaches who nurtured him over the course of several years. For instance, Nick reflected on one coach who supported him as a developing athlete and beyond:

My first Youth Championships, he was my coach, he was actually going without being a national team coach at the time. He was like, 'I'm coming, you're my athlete. I want to see you compete.' So he was spending his own money to come watch me compete.... he's been there with me ever since. When I was making highlight videos to go to the United States, even though he was the university coach (at the university Nick would eventually attend), he taped everything for me. He was like, 'I'm willing to do that.'

Nick further explained that he considered a few senior, more mature intercollegiate track athletes as having had an important impact on his transition to university sport. Nick described these individuals as 'big brothers' who cared for him and invited him to live with them. These positive experiences seemed to foster Nick's belief that mentorship served a key role in facilitating athlete progression to elite sport. It is reasonable to suggest that these positive experiences influenced Nick's desire and willingness to serve as a mentor. In support of this suggestion, there is research in both organizational (e.g., Ragins & Cotton, 1993) and sport settings (i.e., Hoffmann et al., 2017) linking experience as a protégé with a willingness to mentor others.

The conversation with Nick changed when he noted that his belief in the value of mentorship led to the realization that he did not benefit from having a 'true' peer athlete mentor during the prime of his career. That is, he felt his growth in particular areas was hindered because he was never in a position to regularly learn from a more knowledgeable athlete who was

competing in his specific track event. Nick described that he and Donovan (pseudonym), a competitor of his, were both required to learn a lot on their own:

I would say between Paul [pseudonym] and myself, there was no one in between that excelled to the international level in [name of event]. It was myself and another athlete, Donovan. We kind of came around at the same time. And in between there, there wasn't that [event] mentor. Like Paul had Isaac [pseudonym]. You know, Isaac competed at that high level. And then Paul was by himself for a while. And then, I'd say for almost a decade there was no one on the national scene. And then myself and Donovan came around. So we didn't have mentors. We had some of their coaches and they could say like, 'This might happen or that might happen.' But there wasn't someone who actually experienced it, we didn't have any of that. So day-to-day, how to go to meets and stuff like that, how to conduct yourself, how to prepare meals, that stuff... and then the business side. I had no one there, had to figure that out for myself. You know, it kind of takes away from the mental aspect of what you're trying to focus on at track practice.

Nick did indicate that for a short period of time he received some guidance from Paul (see quote above where Paul is introduced), who was in the latter stages of his career and competed in the same event as Nick. Nick further noted that he reached out to Paul from time to time once Paul was retired from sport and felt that Paul's wisdom helped him in terms of mental resilience. While Nick appreciated the value of this guidance, in his eyes, it did not replace what he anticipated could have been provided by a peer athlete mentor at the peak of his/her career.

Not surprisingly, Nick's views on the importance of mentoring in sport were partly based on his own experiences serving as a peer athlete mentor to Phillip, Amy, and Alisha. Nick

described the uniqueness of his peer athlete mentor role and how he believed it provided his protégés with a refreshing balance to the instruction they received from their coaches:

MH: Do you think peer mentoring, like you did when you were an athlete, is that similar to what coaches do?

[Nick nods indicating that it is not similar.]

MH: Oh yeah? How is it different than what coaches do?

Nick: Expectations. You know, a coach tells you something and you're expected to eventually do it. With me, with whatever I was offering, I didn't have the same expectation. Like if they didn't do it, I wasn't like, 'Oh I'm disappointed.' Athletes have a lot going on. So with coaches, they give you something, a task, and they say, 'I need you to do this and you got to get it done.' With me, it's more about suggestions. It was all suggestions. I think that's the difference between peer mentoring and coaching.

Taken together, Nick's experiences with mentors, his experiences not having a regular peer athlete mentor to support him in key areas, and his belief in the unique value of peer athlete mentoring merged to form one narrative on the importance of mentoring in sport, particularly peer athlete mentoring relationships.

Motives for Mentoring: Protégé Gains

Throughout the interviews Nick spoke passionately about his desire to assist Phillip, Amy, and Alisha achieve great levels of success in their respective events. In particular, he described being motivated to help his protégés avoid or manage some of the struggles and stressors he experienced during his athletic career. From this perspective, it appeared that Nick engaged in mentoring purely for the benefit of his protégés:

Nick: I gave them advice 'cause I wanted to see them reach the highest level and continue. And where I had my pitfalls, I hoped they never had to experience them. I think some of the concepts that I talked to them about helped them. That was the whole goal. Like I said earlier, to take that stress away from them.

MH: So given that some of the things you had gone through were tough, it sounds like you wanted them to avoid some of those things or give them advice to deal with them?

Nick: Yeah, they needed to be able to avoid some of it, but really I wanted them to know how to deal with it. How to approach it and kind of get it over with earlier [in their athletic careers]. And if they needed me I was like, 'I'm here, let's talk about it.' Sometimes it was just a conversation to know that there were steps that were going to happen and that they needed to lean on the people around them.

One of Nick's goals was to ensure his protégés understood that elite sport involved being business savvy. Nick felt he lacked the requisite knowledge in this area as an emerging athlete and did not want his protégés to miss their opportunities to gain financially:

There's a business model too. I explained to them that it would help them in the long-term. I never had the business guidance. I said, 'Use that to your advantage.' You know, I talked about sponsorship and things they needed. No one talked to me about that. They [Nick's coaches] were like, 'Oh just go fundraising to get money to go to meets.' I mean, a lot of stress is taken away if you have someone who consistently sponsors you.

While Nick used his knowledge of elite sport to set his protégés up for success in a proactive manner, he also relied heavily on his experiences as a top athlete when Phillip, Amy, and Alisha encountered difficult situations. For instance, Nick vividly recalled supporting Amy when she lost her carding status and the funding that came with it. Nick had gone with and

without funding from Canada's sport governing body over the years and was able to discuss these experiences with Amy and guide her on a path to regaining her funding. Throughout these recollections, Nick reported having an ability to detect when his protégés were in particular need of emotional support:

You see things like slumped shoulders or gazing away, even their movements while doing drills. I see Amy doing a drill and she kind of stops and pauses, something just doesn't seem like her natural flow. So I would kind of just ask what was going on. Sometimes athletes just need a release and you can have those moments and help. Or if Phillip was doing something and looked kind of frantic, you know, with training there's just so much going on and he wanted to be perfect at everything. So I could just see through his movements, being around him, I just saw it. I caught on to that with all of them. And when you have that one-on-one with them you pick up on those things, on their moods. I think I was really good—with Amy in particular.

Nick's accounts suggest that he possessed a relatively high level of emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), an attribute which allows individuals to read how others are feeling in various circumstances and capitalize on that knowledge to relate with others and foster positive outcomes (Goleman, 1998). Cherniss (2007) opined that emotional intelligence is particularly relevant to the prolonged success of mentoring relationships and likely affects the extent to which protégés benefit from such relationships. In support of the tie between emotional intelligence and mentoring, research with formal mentors from academic, business, and military settings identified sensitivity (i.e., empathy, compassion) as an essential mentor trait (Smith, Howard, & Harrington, 2005).

Further evidence that Nick was motivated to mentor for the benefit of his protégés can be gleaned from his comments indicating that his support for Phillip, Amy, and Alisha was never contingent on him receiving anything in return from them. For example, Nick described a time when he and Phillip concluded a period of training at his facility and he offered Phillip a spare piece of equipment. Nick was adamant that Phillip take the piece of equipment with him to his own training facility:

I said, ‘Take it man. If you need it and it’s going to help you, take it.’ So he was like, ‘Wow, really?’ And I don’t think that was a mentoring moment, but I think with all three of them, like, I never asked for anything in return. I’ve never been like, ‘You know I helped you this time, you need to give me something in return.’ And I think that was a big part of all the relationships. I’ve given my time or whatever and I’ve never asked for anything back.... I think that goes a long way and is a crucial part of mentoring. I think that separates people when it comes to mentoring. You do it not expecting anything back. The mentoring I gave them was just for them... no strings attached.

Nick remarking that his mentoring was always for the benefit of his protégés suggests that he did not embrace mentoring from a social exchange perspective. Social exchange theory posits that individuals engage in relationships because they believe the rewards of such relationships will exceed the costs (Homans, 1958). Applied to mentoring relationships, this theory suggests that mentors provide support on the basis that protégés will offer something of value to them. In fact, a number of mentoring studies have been grounded in social exchange theory (e.g., Ragins & Scandura, 1999), and there is evidence that some mentors adopt an exchange orientation with their protégés (i.e., give-and-take orientation, Janssen et al., 2014).

Overall, that Nick indicated being driven to support his protégés for their gains is in line with previous mentoring research from organizational psychology. Indeed, Allen (2003) found that, among other motives, individuals had a desire to mentor to benefit others. The results also showed that individuals with greater motivation to mentor to benefit others also reported greater provision of instrumental and psychosocial mentoring. More recently, Janssen et al. (2014) interviewed mentors and found that the vast majority of these individuals were oriented toward mentoring for the welfare of their protégés. Thus, Nick's inclination to support his protégés for their benefit is not unique and appears to align with the positive mindset shared by mentors across settings.

Motives for Mentoring: Shared Mentor and Protégé Gains

Although Nick described wanting to assist his protégés for their benefit, he also diverged from this narrative by indicating that he and his protégés experienced shared gains through their involvement in mentoring relationships. That is, the opportunity for mutual mentor-protégé benefit was conveyed by Nick as a motivating factor for his engagement in mentorship. This opportunity for mutual gains seemed to stem from Nick's awareness that Phillip, Amy, and Alisha possessed certain characteristics that he appreciated and could relate to as an accomplished athlete. For example, Nick expressed that he identified with the work ethic of his protégés:

Me and Amy, we used to run fartleks [a training method] together. She was the same way as Alisha, just didn't back down. And when I was beating her it was like, 'Ah he's beating me, alright, what do I need to do to get better?' She's fierce. And Phillip was the same way. When he came to train with me, he never looked at me and thought, 'Oh he's way better than me.' He was just like, 'Alright, let's do this.' At that time I was beating

him... the next year he was whooping my butt! You know, when I was growing up I never really got the MVP award, it was always the hardest worker award. You know, like the perseverance award at the awards banquets. And I loved that. 'Cause it's all about the work. And they were always about the work. So I think we all related there.

Nick reported that he felt there was a commonality between he and his protégés in terms of their 'underdog status' as emerging athletes. Nick did not enter the realm of track and field until high school, several years later than many of his peers. For this reason, he adopted what he described as an 'underdog mentality'—a mentality which gave him the confidence to compete against others whom he felt held him in lower regard. Whether due to injuries or because they did not fit the 'prototypical look' of an elite athlete, Nick felt that all three of his protégés were considered 'underdogs' to some extent in the earlier stages of their athletic careers. Thus, Nick related to his protégés in this regard. In a similar vein, Nick described being drawn to his protégés because of their humility and willingness to learn:

There are some athletes who've come here and wanted to be Olympians and have that status and I wouldn't dare have had that conversation with them—because of the way they carried themselves. Amy, Phillip, Alisha carried themselves the right way. I could sit and talk with them, and they would listen and take it in. Then they'd come back and we could have another conversation about it. Some athletes are just... Phillip, Alisha, and Amy don't have that ego.

Research in organizational contexts has indicated that mentors select protégés who remind them of themselves, with whom they have a lot in common, who exhibit a strong work ethic, who take initiative, who are open to learning, and who are motivated to succeed (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997). Mentors have also reported selecting their protégés because they have a high

level of ability/potential, rather than because their protégés are in need of support (Allen, Poteet, & Russell, 2000). Similar findings were noted in research using fictional vignettes, where individuals indicated that they would be less willing to mentor low ability protégés than high ability protégés (Allen, 2004), and average performing protégés than high performing protégés (Olian, Carroll, & Giannantonio, 1993).

Identifying with and relating to Phillip, Amy, and Alisha was timely for Nick as he was experiencing a phase of loneliness in his rise to elite-level athlete status. This period occurred as Nick transitioned out of intercollegiate athletics:

Nick: 'Cause once CIS (Canadian Interuniversity Sport) was done, I would say there was no team after that. So, it was hard for me. I was so used to team, team, team.

MH: Structure...

Nick: Yeah. Now, I'm like by myself. When I go to practice there's not going to be 20 people there saying 'hi' and high-fiving and all that stuff. It's going to be me and the coach. So, I think I struggled with that.

Nick's perspective that he was somewhat isolated fueled his desire to interact with and support his protégés. Specifically, he discussed how mentoring his protégés was mutually rewarding and inspiring:

MH: What was your motivation for mentoring these athletes?

Nick: It was good to have their company. It felt good to share. I don't know if that's a motivation. But I always said that at that level, it's lonely, you know? Because there's no training groups. When I was at [university] I saw Amy rising, Alisha rising, sometimes it's good to have people at that level around you. You might not say anything, but to see them at the track every day, seeing others who care as much as you do, it was good to

see. So I wanted to offer anything I could to help their longevity or just the mental part it takes to continue being successful. I think that was the motivation. And for Phillip, it was also lonely for him. But at least when I was getting out of [event], he had someone to support him.... so just having the company at that level is good. 'Cause we're talking about four people. There weren't many people in this area doing that well at that time.

MH: So it was good company for them to have or also for you to have?

Nick: For me to have. Having people around that passionate who wanted to work that hard, it was great.

Nick similarly described how he and his protégés worked together to achieve shared gains:

Sometimes, with the peer mentoring of an athlete, it's an athlete on their way up and an athlete on their way out. Sometimes I felt it was that way. But for me it was different. I was still in my prime competing.... we were all competing together. So, I think the friendship helped there. You know I saw potential in them and I wanted to help them get to the next level. We were all working together. I felt like if they knew anything they would help me too. That's where our conversations helped each other. That's how we learned the mentoring. You know, I would offer a little sometimes just to kind of see where they were at, and when I felt like they were thinking the same as me, we could open up and talk more freely. And just being in familiar company in terms of your goals, how you approach things, I think that was a big part of the mentoring of those three.

Shared gains also extended to training-related benefits. Nick explained how he and his protégés trained together to the extent that their respective events permitted and pushed each other to their physical limits. In particular, training with Phillip forced Nick to stay sharp, which helped him maintain the gap between Phillip and himself. Nick described having to continually adjust

technically because he could not match Phillip's development from an athletic standpoint. Nick's accounts of the training dynamic between he and Phillip are interesting in light of the long-standing belief among some scholars in organizational psychology that mentoring may buffer the effects of plateauing for mentors (Allen, 2007).

Beyond these reciprocal gains, Nick went on to describe how his relationships with his protégés satisfied his need to identify with similar others at a critical time in his career.

Belongingness is a fundamental human need (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), and Nick's accounts suggest that this need was to some degree fulfilled through his relationships with his protégés.

You just want to have someone to identify with.... Like, I'm here all the time, I'm seeing athletes coming in and out, in and out, in and out. So when I saw athletes around at the times I was around, it made me feel good. You don't feel lonely. That lonely feeling was kind of gone. So you know, I would talk to them and we'd relate.

When considered as a whole, Nick's comments about relating to his protégés and benefitting from these relationships aligns closely with the concept of *relational* mentoring (Ragins, 2016). Relational mentoring differs from traditional mentoring in that the relationship between mentors and protégés is seen as a 'two-way street,' with mutual learning and growth opportunities (Ragins, 2016). Further, as opposed to traditional mentoring, relational mentoring is more likely to meet the needs of both mentors and protégés, and it is considered the highest quality form of mentoring along the continuum of mentoring relationships (Ragins, 2016).

Allen's (2003) research from organizational psychology demonstrated that individuals were motivated to mentor for reasons related to self-enhancement and self-gratification, but neither of these forms of personal gain relate to feelings of belongingness with protégés. Janssen et al. (2014) found that mentors in organizational settings had 'self-focused motives' to engage in

mentoring that varied from intrinsic motivation to subtypes of extrinsic motivation (i.e., external, introjection, identification, integration). Further, mentors reported being motivated to support protégés for reasons that fulfilled their need for affiliation—a finding which appears to more closely relate to Nick’s motivation to belong and belief that he was involved in mentoring relationships that can be characterized as relational. Regardless, Nick’s perception that his mentoring relationships were mutually enhancing sheds new light on the potential reasons that athlete mentors may engage in mentoring relationships in sport.

Lastly, the role that relational mentoring played in Nick and Phillip’s relationship must be expanded upon. Not only did Nick perceive that his mentoring relationship with Phillip was strengthened as a result of shared gains, he also believed they shared a common bond because of the uniqueness of their event. Nick described his event as a ‘brotherhood’ comprising few competitors. Consequently, Nick felt there was little tension or ill-will between he and Phillip:

With [event], people don’t really know that it’s a brotherhood. And if you spent energy trying to be like a sprinter where you have the ego and all that stuff, you’d be tired. Like I said, the mental energy would just drain you.... it’s just the nature of the event. From the people we learned from, the competitions we went to, it’s just very interesting. You’re there and these guys are like all your best friends. You’re cracking jokes, talking about your lives, telling stories. You know, you become friends just by being in the same event.

That Nick was eager to mentor Phillip despite Phillip’s position as a burgeoning competitor is somewhat at odds with recent sport research by Boroumand, Benson, and Eys (2017). Using fictional vignettes, these authors found that intercollegiate athletes were less inclined to support high-status newcomers who played their position than low-status newcomers who played their position. Further, athletes were less inclined to support high-status newcomers who played their

position than high-status newcomers who played a different position. However, these findings cannot be directly compared to Nick and Phillip's situation as these two did not compete for playing time, status within a team, and so forth.

Unwavering Belief in and Allegiance to Protégés

Throughout his stories, Nick consistently returned to his deep belief in Phillip, Amy, and Alisha and how he regularly attempted to instill confidence in them. For Nick, believing in his protégés' abilities and ensuring that they believed in themselves was 'how' he mentored them:

Nick: I never had any doubt in Alisha's abilities and I always let her know that. I never 'talked her up.' I was like, 'You are that good.' So we had those conversations. When she was off competing I would send her messages. I would talk about the experience and remind her where she was. You know, talk about race-day mentality, try to ease any fears she might have had. And I always say, when athletes get on that level sometimes, they fall into the idea of, 'Do I belong here?' And that's the last thing you want to be thinking about when you get there, like, 'Do I belong with these people?'

MH: Because you had that run through your mind once or twice?

Nick: Yeah, star struck. It happens. You get star struck. One time I lined up and I was like, 'This is the Olympic champ here, this is the world record holder here.' And it's like, 'I got to focus on the race!' But at the same time, 'Am I that good?' And you have to say, 'Yes, I am that good!' So I always wanted her to know that she belonged there.

Nick also indicated that he tried to breed absolute confidence in his protégés because Paul (the former mentor who once competed in the same event as Nick) had done that for him. Thus, in many ways Nick tried to mimic Paul's approach because he had an appreciation for the impact that it could have:

Like I said, Paul had told me, ‘Man, you’re really good, I can’t believe the things you can do.’ When you hear that, you’re like, ‘Sky is the limit.’ It’s like, ‘*This* [emphasis added] person is telling me this?’ So I let them [protégés] know that too. And I let them know it ’cause it was valid.

Like Paul, Nick carried a particular ‘status’ as an experienced and accomplished athlete, which he realized was likely appealing to his protégés. Because of this status Nick felt his messages held influence, which allowed him to breed a culture of confidence among he and his protégés—a culture that he felt was necessary at the elite level of sport. Nick also described himself as a fierce competitor who had utter internal belief. Consequently, it is not unrealistic to assume that this mentality carried over to his protégés. Various definitions of mentoring (e.g., Ragins, 2016) have highlighted that knowledge, skills, and experience are typically required components to being a mentor. Further, experience and status are included as key antecedent mentor characteristics to the development of mentoring relationships in Weaver and Chelladurai’s (1999) mentoring model from the sport management domain.

It can be argued that Nick’s enduring suggestion to his protégés that they possessed the necessary capabilities to flourish resembles what Bandura (1977) referred to as verbal persuasion—one of the four sources of self-efficacy. Similarly, but from a different perspective, peer mentored athletes competing at elite levels indicated that their athlete mentors regularly reassured them that they had what it took to succeed (Hoffmann et al., 2017). Taken together, these findings suggest that verbal persuasion plays a prominent role in the supportive strategies used by peer athlete mentors. Additional research is certainly needed to validate this suggestion, however matching accounts between protégés and a highly-regarded athlete mentor is a promising starting point.

Nick's deeply rooted belief in his protégés also presented itself in the form of allegiance. He described being committed to his protégés' needs because he viewed them not only as promising talents but because he respected them as quality human beings. Nick shared one instance where his allegiance to Phillip was particularly apparent:

One thing I remember when I spoke with Phillip was, coaches probably wouldn't like this because they were trying to recruit him to come to [name of Nick's university]. But he was staying at my house and we got in a conversation and I said, 'You got major talent.' I told him the years I was in school I was held back from excelling as much as I could have 'cause I wasn't devoted 100%. I told him he was in a situation where he could devote all his time to track. I was like, 'Don't let anyone tell you you need to go to school to do what you need to do.' School will be here when you're done. I was like, 'Go for it.' I think my coaches and everyone thought I was trying to recruit him 'cause he came to training camp with us and stayed at my house. Coaches were like, 'Come to [name of university]!' But I told him the exact opposite. I told him to do what was best for him.

Nick's dedication to Phillip's needs is what Ragins (2009) contended is a distinguishing feature that separates mentoring relationships from leader-subordinate relationships. In fact, Ragins proposed that mentor allegiance to his/her protégé could outweigh allegiance to the organization. Nick's accounts appear to support Ragins' suggestion. Despite being retired from athletics and having less day-to-day contact with his protégés, Nick reported having a continuing commitment to them. However, Nick described that his current mentorship came in the form of psychosocial support, with much less focus on the instrumental aspect mentoring. His lasting allegiance to Alisha is highlighted in the following story:

I understand the importance of every-day life and the effects it has on training. So like, her house flooded during the [2016] Olympics, so I took care of that. We tried to keep it as hush-hush as possible. I was in her house getting things and when she found out she was like, ‘Nick, I had this here and there, can you go get it?’ I was going to her house at like 3 in the morning... I was making sure everything was safe in her house and nothing was getting flooded. So I’m ‘team Alisha’ now. You know, before I was ‘training partner Alisha.’ Now I’m ‘team Alisha’. I do whatever I have to to help relieve any stress for her.

Complexity of ‘Mentoring Identity’

Nick’s accounts highlight the complexity through which he viewed himself as adopting a relational ‘mentoring identity’ as an athlete. In many ways, Nick struggled to convey whether he believed he assumed this mentoring identity, in part because viewing himself through this lens (i.e., defining himself in terms of his mentoring relationships) was not something he was accustomed to doing. Nonetheless, at times throughout the conversations Nick did seem to construct an image of himself embracing a mentoring or leadership identity:

I think I probably didn’t word it as a ‘mentor’ at the time. But I liked being a leader in any aspect that I could. With the way I competed, I liked putting myself out front so that people could use it as an example. So I think that was part of me. And then as I got more professional, I got away from ‘team’ and that’s when I said it was lonely. And people come along and they ask again, you know they want you to lead. Lead them not for their whole career but just at that little moment when they need some guidance. So I think I definitely thought of myself as a leader and I think the aspects of a leader are the aspects of a mentor. Obviously you have to have a body of work, you have to have skills, you

have to have the know-how or the experience behind you. So once I started gaining that, I definitely embraced it. I enjoyed it.

At other times during the conversations it appeared Nick assumed more of a 'sharing identity.' This identity was grounded in his general propensity and desire to share knowledge with other athletes who could benefit from it:

I'm all about sharing knowledge. I'm not about holding things in and not helping someone else excel or get to their next level. I think it's helped me and helped that person as well. You feel good about yourself. I'm all about 'that' energy. Not like, 'What goes around comes around,' but if I can leave a conversation about track and I've felt like I've given my most and I've helped someone, then that's great. So I'm all about helping and sharing. You know it's the only way. I think with growth in anything it's how a person evolves and takes things from other people to become whatever they need to be.

In the third interview, we probed the concept of a mentoring identity with Nick to gain more clarity on this topic. When prompted to elaborate on his previous responses, Nick offered a perspective that suggested he did not consciously assume a mentoring identity when he was competing in sport:

I didn't feel like a mentor at that point. I did feel like I was a support system to them. But yeah, the word is probably mentor. But at the time, I kind of identified with what I was. And I was still an athlete, so I didn't really see myself as a mentor. You know? Like I said, sometimes with mentors they are on their way out. At that time I didn't feel like I was on my way out. I felt like I was still competing at a high level.

Nick's perspective that it was difficult to simultaneously identify as an athlete and a peer mentor sheds further light on the complexity of his perceived role. Further, his perception that his

mentoring relationships with his protégés were very informal might have added to the ambiguity concerning his adoption of a mentoring identity. Informal mentoring is unstructured and occurs spontaneously when required (Ragins et al., 2000). Thus, part of Nick's uncertainty about whether he fully adopted a mentoring identity may be due to the fact that he was never formally assigned to a peer athlete mentor role. Regardless, to the extent that Nick did identify as a mentor he appeared to adopt a generic rather than particularistic relational mentoring identity (cf. Ragins, 2016; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). That is, he did not perceive that he specifically assumed a mentoring identity in relation to Phillip, Amy, and Alisha:

I never focused on those three. I just felt when they got to such a high level—they knew what they needed to do. And when they needed something from me, they would ask. And then when I was around them, I think it's part of who I am, I was able to read body language and I would offer something up.... different times called for different strategies, you know? But it was never... I never sought those three out. Because I did that sort of thing for a lot of people. Like I said, with them, it didn't require much. It was easy to support them because they were always willing to do the work.

Overall, while there is some evidence that Nick adopted a generic mentoring identity as an athlete it is unclear if this identity was a strong driving force behind his motivation to mentor Phillip, Amy, and Alisha, as well as other athletes.

Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to explore the experiences of one former highly-regarded peer athlete mentor (i.e., Nick). The rich insight gained from our conversations with Nick makes a significant contribution to the mentoring literature in sport, particularly because previous research has explored peer athlete mentoring strictly from the protégé's perspective

(e.g., Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2016a, 2016b). Further, the strength of the present study lies in the case that was investigated. Nick, a former athlete who experienced great success himself, was viewed by three current, elite athletes as having been very effective in his informal role of peer athlete mentor. Nick represented a unique opportunity given that mentoring researchers across domains have generally gained insight into the experiences of those in average-quality rather than high-quality mentoring relationships (Ragins, 2016).

Through our interviews with Nick, we were able to identify some key features of his mentoring experiences. First, Nick reported that mentoring was a vital element of sport that contributed to an athlete's ability to reach elite status. Nick felt that peer-to-peer mentoring was especially important to an athlete's development, and he adopted this perspective in part because he believed he did not benefit from having a more knowledgeable peer athlete mentor during his athletic career. Second, Nick indicated that he was motivated to support his protégés because he wanted them to benefit from his experience. Nick's desire to assist his protégés for their benefit is certainly congruent with mentors' motives in organizational contexts (Allen, 2003; Janssen et al., 2014). Third, Nick described being motivated to mentor because of the opportunity for shared mentor-protégé gains. The opportunity for shared gains stemmed from his identification with and sense of belonging to a group of like-minded athletes (i.e., his protégés). This was somewhat of an unexpected finding but does align with the more contemporary theory of relational mentoring (cf. Ragins, 2016). That Nick reported benefitting from his mentoring relationships challenges the often taken-for-granted assumption that mentoring is a one-way process designed to help protégés only. This finding also complements early work by Kram (1988), who characterized some mentoring relationships between junior and senior managers in business contexts as mutually enhancing. Fourth, Nick indicated that he had a deeply rooted

belief in his protégés and allegiance to them. He frequently shared this belief with his protégés through what could be described as verbal persuasion (cf. Bandura, 1977). Lastly, Nick's accounts provided some evidence that he assumed a generic relational mentoring identity as an athlete (cf. Ragins, 2009; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). However, his understanding of this identity was complex and did not seem to strongly underlie his motivation for mentoring his protégés.

Based on Nick's perspectives of athlete mentorship, and with the realization that they may not represent the views of all athletes who assume the role of peer mentor, we forward a few broad practical implications that might be considered by practitioners (i.e., researchers, coaches, applied consultants) interested in facilitating peer mentoring relationships between more and less experienced athletes. It is our contention that practitioners should consider how potential athlete mentors may perceive potential protégés. Nick was keenly aware that Phillip, Amy, and Alisha were high-potential athletes, and this seemed to draw him to them. Research by Singh, Ragins, and Tharenou (2009) in the organizational setting supported the 'rising star' hypothesis, which suggests that individuals on the fast-track to success are more likely to be mentored. Thus, practitioners should consider that potential mentors may have lower interest in supporting an athlete whom they view as having less potential. This highlights the need to consider other factors that might facilitate mentoring relationships, such as mentor-protégé compatibility in terms of personality. Practitioners should also assume that one's motivation or willingness to serve as a peer athlete mentor may depend on the extent to which he/she relates to a potential protégé and feels a sense of belongingness with him/her. Therefore, practitioners should not lose sight of a mentor's needs by focusing solely on the protégé's comfort level with that mentor. Along the same line, given that Nick appeared to be motivated to mentor partly for his own gains, and given the known benefits associated with being a mentor (e.g., Ghosh & Reio Jr.,

2013), it should be assumed that athlete mentors may be seeking particular benefits from their involvement in mentoring relationships. Be it personal satisfaction from supporting a protégé or a desire to benefit from training-related gains, practitioners should consider that mentors may have a vested interest in making their relationships work smoothly. Consequently, any attempts to formally pair athletes should take into account what the mentor hopes to gain from the relationship and should not consist merely of pleasing the protégé and advancing his/her career.

Finally, we encourage readers to consider a few factors when interpreting the results of the present study. Nick and his protégés trained together at common locations, and Amy and Alisha competed on the same intercollegiate team as Nick. Therefore, that all three protégés considered Nick as their peer mentor is, to some extent, due to a ‘proximity effect.’ Further, the mentoring relationships between Nick and his protégés emerged in an organic fashion. Thus, it cannot be assumed that Nick would have been motivated to belong with his group of protégés had he been formally assigned to mentor them. Additionally, Nick competed in an individual event and lacked teammate support once he retired from intercollegiate athletics and transitioned to full-time amateur athlete. It is conceivable that an athlete’s need to relate with similar others would be less prevalent in a team sport setting where group members likely offer some degree of companionship. Finally, unlike Janssen et al. (2014), we did not deductively analyze Nick’s self-focused motives for mentoring using self-determination theory as a framework. Given the single case study design, and our use of narrative analysis, we were weary of fragmenting the data and overlooking the larger story. However, future research with larger samples of peer athlete mentors might certainly benefit from taking a more nuanced approach to examining individuals’ self-focused motives for mentoring their peers.

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CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

There is growing evidence that some competitive athletes are involved in mentoring relationships or are exposed to mentoring opportunities in sport. According to Bimper Jr. (2017), athletic departments at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) member institutions are increasingly offering mentoring programs for their student-athletes to enhance general well-being. Bimper Jr. reported that these programs vary in their objectives (e.g., career opportunities, cultural development) and composition of mentors (e.g., faculty, peers, community members). In addition to the mentoring initiatives of athletic departments, some Canadian intercollegiate coaches have indicated that they integrated newcomers into their teams by formally pairing veterans with rookie athletes (Benson, Evans, & Eys, 2016). Similar findings were noted with self-reported peer mentored intercollegiate athletes, where approximately 10% of protégés sampled indicated they were involved in formal mentoring relationships with team members (Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016a). While some athletes receive support via formal mentoring arrangements, previous research (i.e., Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016a), including the studies in this dissertation, suggest that most athletes receive peer mentorship through informal relationships with other athletes. Regardless, recent research has shown a link between being peer mentored as an athlete and overall satisfaction (i.e., Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016a, 2016b), yet the empirical examination of peer mentoring relationships between athletes remains limited. Consequently, the central purpose of this dissertation was to gain a deeper understanding of peer athlete mentoring in sport. Three empirical research studies were conducted to address this objective.

In Chapter 2 the experiences of 14 self-reported peer mentored athletes who competed in elite sport were explored via individual semi-structured interviews. The primary purpose of Chapter 2 was to identify the mentoring functions exhibited by athlete mentors. The results pertaining to this purpose suggested that athlete mentors provided an assortment of specific mentoring functions to facilitate protégés' progression through sport (instrumental mentoring) and development from a personal standpoint (psychosocial mentoring). In particular, protégés felt they received specific instrumental functions that were unique to an athlete population and thus did not align with those outlined in Kram's (1980) research in an organizational setting. These specific functions were labelled mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction, and career assistance. While protégés felt they received unique instrumental functions, they suggested their mentors provided specific psychosocial functions that closely resembled those identified by Kram. These specific functions included role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counselling, and friendship. The secondary purpose of Chapter 2 was to investigate the outcomes related to protégés' mentoring experiences, the results of which suggested that protégés benefitted in terms of enhanced performance and confidence, and also demonstrated a willingness to provide mentorship to their peers. Taken together, the results of Chapter 2 shed light on the specific functions provided by athlete mentors and highlight the positive outcomes that protégés experience as a result of their mentoring relationships with peers.

The general objective of Chapter 3 was to develop a psychometrically sound questionnaire to measure peer athlete mentoring functions, using the results from Chapter 2 as the basis for the development of questionnaire items. Following the examination of content validity evidence via think-aloud interviews with athletes and the use of an expert rating panel, a preliminary version of the Athlete Mentoring Questionnaire (AMQ) was completed by 377

Canadian National team and varsity-level athletes. A series of analyses including post-hoc modifications resulted in a 34-item questionnaire measuring six specific mentoring functions. These functions included three specific instrumental functions (i.e., mental guidance, coach relations, task instruction), two specific psychosocial functions (i.e., role modeling, friendship), and a specific career assistance function that was hypothesized to represent instrumental mentoring but did not significantly load on either of the two higher-order mentoring functions. The development of the AMQ is a significant addition to the mentoring literature and provides researchers and practitioners with a sport-specific measurement tool to assess peer athlete mentoring functions. Further, the AMQ displayed evidence of measurement invariance across groups, which suggests that it can be used with diverse samples of peer mentored athletes. Although the AMQ's scores demonstrated preliminary evidence of reliability and construct validity, future research is needed to confirm the factor structure of this newly developed questionnaire.

A different approach was taken in Chapter 4 whereby the mentor's perspective of peer athlete mentoring was sought. Specifically, using a case study design, the experiences of one former highly-regarded peer athlete mentor were explored. This individual was invited to participate in three interviews because he was viewed by three current and elite athletes (in Chapter 2) as having been particularly effective in his informal role of peer athlete mentor. This former athlete indicated that he felt mentoring played a key role in an athlete's ability to rise to elite sport. He suggested that he was motivated to mentor his protégés for their benefit but also for his own personal gains. Moreover, he described having an unwavering belief in and allegiance to his protégés and shared his views concerning the complexity of the 'mentoring identity' that he adopted. Overall, this former peer athlete mentor's accounts suggested that he

was involved in what Ragins (2016) described as relational mentoring relationships. While this individual's perspectives cannot be generalized to others who assume the role of peer athlete mentor, they do suggest that mentoring relationships between athletes may be mutually enhancing. That is, it is possible that both protégés and their peer athlete mentors generally benefit from the mentoring experience.

While the examination of peer athlete mentoring remains in its infancy, the extant literature on this topic can generally be classified into three areas. First, there is mounting evidence that being peer mentored as an athlete has its advantages. Specifically, being the beneficiary of peer mentorship has been linked to enhanced satisfaction (Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016a, 2016b), sport confidence, and performance (Chapter 2; Hoffmann, Loughead, & Bloom, 2017). Further, those athletes who have experienced being peer mentored seem to display a willingness to serve as athlete mentors to others (Chapter 2; Hoffmann et al., 2017). Second, research is beginning to offer clarity with regard to the functions provided by athlete mentors. Qualitative research suggested that eight specific mentoring functions were relevant to peer athlete mentoring relationships (Chapter 2; Hoffmann et al., 2017), while quantitative analyses pointed to the presence of six specific mentoring functions (Chapter 3; Hoffmann & Loughead, 2017). These findings led to the development of the AMQ, which assesses the degree to which athlete mentors use six specific mentoring functions when supporting their protégés. Third, there is one known study that has explored peer athlete mentoring from the mentor's perspective (i.e., Chapter 4; Hoffman, Loughead, & Caron, 2017). While this study examined the experiences of one peer athlete mentor only, the results highlighted the possibility that mentoring relationships between athletes may result in reciprocal mentor-protégé gains.

Although we continue to expand upon our understanding of peer athlete mentoring in sport, there are many questions about peer mentorship among athletes that remain unanswered. For instance, because research to date suggests that the vast majority of athlete mentoring relationships develop informally (e.g., Chapter 3; Hoffmann & Loughhead, 2017), we have little knowledge about the experiences of those athletes whose mentoring relationships with peers develop due to formal assignment. Are these relationships equally beneficial to protégés and peer athlete mentors as those that emerge organically? Do formal peer athlete mentors use the same mentoring functions as those involved in informal mentoring relationships? Some research from the area of organizational psychology has shown that protégés engaged in formal mentoring relationships report less instrumental and/or psychosocial support than do protégés who are informally mentored (e.g., Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Sosik, Lee, & Bouquillon, 2005). Nonetheless, numerous Fortune 500 companies have relied on mentoring programs over the years to develop their employees (Hegstad & Wentling, 2004). Thus, it is conceivable that formalized peer mentoring relationships between veteran athletes and less experienced teammates could and do currently result in positive individual and/or team level outcomes. Comparing the experiences of those athletes in formal versus informal mentoring relationships presents an interesting avenue for future research.

The examination of high-quality peer athlete mentoring relationships certainly yields valuable information. To date, this is the approach that has been used in the peer athlete mentoring literature. A different angle, which would also provide valuable insight, would be to investigate the nature and consequences of negative mentoring relationships between athletes. Scandura (1998) was among the first to note that mentoring relationships could be marked by dysfunction. In support of this suggestion, protégés in organizational contexts reported that their

negative mentoring experiences occurred for various reasons including but not limited to mentor neglect, abuse of power, ‘credit taking,’ and sabotage (Eby, McManus, Simon, & Russell, 2000). However, poor mentor behaviour was not the only reason provided for protégés’ negative mentoring experiences in this study. For instance, protégés indicated that their destructive mentoring relationships occurred because of mentor-protégé personality differences, mismatched working styles, and so forth. Finally, reports from both mentors and protégés have suggested that involvement in formal mentoring relationships can occasionally result in negative outcomes (Eby & Lockwood, 2005). Given these findings from research in organizational settings, it may be important for future researchers to assess whether some peer athlete mentoring relationships contain negative elements, and if so, to what extent.

Moving forward, scholars should not lose sight of the fact that Kram’s (1980) research findings were based on interviews with mentor-protégé dyads. With some exceptions (e.g., Beres & Dixon, 2014), mentoring researchers have generally failed to examine protégés’ perceptions in conjunction with mentors’ perceptions. Gathering insights from both protégés and their peer athlete mentors could be a difficult endeavor, but it would certainly yield interesting information and would allow for the comparison of protégés’ and mentors’ experiences. Importantly, examining both mentors’ and protégés’ perspectives would help control against common method bias (see Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), which is an issue when only the protégé’s or mentor’s experiences are considered. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to explore the experiences of both protégés and their peer athlete mentors when feasible.

A final future research direction is to examine whether athletes turn to multiple peer mentors for guidance. Having a network of mentors is known as constellation mentoring (Kelly & Dixon, 2014). A constellation mentoring approach rests on the assumption that protégés

benefit from looking to different mentors to provide different types of support (Kelly & Dixon, 2014). The value of multiple mentors was recently highlighted in a study with coach mentors involved in formal coach mentoring programs (i.e., Sawiuk, Taylor, & Groom, 2017), but the potential benefits of having several peer athlete mentors have yet to be investigated in the mentoring literature. Hoffmann and Loughead (2017; Chapter 3) found that many protégés had considered several peers as mentors, however the authors were unable to identify whether these peer mentors provided guidance to protégés at the same time or if they served as mentors at different times throughout protégés' athletic careers. Consequently, future researchers might consider moving beyond the current approach of asking protégés to reflect on only their best-ever peer athlete mentors.

In conclusion, while many questions remain about the nature of peer athlete mentoring, the findings resulting from this dissertation make significant contributions to this emerging research area. It is hoped that researchers, coaches, sport psychology consultants and others involved in sport can use the theoretical and practical implications of this dissertation to enhance the overall well-being of athletes. In a similar vein, it is hoped that these results can be used to facilitate effective peer mentoring relationships between athletes at all levels of competition in the future.

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TABLES

Table 1

Characteristics of Protégés and their Mentoring Relationships

Protégé	Protégé's Age Range	Sport	Mentor-Protégé Age Gap	Mentor Sex	Protégé Sex	Protégé's Highest Level of Competition
P1	20-24	Ice Hockey	3 Years ^a Same Age ^b	M ^a M ^b	M	Major Junior Hockey
P2	20-24	Ice Hockey	9 Years	M	M	Professional
P3	25-29	Basketball	9 Years	M	M	Professional
P4	25-29	Track and Field	4 Years	M	F	Olympics
P5	25-29	Track and Field	4 Years	M	F	Commonwealth Games
P6	25-29	Ice Hockey	7 Years	F	F	Olympics
P7	30-34	Ice Hockey	4 Years	F	F	Olympics
P8	25-29	Speed Skating	17 Years ^a 13 Years ^b	F ^a F ^b	F	Olympics
P9	25-29	Basketball	8 Years	F	F	Professional
P10	20-24	Track and Field	5 Years	M	M	Olympics
P11	25-29	Wrestling	12 Years ^a 4 Years ^b	M ^a M ^b	M	Commonwealth Games
P12	30-34	Cross-Country	1 Year	M	M	Olympics
P13	20-24	Rugby	1 Year	F	F	National U-20 Team
P14	25-29	Pairs Figure Skater	7 Years	M	M	Olympics

Note. In each case where there is an age gap between the mentor and the protégé, the mentor is older. It should also be noted that some information has been presented in a particular manner (e.g., age range) or excluded (e.g., specific Olympic track and field event) to protect the protégés' identities.

^aThe first of two mentors involved in a mentoring relationship with the protégé. ^bThe second of two mentors involved in a mentoring relationship with the protégé.

Table 2

Summary of Higher-Order and Lower-Order Categories Pertaining to Protégés' Mentoring Experiences

Higher-Order Categories	Lower-Order Categories	Protégés
Instrumental Mentoring (151)	Mental Guidance* (43)	All but P9
	Coach Relations* (20)	P1, P2, P5, P6, P8, P13
	Task Instruction* (58)	All but P5
	Career Assistance* (30)	All but P1, P2, P7, P11
Psychosocial Mentoring (248)	Role Modeling** (96)	All
	Acceptance-and-Confirmation** (58)	All but P9, P14
	Counselling** (42)	All but P4, P11, P13
	Friendship** (52)	All
Mentoring Outcomes for Protégés (64)	Sport Confidence (20)	All but P8, P12, P13
	Sport Performance and Development (19)	All but P4, P5, P8, P13
	Willingness to Mentor (25)	All but P5, P9

Note. Numbers in parentheses represent meaning units.

*Mentoring functions unique to an athlete population.

**Mentoring functions previously identified by Kram (1980).

Table 3

Descriptions of General (Higher-Order) and Specific (Lower-Order) Mentoring Functions Identified in Hoffmann et al. (2017)

Mentoring functions	Descriptions
Instrumental** ^a	This type of mentoring facilitates the protégé's performance, goal attainment, and/or advancement in sport.
Mental guidance* ^b	Similar to what would be provided by a sport psychology consultant, this type of mentoring targets the psychological component of the protégé's game, which in turn helps him/her to remain focused and perform optimally.
Coach relations* ^b	This type of mentoring is used to facilitate positive relations between the protégé and his/her coach(es). Specifically, this function ensures the protégé is continually having predominantly constructive interactions with his/her coach(es) that assist the protégé in achieving their task-based goals.
Task instruction* ^b	This type of mentoring is used to provide task-specific knowledge to the protégé. This includes instruction and guidance related to the technical or tactical side of the game, as well as corrective feedback in terms of where the protégé could improve athletically.
Career assistance* ^b	This type of mentoring is used to guide the protégé in effectively managing and advancing his/her athletic career as a whole. This aspect of mentoring does not target the protégé's on-field sport performance; rather, this function assists the protégé with their athletic career more globally.
Psychosocial** ^a	This type of mentoring facilitates the protégé's personal growth, enhances their perception of competence, and clarifies their identity, both within and outside of the sport setting. Unlike instrumental mentoring which is limited to influencing the protégé's athletic advancement, psychosocial mentoring targets the protégé's personal development as an athlete <i>and</i> as an individual.
Role modeling** ^b	This type of mentoring is used to exhibit desirable values, attitudes, and behaviours. Essentially, the mentor serves as a role model for the protégé by setting a good example in sport and in life.
Acceptance-and-confirmation** ^b	This type of mentoring is used to consistently support the protégé by accepting him/her as a valued athlete and individual. The mentor engages in receptive, non-judgmental behavior, and shows interest in the protégé through timely attention and/or praise.
Counselling** ^b	This type of mentoring is used when the protégé needs a sounding board to discuss any personal struggles or doubts. That is, the mentor serves as a confidant for non-performance related concerns within or outside of the sport setting.
Friendship** ^b	This type of mentoring is used for sport and non-sport related social interactions with the protégé. The mentor has enjoyable "everyday" discussions with the protégé while in the sport setting or during social gatherings. Personal stories and moments are shared between the mentor and the protégé as the friendship grows.

Note. *Instrumental mentoring function. **Psychosocial mentoring function.

^aGeneral function. ^bSpecific function.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics and Latent Variable Correlations for ESEM and CFA Solutions

Factors	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
F1 (Mental Guidance)	-	.71	.54	.74	.51	.57
F2 (Coach Relations)	.57	-	.54	.76	.48	.58
F3 (Task Instruction)	.44	.38	-	.56	.39	.30
F4 (Career Assistance)	.49	.47	.41	-	.48	.64
F5 (Role Modeling)	.44	.40	.34	.28	-	.61
F6 (Friendship)	.46	.42	.25	.44	.55	-
<i>M</i>	5.34	5.07	5.56	4.97	6.02	5.69
<i>SD</i>	1.14	1.29	1.24	1.29	.90	1.11
Skewness	-.66	-.75	-.98	-.61	-1.26	-.95
Kurtosis	.31	.66	.88	.19	2.56	.63
CR (CFA)	.83	.87	.92	.84	.90	.91
CR (ESEM)	.75	.77	.90	.65	.89	.89

Note. CFA and ESEM correlations are above and below the diagonal, respectively. All correlations have p 's < .001. CR = composite reliability.

Table 5

ESEM and CFA Factor Structures for the 34-item, 6-Factor Model

Items	ESEM						CFA	ESEM R ²	CFA R ²
	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6			
F1 (Mental Guidance)									
MG1	.45	.12	.19	-.20	.09	.10	.61	.42	.37
MG2	.72	-.02	-.02	.02	.04	.11	.78	.61	.60
MG3	.86	.02	-.02	.11	-.01	-.12	.80	.75	.64
MG4	.54	-.05	.09	.20	.02	.10	.77	.56	.60
F2 (Coach Relations)									
CR1	-.02	.77	.05	-.14	.04	.05	.69	.57	.47
CR2	.02	.74	-.09	.03	.12	.05	.76	.67	.57
CR3	.06	.66	.05	.24	-.02	-.01	.84	.71	.70
CR4	.04	.53	.21	.17	-.04	.16	.85	.69	.72
F3 (Task Instruction)									
TI1	-.02	.06	.87	-.16	.03	-.08	.80	.69	.64
TI2	.19	.04	.72	-.10	-.04	.03	.78	.63	.61
TI3	.13	.01	.79	-.04	.07	-.06	.85	.73	.72
TI4	-.03	.04	.74	.08	.07	-.04	.79	.63	.63
TI5	-.12	-.05	.81	.20	.02	-.03	.82	.71	.67
TI6	-.01	.02	.75	.09	-.06	.12	.80	.66	.63
F4 (Career Assistance)									
CA1	.25	.13	-.09	.36	.08	.09	.69	.45	.48
CA2	.15	.17	.10	.44	-.07	.02	.67	.47	.44
CA3	-.01	.11	.03	.56	.12	-.02	.65	.44	.43
CA4	.05	.04	.06	.71	.09	.02	.80	.69	.64
CA5	.07	.04	.12	.51	.04	.21	.79	.61	.63
F5 (Role Modeling)									
RM1	.06	.12	-.04	-.09	.68	-.03	.68	.50	.46
RM2	-.01	.09	-.02	-.05	.91	-.15	.81	.73	.66
RM3	.07	.12	-.05	.15	.61	-.15	.64	.45	.41
RM4	.08	-.09	.04	.03	.79	-.03	.79	.64	.63
RM5	-.09	-.07	.06	-.04	.79	.13	.80	.66	.63
RM6	-.03	-.02	.05	.06	.68	.13	.78	.59	.60
RM7	-.03	-.11	.01	.08	.69	.20	.79	.63	.62
F6 (Friendship)									
F1	.07	.10	-.16	.08	.04	.62	.74	.54	.55
F2	.02	.22	-.11	-.07	.05	.66	.75	.58	.57
F3	-.03	.11	.01	-.03	-.06	.67	.66	.45	.44
F4	.01	-.06	.05	.04	.11	.65	.71	.52	.50
F5	.03	-.08	.00	.03	-.00	.83	.81	.68	.66
F6	.05	-.01	.00	-.11	.05	.82	.80	.67	.64
F7	-.04	.12	.11	.23	-.04	.58	.74	.61	.55
F8	.04	-.10	.03	.01	.05	.75	.75	.59	.56

Note. Factor loadings are standardized. For the ESEM solution, values loading on their intended factors are in bold. CFA factor loadings are also in bold. For both the ESEM and CFA solutions, all values loading on their intended factors are significant ($p < .01$). MG = mental guidance; CR = coach relations; TI = task instruction; CA = career assistance; RM = role modeling; F = friendship. Item numbers correspond with those found in Appendix D.

Table 6

Measurement Invariance Testing

	χ^2 (df)	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	CM	SBS $\Delta\chi^2$ (df)	Δ CFI	Δ SRMR	Δ RMSEA
Competition level									
1a: Configural invariance	1447.96 (744)	.896	.030	.071	-	-	-	-	-
1b: Metric invariance	1572.27 (912)	.902	.057	.062	1a	80.33 (168)	+0.006	+0.027	-0.009
1c: Scalar invariance	1615.52 (940)	.900	.060	.062	1b	45.83 (28)*	-0.002	+0.003	.000
Mentoring status									
2a: Configural invariance	1364.37 (744)	.905	.031	.067	-	-	-	-	-
2b: Metric invariance	1501.19 (912)	.910	.052	.059	2a	131.72 (168)	+0.005	+0.021	-0.008
2c: Scalar invariance	1526.80 (940)	.910	.053	.058	2b	36.00 (28)	.000	+0.001	-0.001
Gender									
3a: Configural invariance	1327.31 (744)	.910	.030	.064	-	-	-	-	-
3b: Metric invariance	1449.42 (912)	.917	.053	.056	3a	98.51 (168)	+0.007	+0.023	-0.008
3c: Scalar invariance	1507.18 (940)	.913	.056	.057	3b	50.99 (28)**	-0.004	+0.003	+0.001

Note. CM = Comparison model.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE (CHAPTER 2)

Opening Questions:

1. Briefly describe your athletic career and how you got to where you are today in your sport.
2. You indicated to me through email that one or more athletes stand out as having been important to your sporting and personal development. Please tell me about these athletes.
 - a. Were these teammates or individuals from different teams and/or sports?
3. Of the athletes you just mentioned, is there one in particular that took a special interest in you and your development in sport?
 - a. Was X a teammate? *Note.* “X” can refer to more than one person.

Main Questions:

4. How did you first meet X?
 - a. What were your initial impressions?
 - b. What was your status on the team at the time (e.g., rookie)?
 - c. What was the status of X on the team at the time?
5. Describe how the mentoring relationship developed? Did you approach him/her or vice versa?
 - a. Was the relationship more natural or assigned by the coach/team?
6. What do (did) you like/respect about X?
 - a. What are (were) some of the characteristics that made X a good mentor (e.g., mature, intelligent)
7. In general, what does (did) X do for you? What does (did) X provide to you?
 - a. In what ways does (did) X give you advice that affects (affected) your improvement in sport and your advancement in your sporting career?
 - b. In what ways does (did) X give you advice that affects (affected) your personal growth and development, both in and outside the sport environment?
8. When you receive(d) guidance from X, describe who initiates (initiated) these interactions/discussions.
 - a. How often and for how long do (did) these interactions typically occur?
 - b. When do (did) these interactions typically occur? In-season? Off-season?
9. What are (were) the personal outcomes (positive and negative) of having X as a mentor?
 - a. What are the outcomes (positive and negative) of having athletes serve as mentors to other athletes? What are the team outcomes?
10. Based on your experiences, what are the barriers to finding an athlete/teammate who can serve as a mentor to you?

- a. Personal or organizational influences?
- b. Availability of a mentor? Proximity to a mentor?

11. Describe what you believe X gets (got) out of his/her relationship with you.

Summary Questions:

12. Reflecting back on your relationship with X, how would you say this mentoring relationship has affected you as an athlete and a person?
13. How has the mentoring relationship changed over time?
- a. Has X provided more or less advice as the relationship has progressed?
14. For how long do you think you will view X as a mentor?
- a. What would make the relationship change?
15. Have you ever attempted to serve as a mentor to another athlete/teammate, as X has to you?
- a. If so, why did you decide to do this?

Concluding Question:

16. Are there any questions or comments regarding your mentoring experience(s) that you would like to ask or share?

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT (CHAPTER 2)

Title of Study: Perceptions of Athlete Mentor Functions by Elite Sport Participants

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Matt Hoffmann (M.H.K., Ph.D. Student) and Dr. Todd Loughead (Ph.D., Faculty Supervisor), from the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. The results of this study will contribute to the completion of a doctoral dissertation in kinesiology. This study has received University of Windsor REB clearance.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Mr. Matt Hoffmann at (phone number) or (email address), or Dr. Todd Loughead at (phone number) or (email address).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to explore athletes' perceptions of the mentoring functions (i.e., behaviours) provided by athlete mentors in sport. All participants must currently be or have been an athlete mentor or protégé at some point during their athletic career. Mentoring is defined as: "a process in which a more experienced and knowledgeable athlete (i.e., the mentor) acts as a role model, provides support and guidance to a novice athlete (i.e., the protégé), and assists in that individual's development".

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a brief survey and an interview that may last between 45-60 minutes in duration.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable psychological or physical risks or discomforts associated with participation in this study.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The information gained from this study will help advance knowledge in the field of sport psychology. The results will help to better understand how peer-to-peer mentoring relationships between athletes are beneficial to mentors, protégés, and sport teams. This knowledge can be used by sport psychology consultants to enhance the development of sport teams.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

You will receive a \$15 gift card to Tim Horton's for your participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Responses to the survey and interview questions will remain confidential. All data will be kept in a password protected file which will only be accessible by the primary investigator. Potentially the data may also be utilized in subsequent studies conducted by the researcher. Data will be kept secured for five years when it will then be destroyed.

In addition, participants' interviews will be audio recorded so that responses may be transcribed verbatim. The audio recordings will also be kept in a password protected file accessible by the primary researcher only. Audio recordings will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time (prior to, during, or after the interview), without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

As mentioned, all participants must currently be or have been an athlete mentor or protégé at some point during their athletic career to participate in the study.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The results will be posted at the University of Windsor's Research Ethics Board website by May 1, 2015 (<http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb>). If you have any additional concerns or questions, you can contact the investigators at the phone numbers or emails above.

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study, "Perceptions of Athlete Mentor Functions by Elite Sport Participants", as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant:

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of Investigator

Date

APPENDIX C

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT (CHAPTER 2)

Dear athlete,

My name is Matt Hoffmann and I am a doctoral student studying sport psychology in the Department of Kinesiology, at the University of Windsor. I am currently seeking participants for a project which will examine athletes' perceptions of the behaviours of athlete mentors in sport. This study has received University of Windsor REB clearance. If you are currently or have been mentored by another athlete at some point in your athletic career, you are eligible to participate in the study. A peer athlete mentor would be considered a more experienced and knowledgeable athlete who acts as a role model for you, provides guidance and support to you, and assists in your sport and/or personal development. This athlete cannot be a family member or an individual with whom you have a romantic relationship.

Your participation includes completing an interview which will take 45 to 60 minutes to complete and your participation is voluntary. All information obtained will be confidential. If you agree to participate, we can arrange a location and time to meet. You will receive a \$15 Tim Horton's gift certificate for your participation in my study.

Please contact me if you are interested in participating, if you have any questions, or if you need some clarification regarding your status as a protégé. Please contact me at (email address) or (phone number). I have also attached a document (i.e., Letter of Information) which contains more information about the nature of this study.

Thanks in advance for your participation.

Matt Hoffmann (M.H.K., Ph.D. Student)

APPENDIX D

ATHLETE MENTORING QUESTIONNAIRE (CHAPTER 3)

Instructions: Using the following scale, please circle a number from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) to indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements regarding your PEER ATHLETE MENTOR. There are no right or wrong answers, so please answer each question as honestly as possible. The statements are written in the present tense, but simply pretend that they are written in the past tense if your mentoring relationship occurred in the past.

My peer athlete mentor...

MG1. Provides advice to help me concentrate in my sport.

MG2. Provides advice that helps the mental side of my game.

MG3. Suggests strategies to assist with mental preparation for my athletic pursuits.

MG4. Guides me psychologically through high-pressure situations in sport.

CR1. Assists me in having positive sport-related interactions with my coach(es).

CR2. Advises me on how to have constructive communication with my coach(es) in the sport setting.

CR3. Suggests how I can work effectively with my coach(es) to benefit my performance.

CR4. Provides advice about managing performance-related feedback I get from my coach(es).

TI1. Gives me advice concerning the technical side of my game.

TI2. Suggests tactical strategies that I can use in my sport.

TI3. Instructs me on how to develop my sport skills.

TI4. Shares his/her knowledge about how to execute certain techniques more effectively.

TI5. Corrects me from a technical or tactical standpoint when required.

TI6. Provides me with constructive criticism about my game.

CA1. Helps me make choices about my career as an athlete.

CA2. Teaches me about the “politics” within my sport that can impact my advancement as an athlete.

CA3. Recommends people in the sporting community who can assist me in my athletic career (e.g., trainers, nutritionists, sponsors, recruiters).

CA4. Discusses opportunities I should consider to advance through the sporting system.

CA5. Supports me in planning my general career objectives as an athlete.

RM1. Serves as a role model for me.

RM2. Sets a good example for me to follow.

RM3. Shows me what ideal behaviors look like.

RM4. Acts in a way that is impressive to me.

RM5. Carries himself/herself in a way that I respect.

RM6. Exhibits behaviors and attitudes that I identify with.

RM7. Displays values that I relate to.

- F1. Counsels me in non-performance related matters.
- F2. Serves as a sounding board for me to discuss any personal struggles.
- F3. Interacts with me through different mediums (internet, text message, phone).
- F4. Shares his/her personal stories and moments with me.
- F5. Has conversations with me where we both share personal stories.
- F6. Serves as a trusted friend.
- F7. Offers feedback on my non-performance related concerns.
- F8. Bonds with me over similar interests.

APPENDIX E

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT (CHAPTER 3; PHASE 2, STAGE 2)

Title of Study: The Development of an Inventory to Assess Peer Athlete Mentoring Functions

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Matt Hoffmann (PhD Student) and Dr. Todd Loughead (Faculty Supervisor), from the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. The results of this study will contribute to the completion of a doctoral dissertation in Kinesiology. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, prior to consenting to participate or after participation in the study, please feel to contact Mr. Matt Hoffmann at (email address) or Dr. Todd Loughead at (email address) or (phone number).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to examine peer mentored athletes' perceptions of the behaviours of athlete mentors. Specifically, participants will be asked to comment on the adequacy of survey items that have been developed for a questionnaire which will assess peer mentored athletes' perceptions of the behaviours of athlete mentors.

To be eligible to participate, you must be: a) 17 years of age or older and, b) have considered another athlete as a peer mentor to you at some point in your athletic career. A peer athlete mentor would be considered a more experienced and knowledgeable athlete who served as a trusted role model to you, assisted you in your pursuit of goal achievement and advancement in sport, and/or supported your personal growth and development. This athlete cannot be a family member or someone with whom you had a romantic relationship.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a paper-and-pencil survey and also verbally share your thoughts about the adequacy of the survey as you complete it. This process will be audio recorded. Participation in the study could take up to 45 minutes.

Participation in this study will occur in the Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center, located in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable psychological or physical risks or discomforts associated with participation in this study. Further, participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty if they feel uncomfortable.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their personal mentoring experiences as mentees, and how it has positively influenced their athletic career as well as their personal well-being. Consequently, participants may gain some useful knowledge about themselves and how they like or would like to receive mentorship.

From a research perspective, the information obtained from this project will help advance knowledge concerning the area of peer athlete mentoring in sport. This will benefit researchers in the areas of sport psychology, mentoring, and group dynamics. From a societal perspective, the information obtained from this project may help athletes, coaches, managers, parents, sport psychologists and others involved in sport promote the development of positive relationships between athletes.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

Participants will receive a \$15.00 Starbucks gift card for participating in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. Only the investigators will know your identity and have access to your information. Any dissemination of the results will use pseudonyms.

Audio recordings from this research will be stored on Mr. Hoffmann's password-protected work computer, located in the Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. This work computer is located in a locked room. Participants have the right to review their audio recordings upon request. Once audio recordings are transcribed, they will be deleted immediately. Transcriptions will be stored on Mr. Hoffmann's work computer.

Paper-and-pencil surveys will also be stored in the aforementioned locked room in the Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center. All data pertaining to this research will be destroyed 5 years after data collection.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Participants may choose to withdraw from the study prior to, during, or after participation in the research, without consequences of any kind. Further, participants may choose to not answer a particular question if they feel uncomfortable with it. Participants will still receive compensation (Starbucks gift card) if they withdraw their data during or after participation in the research. However, participants will not be able to withdraw their data once the study has been formally presented at a conference or published (i.e., September 1, 2017). The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so. If you reveal that you have not considered another athlete as a peer mentor at some point in your athletic career, then the investigator will withdraw you from this research.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The results will be posted at the University of Windsor's Research Ethics Board website by December 1, 2017 (<http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb>). If you have any additional concerns or questions, you can contact the investigators at the phone numbers or emails above.

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study "The Development of an Inventory to Assess Peer Athlete Mentoring Functions" as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of Investigator:

Date:

APPENDIX F

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT (CHAPTER 3; PHASE 2, STAGE 3)

Title of Study: The Development of an Inventory to Assess Peer Athlete Mentoring Functions

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Matt Hoffmann (PhD Student) and Dr. Todd Loughead (Faculty Supervisor), from the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. The results of this study will contribute to the completion of a doctoral dissertation in Kinesiology. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, prior to consenting to participate or after participation in the study, please feel to contact Mr. Matt Hoffmann at (email address) or Dr. Todd Loughead at (email address) or (phone number).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to assess the adequacy/content validity of potential items that have been developed for a questionnaire which will assess peer mentored athletes' perceptions of the mentoring functions provided by athlete mentors.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey in which you will rate the appropriateness of potential questionnaire items. Participation in the study could take up to 60 minutes.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable psychological or physical risks or discomforts associated with participation in this study. Further, participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty if they feel uncomfortable.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Participants will have the opportunity to help advance knowledge in an area of research in which they are likely somewhat interested in. Consequently, participants may feel a sense of satisfaction by helping to advance knowledge.

From a research perspective, the information obtained from this project will help advance knowledge concerning the area of peer athlete mentoring in sport. This will benefit researchers in the areas of sport psychology, mentoring, and group dynamics. From a societal perspective, the information obtained from this project may help athletes, coaches, managers, parents, sport psychologists and others involved in sport promote the development of positive relationships between athletes.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

There is no compensation for participation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. Only the investigators will know your identity and have access to your information. Any dissemination of the results will use pseudonyms.

Online data obtained using FluidSurveys will be saved on the FluidSurveys server, which is securely located in Canada. These data will also be stored on Mr. Hoffmann's password-protected work computer, located in the Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. This work computer is located in a locked room. All data pertaining to this research will be destroyed 5 years after data collection.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Participants may choose to withdraw from the study prior to, during, or after participation in the research, without consequences of any kind. Further, participants may choose to not answer a particular question if they feel uncomfortable with it. To withdraw after having begun the online survey, participants must click the "discard" button located on webpage. Doing so will discard participants' data. Simply closing the browser will not discard participants' data. Participants will not be able to withdraw their data once the study has been formally presented at a conference or published (i.e., September 1, 2017). The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The results will be posted at the University of Windsor's Research Ethics Board website by December 1, 2017 (<http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb>). If you have any additional concerns or questions, you can contact the investigators at the phone numbers or emails above.

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study “The Development of an Inventory to Assess Peer Athlete Mentoring Functions” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of Investigator:

Date:

Do you wish to participate in this study (please check box below)?

Yes, I agree to participate

No, I do not agree to participate

APPENDIX G

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT (CHAPTER 3; PHASE 3)

Title of Study: Examining athletes' mentoring experiences

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Matt Hoffmann (PhD Student) and Dr. Todd Loughead (Faculty Supervisor), from the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. The results of this study will contribute to the completion of a doctoral dissertation in Kinesiology. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, prior to consenting to participate or after participation in the study, please feel to contact Mr. Matt Hoffmann at (email address) or Dr. Todd Loughead at (email address) or (phone number).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine athletes' mentoring experiences with other athletes. You must be 17 years of age or older to participate.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey which will examine your mentoring experiences with other athletes. Participation in the study could take up to 20 minutes.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable psychological or physical risks or discomforts associated with participation in this study. Further, participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty if they feel uncomfortable.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their personal mentoring experiences with other athletes. Consequently, participants may gain some useful knowledge about themselves and how they like or would like to receive mentorship.

From a research perspective, the information obtained from this project will help advance knowledge concerning the area of peer athlete mentoring in sport. This will benefit researchers in the areas of sport psychology, mentoring, and group dynamics. From a societal perspective, the information obtained from this project may help athletes, coaches, managers, parents, sport psychologists and others involved in sport promote the development of positive relationships between athletes.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

If you submit your survey responses, you will have the opportunity to enter into a draw to win one (1) of fifty (50) \$5.00 Starbucks gift cards. Draw winners will receive their gift card through email. However, participants who withdraw from the study will not have the opportunity to enter into the draw.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed as the survey responses are submitted anonymously. Further, all data will be analysed and presented/published in aggregate form.

Online data obtained using FluidSurveys will be saved on the FluidSurveys server, which is securely located in Canada. These data will also be stored on Mr. Hoffmann's password-protected work computer, located in the Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. This work computer is located in a locked room. All data pertaining to this research will be destroyed 5 years after data collection.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Participants may choose to withdraw from the study prior to or during participation in the research, without consequences of any kind. Further, participants may choose to not answer a particular question if they feel uncomfortable with it. To withdraw after having begun the online survey, participants must click the "discard" button located on the webpage. Doing so will discard participants' data and also eliminate their opportunity to enter the draw. Simply closing the browser will not discard participants' data. Participants will not be able to withdraw their data once they have submitted their survey responses given responses are provided anonymously (i.e., researchers will not be able to identify participants). The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The results will be posted at the University of Windsor's Research Ethics Board website by December 1, 2017 (<http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb>). If you have any additional concerns or questions, you can contact the investigators at the phone numbers or emails above.

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study “Examining athletes’ mentoring experiences” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of Investigator:

Date:

Do you wish to participate in this study (please check box below)?

Yes, I agree to participate

No, I do not agree to participate

APPENDIX H

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT (CHAPTER 3; PHASE 2, STAGE 2)

FOR CANADIAN VARSITY SPORT ATHLETES (University of Windsor):

Dear athlete,

My name is Matt Hoffmann and I am a doctoral student studying sport psychology in the Department of Kinesiology, at the University of Windsor. I am currently seeking participants for a project which will examine athletes' perceptions of the behaviours of athlete mentors in sport. Mr. Mike Havey (AD) has agreed to forward along this email to you on my behalf. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance. You will receive a \$15.00 Starbucks gift card for participating in my study. I am seeking a maximum of 4 athletes for this study, so participation is on a "first come first serve" basis.

You are eligible to participate if you: a) are 17 years of age or older and, b) have considered another athlete as a peer mentor to you at some point in your athletic career. A peer athlete mentor would be considered a more experienced and knowledgeable athlete who served as a trusted role model to you, assisted you in your pursuit of goal achievement and advancement in sport, and/or supported your personal growth and development. This athlete cannot be a family member or someone with whom you had a romantic relationship.

Your participation would involve completing a survey. You would also be asked to verbally share your thoughts about the survey and this will be audio recorded on a handheld digital voice recorder. The whole process could take up to 45 minutes. All information obtained will be confidential. If you wish, we can arrange a convenient time for you to participate in this research at the University of Windsor Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center (second floor of Human Kinetics building). Please reply to this email if you are interested in participating, if you have any questions, or if you need some clarification regarding eligibility for the study. You may also contact Dr. Todd Loughead at (email address) or (phone number). I have also attached a document (i.e., Letter of Information) which contains more information about the nature of this study.

Thank you in advance for your participation. It will greatly help me complete my degree and also advance knowledge in the field of sport psychology.

Matt Hoffmann
PhD student
University of Windsor

FOR CANADIAN NATIONAL TEAM ATHLETES:

Dear athlete,

My name is Matt Hoffmann and I am a doctoral student studying sport psychology in the Department of Kinesiology, at the University of Windsor. I accessed your contact information from your publicly available website. I am currently seeking participants for a project which will examine athletes' perceptions of the behaviours of athlete mentors in sport. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance. You will receive a \$15 Starbucks gift card for participating in my study. I am seeking a maximum of 4 athletes for this study, so participation is on a "first come first serve" basis.

You are eligible to participate if you: a) are 17 years of age or older and, b) have considered another athlete as a peer mentor to you at some point in your athletic career. A peer athlete mentor would be considered a more experienced and knowledgeable athlete who served as a trusted role model to you, assisted you in your pursuit of goal achievement and advancement in sport, and/or supported your personal growth and development. This athlete cannot be a family member or someone with whom you had a romantic relationship.

Your participation would involve completing a survey. You would also be asked to verbally share your thoughts about the survey and this will be audio recorded on a handheld digital voice recorder. The whole process could take up to 45 minutes. All information obtained will be confidential. If you wish, we can arrange a convenient time for you to participate in this research at the University of Windsor Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center (second floor of Human Kinetics building). Please reply to this email if you are interested in participating, if you have any questions, or if you need some clarification regarding eligibility for the study. You may also contact Dr. Todd Loughhead at (email address) (phone number). I have also attached a document (i.e., Letter of Information) which contains more information about the nature of this study.

Thank you in advance for your participation. It will greatly help me complete my degree and also advance knowledge in the field of sport psychology.

Matt Hoffmann
PhD student
University of Windsor

APPENDIX I

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT (CHAPTER 3; PHASE 2, STAGE 3)

Dear Dr. [insert name],

My name is Matt Hoffmann and I am a doctoral student studying sport psychology in the Department of Kinesiology, at the University of Windsor. I was able to access your contact information because it is made publicly available by your university. I am contacting you because you are an expert in the field of sport psychology, group dynamics, or mentoring, and I am kindly asking that you consider participating in my study. Briefly, under the supervision of Dr. Todd Loughead, I am in the process of developing a questionnaire which will assess the mentoring functions that athlete mentors provide to their peers. I am contacting you because I am hoping you will agree to provide feedback on the appropriateness of the survey items I have developed. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance.

Your participation would involve completing an online survey in which you would rate the appropriateness of the survey items I have developed. This process could take up to 60 minutes to complete. All information obtained will be kept confidential. Please reply to this email if you are interested in participating or if you have any questions regarding the study. You may also contact Dr. Todd Loughead at (email address) or (phone number). I have also attached a document (i.e., Letter of Information) which contains more information about the nature of this study.

Thank you in advance for your participation. It will greatly help me complete my degree and also advance knowledge in the field of sport psychology.

Matt Hoffmann
PhD student
University of Windsor

APPENDIX J

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT (CHAPTER 3; PHASE 3)

FOR CANADIAN VARSITY SPORT ATHLETES (Non-University of Windsor):

Dear athlete,

My name is Matt Hoffmann and I am a doctoral student studying sport psychology in the Department of Kinesiology, at the University of Windsor. I was able to access your contact information because it is made publicly available by your university. I am currently seeking participants for a project which will examine athletes' mentoring experiences. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance. If you complete an online survey, you will have the opportunity to enter into a draw to win one (1) of fifty (50) \$5.00 Starbucks gift cards.

You are eligible to participate if you are 17 years of age or older.

Your participation would involve completing an online survey which could take up to 20 minutes to complete (please click this link [link] to access the online survey). All information obtained will be anonymous and confidential. Please reply to this email if you are interested in participating, if you have any questions, or if you need some clarification regarding eligibility for the study. You may also contact Dr. Todd Loughhead at (email address) or (phone number). I have also attached a document (i.e., Letter of Information) which contains more information about the nature of this study.

Thank you in advance for your participation. It will greatly help me complete my degree and also advance knowledge in the field of sport psychology.

Matt Hoffmann
PhD student
University of Windsor

FOR CANADIAN VARSITY SPORT ATHLETES (University of Windsor):

Dear athlete,

My name is Matt Hoffmann and I am a doctoral student studying sport psychology in the Department of Kinesiology, at the University of Windsor. I am currently seeking participants for a project which will examine athletes' mentoring experiences. Mr. Mike Havey (AD) has agreed to forward along this email to you on my behalf. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance. If you complete an online survey, you will have the opportunity to enter into a draw to win one (1) of fifty (50) \$5.00 Starbucks gift cards.

You are eligible to participate if you are 17 years of age or older.

You participation would involve completing an online survey which could take up to 20 minutes to complete (please click this link [link] to access the online survey). All information obtained will be anonymous and confidential. Please email me at (email address) if you are interested in participating, if you have any questions, or if you need some clarification regarding eligibility for the study. You may also contact Dr. Todd Loughead at (email address) or (phone number). I have also attached a document (i.e., Letter of Information) which contains more information about the nature of this study.

Thank you in advance for your participation. It will greatly help me complete my degree and also advance knowledge in the field of sport psychology.

Matt Hoffmann
PhD student
University of Windsor

FOR CANADIAN NATIONAL TEAM ATHLETES:

Dear athlete,

My name is Matt Hoffmann and I am a doctoral student studying sport psychology in the Department of Kinesiology, at the University of Windsor. I am currently seeking participants for a project which will examine athletes' mentoring experiences. AthletesCan agreed to forward along this email to you on my behalf. If you complete an online survey, you will have the opportunity to enter into a draw to win one (1) of fifty (50) \$5.00 Starbucks gift cards. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance.

You are eligible to participate if you are 17 years of age or older.

You participation would involve completing an online survey which could take up to 20 minutes to complete (please click this link [link] to access the online survey). All information obtained will be anonymous and confidential. Please email me at (email address) if you are interested in participating, if you have any questions, or if you need some clarification regarding eligibility for the study. You may also contact Dr. Todd Loughead at (email address) or (phone number). I have also attached a document (i.e., Letter of Information) which contains more information about the nature of this study.

Thank you in advance for your participation. It will greatly help me complete my degree and also advance knowledge in the field of sport psychology.

Matt Hoffmann
PhD student
University of Windsor

APPENDIX K

INTERVIEW GUIDE (CHAPTER 4)

Interview 1:

1. Tell me about yourself, your family, and your interests.
2. How would you describe yourself?
 - Your personality?
 - How do you think others would describe you?
3. How did you first get involved in sport?
 - In track and field?
 - Other sports?
4. Tell me how you progressed through your athletic career.
 - Important milestones.
5. Describe the people who played a key role in you achieving your athletic success.
 - Coaches?
 - Athletes?
 - Others (e.g., teachers, family, friends)?
 - What did they do to support you?
 - How did this support affect you?
6. Would you like to add anything else before we end our interview today?

Interview 2:

*Begin interview with summary of interview 1 and offer Nick opportunity to elaborate on his previous comments.

7. Provide definition of peer athlete mentoring. How is this definition similar to or different from your view on peer mentoring?
8. As you know, three athletes identified you as a former peer mentor in sport. How does this make you feel?
 - Surprised by this?
9. Why do you think athletes viewed you as a peer mentor?
 - Status/success a factor?
 - Approachability?
 - Communication skills?
10. Describe your experiences/relationships with these athletes.
11. Did you purposely try to mentor these athletes?

- Was there anything special about these athletes? (i.e., made it worth your time)
12. How did you go about supporting and mentoring these athletes?
- What aspect(s) of their development were you targeting?
 - Can you think of a key time/moment (or more than one) when your mentoring relationship was particularly strong with (protégé)?
 - Gender of protégé a factor?
 - Protégé event a factor?
13. What was your motivation for mentoring these athletes?
- Any pressure from protégés?
 - Any pressure from coaches/others?
14. Do you believe being a mentor was part of who you were as an athlete?
- If so, how and why?
 - If so, when did this ‘identity’ emerge for you (e.g., in sport, through life experiences)?
 - If not, do you think not adopting this ‘identity’ added to/detracted from your athletic career?
15. Can you think of any negative experiences or moments of tension when mentoring these or other athletes?
- Competition between you and protégé?
 - Other challenges?
16. Would you like to add anything else before we end our interview today?

Interview 3:

*Begin interview with summary of interview 2 and offer Nick opportunity to elaborate on his previous comments.

17. Why is it important for more experienced athletes to mentor their peers?
18. In what ways is a mentoring relationship different from a friendship, if at all?
19. What did you gain from these mentoring relationships?
- Sport-specific benefits?
 - Other benefits?
20. Have you continued mentoring these athletes despite being retired from sport?
- If so, or if not, what has the transition been like?
21. Have you had any coaching experience?

- If so, can you describe the transition from athlete to coach?
- If not, would you like to in the future?

22. Do you think mentoring is (or would be) similar to being a coach?

- How are these roles similar and different [if they have coached before]?
- How might there be similarities/differences between the roles [if they have not coached before]?

23. Is there anything else about your experiences as a peer mentor that I should know?

- More generally, is there anything else that you would like to add to the three conversations we have had?

APPENDIX L

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT (CHAPTER 4)

Title of Study: Peer athlete mentoring from the mentor's perspective: A case study of a former highly regarded peer athlete mentor

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Matt Hoffmann (PhD Student) and Dr. Todd Loughead (Faculty Supervisor), from the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. The results of this study will contribute to the completion of a doctoral dissertation in Kinesiology. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, prior to consenting to participate or after participation in the study, please feel to contact Mr. Matt Hoffmann at (email address) or Dr. Todd Loughead at (email address) or (phone number).

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to explore peer athlete mentoring from the perspective of the mentor. Specifically, you will be asked to describe your experiences serving as a peer mentor to other athletes.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a series of individual interviews (likely 2-3). These interviews will be audio recorded. Each interview could last up to 60 minutes. Therefore, participation in the study as a whole could span 3 hours.

Participation in this study will occur in the Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center, located in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable psychological or physical risks or discomforts associated with participation in this study. However, although unlikely, it is possible you may feel uneasy describing a former mentoring relationship that ended negatively. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty if you feel uncomfortable.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

You will have the opportunity to reflect on your personal mentoring experiences as a mentor, and how it positively affected your protégés' athletic careers as well as their personal well-being. Consequently, this may be a pleasant experience for you. Further, you may take pleasure in knowing that you are contributing to the literature/knowledge base concerning peer athlete mentoring relationships in sport.

From a research perspective, the information obtained from this project will help advance knowledge concerning the area of peer athlete mentoring in sport. This will benefit researchers in the areas of sport psychology, mentoring, and group dynamics. From a societal perspective, the information obtained from this project may help athletes, coaches, managers, parents, sport psychologists and others involved in sport promote the development of positive relationships between athletes.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

You will receive a pre-paid Visa gift card valued at \$150.00 for participating in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. Only the investigators (and the individuals who identified you as their mentor) will know your identity. Only the investigators will have access to your information. Any dissemination of the results will use a pseudonym.

Audio recordings from this research will be stored on Mr. Hoffmann's password-protected work computer, located in the Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center in the Department of Kinesiology at the University of Windsor. This work computer is located in a locked room. You will have the right to review your audio recordings upon request. Once audio recordings are transcribed, they will be deleted immediately. Transcriptions will be stored on Mr. Hoffmann's work computer. All data pertaining to this research will be destroyed 5 years after data collection.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose to withdraw from the study prior to, during, or after participation in the research, without consequences of any kind. Further, you may choose to not answer a particular question if you feel uncomfortable with it. You will still receive compensation if you withdraw your data during or after participation in the research. However, you will not be able to withdraw your data once the study has been formally presented at a conference or published (i.e., April 1, 2018). The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The results will be posted at the University of Windsor's Research Ethics Board website by April 1, 2018 (<http://www.uwindsor.ca/reb>). If you have any additional concerns or questions, you can contact the investigators at the phone numbers or emails above.

USE OF DATA

These data may be used in publications and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

I understand the information provided for the study “Peer athlete mentoring from the mentor’s perspective: A case study of a former highly regarded peer athlete mentor” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of Investigator:

Date:

APPENDIX M

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT (CHAPTER 4)

Dear (participant's name),

My name is Matt Hoffmann and I am a doctoral student studying sport psychology in the Department of Kinesiology, at the University of Windsor. In a previous project of mine, several individuals noted that you played a significant role in their development as athletes. In fact, they said you served as a peer mentor to them when you were an athlete yourself. Now, I am interested in speaking with you about your mentoring experiences. I would like to understand mentoring from your perspective and gain a sense as to what made you a great mentor to several athletes. I am hoping you will agree to participate in my study – which is essentially a case study of your mentorship towards other athletes. I would be happy to provide you with a pre-paid Visa gift card valued at \$150.00 for the time that you would be dedicating to this study. This study has received University of Windsor ethics clearance.

Your participation would involve multiple interviews (likely 2-3) with me over the course of 3-4 weeks. Each interview could last up to 60 minutes. These interviews would be audio recorded on a handheld digital voice recorder. All information obtained would be strictly confidential; however, the individuals that identified you as their mentor would obviously know your identity. If you wish, we can arrange a convenient time for you to participate in this research at the University of Windsor Sport Psychology and Physical Activity Research Center. Please email me at (email address) if you are interested in participating, if you have any questions, or if you need some clarification regarding any aspects of the study. You may also contact Dr. Todd Loughhead (PhD supervisor) at (email address) or (phone number).

Thank you very much in advance for your participation, (participant's name). It will greatly help me complete my degree and also advance knowledge in the field of sport psychology.

Matt Hoffmann
PhD student
University of Windsor

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Matt D. Hoffmann

PLACE OF BIRTH: Toronto, ON

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1988

EDUCATION: Malvern Collegiate Institute, Toronto, ON, 2006

Laurentian University, H.B.A., Sudbury, ON,
2011

University of Windsor, M.H.K., Windsor, ON,
2013

University of Windsor, Ph.D., Windsor, ON,
2018