Article

"Froome with His SKY Bodyguards, Layers of Armour": The 'Sport is War' Conceptual Metaphor in Grand Tour Cycling Commentary

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Abstract

The incorporation of metaphors into everyday language use has formed the basis of scholarly investigation for decades. Particular attention has been given to conceptual metaphors, which are seen as essential tools for individuals to interpret and process various ideas and experiences. Within the milieu of metaphorical speech, metaphors of war have frequently been applied across a range of domains including politics, business, and sport. Within the sporting context, the notion of 'Sport is War' has been discussed in relation to various football codes, baseball, and tennis. In this article, we examine this metaphor in relation to professional stage-race cycling, a sport known for its combative, tactical, and physically demanding nature. We focus specifically on cycling commentary of the 2016 Tour de France—thus recalibrating the metaphor as 'Cycling is War.' Our findings show that war metaphors are prevalent in cycling commentary and are particularly useful in highlighting aspects of the sport inclusive of competition, strategy, power, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Through these categories, the cycling is war metaphor can be said to have the potential to elevate viewer engagement as well as

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add insight into the technicalities of the sport and expand on previous understandings of sport/war metaphors.

Keywords
cycling, metaphor, Tour de France, war, language

Since the foundational work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and their conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), the multitude of ways through which metaphors are incorporated into everyday communication has attracted significant interest. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) contend that metaphors are tools that enable individuals to use their knowledge, awareness, and understanding of their physical and social environment to facilitate a more comprehensive level of engagement with other experiences. Lakoff and Turner (1989, p. 214) later assert that to study metaphor is "to be confronted with hidden aspects of one's own mind and one's own culture." Attesting to the broad appeal of metaphorical research, Caballero (2012, p. 705) points out that sport has long been effective in attracting a broad range of researchers from diverse fields such as "sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies, all of which have stressed its impact on contemporary society and its role in promoting social values like perseverance, honor, courage, etc."

One domain frequently connected to metaphorical expression is the context of competitive sport (e.g., Butterworth, 2007; Trujillo, 1995). Referring to team sports, Bineham (1991, p. 36) states that this is likely due to the fact that "the influence of team sports on our culture is far reaching and cannot be overestimated". For example, Serazio (2010, p. 156) explains how in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, the New Orleans Saints National Football League (NFL) team found unexpected success, and the media utilised the team as "the trope for metaphorical recovery and a means of the collective simultaneously coping with and escaping from traumatic memory." Metaphorical expression within competitive sport frequently extends to the national level where nations face off against each other, often with a desire to preserve a sense of national pride and positive identity (Bishop & Jaworski, 2003). Sport also, therefore, offers itself to conflict narratives as observable in mass participation events such as the Olympics (e.g., Hilvoorde, Elling, & Stokvis, 2010) or the FIFA World Cup (e.g., Alabarces, Tomlinson, & Young, 2001; Vincent, Kian, Pedersen, Kuntz, & Hill, 2010). Indeed, elements of contest, conflict, violence, and drama are all commonly found within sporting metaphors. Further, Segrave (1997) documents how sport is reliant upon metaphorical language with each sport having its own distinctive language and later argues that regardless of the cultural context in which they are utilised—inclusive of sporting culture—metaphors should not only provide a layer of description but also provide some cognitive benefit, be it in relation to the source or the target domain (Segrave, 2000).

It should be noted, however, that while contest-related metaphors are prevalent in relation to sporting contexts and competitions such as these, sport metaphors have also been transferred to other target domains, including art, finance, politics, and war. For instance, in relation to war, Jansen and Sabo (1994, p. 1) studied connections between hegemonic masculinity and the Persian Gulf War arguing that, "sport/war metaphors reflected and reinforced the multiple systems of domination that rationalised the war and strengthened the ideological hegemony of white Western male elites." Others such as Fiddick (1989) draw metaphorical links between the Vietnam War and domestic metaphors of sports common within American culture. Such studies point toward a conceptualisation of metaphorical language used in competitive sports which, in the context of this article, is termed the 'Sport is War' metaphor.

The 'Sport is War' metaphor can be applied to various discrete sports and has been done so most notably in differing formats of football (soccer, American football, and Australian Rules football) as well as other sports such as baseball and tennis. In fact, to date, it can be said that communication scholars have demonstrated a tendency to focus their efforts on more commercially successful sports, and this is particularly true for the U.S. context. What this means is that there is great potential to miss the manner in which metaphorical language use has been absorbed elsewhere, in different sports. One such sporting context that exemplifies this scenario and that has not yet been the focus of such analyses is that of professional cycling—in particular, stage-race cycling such as the Tour de France—which presents a particularly fertile site for the emergence of war-related metaphors. This is through, first, the long duration of events such as the Tour de France (approximately 3 weeks of 4–6 hr daily stages). Second, professional stage-race cycling is extremely tactical and heavily reliant on organisation and structure.

In light of this, and adopting the broad theoretical lens of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CMT, this article examines the 'Sport is War' metaphor within the context of professional 'Grand Tour' cycling commentary taken from the 2016 Tour de France. Refocusing the 'Sport is War' metaphor to 'Cycling is War,' particular emphasis is placed on how this structural metaphor is established and developed through figurative, technical, and idiosyncratic language use.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory: An Overview

A metaphor can be defined as "understanding one thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 255) and represents something "absolutely central to ordinary natural language semantics" (Lakoff, 1993, p. 203). As such, the cognitive linguistic perspective positions metaphors as an essential cog in an individual's ability to comprehend various events, ideas, and experiences. When this involves using language related to one specific concept—abstract or otherwise—to help understand or explain another, a conceptual metaphor results. Although language is of course central to the expression of metaphors, there is a significant distinction to be made

between language and cognitive processing, given that Lakoff (1993, p. 203) contends that "the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way we conceptualise one mental domain in terms of another." This involves what is referred to as language related to a *source domain* being transferred to a *target domain*. Concepts from within the target domain are generally understood as more abstract and for many constitute a lesser known realm of experience, whereas concepts from within the source domain are drawn from better-known areas (Semino, 2008). In describing CMT, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) outline three primary types of metaphors—structural, orientational, and ontological.

Structural metaphors emerged from Lakoff and Johnson's (1980, p. 23) belief that it is important to be able to gain an awareness of "what it could mean for a concept to be metaphorical and for such a concept to structure an everyday activity." The authors present 'Argument is War' as a means of demonstrating that the metaphor of war "structures the actions we perform in arguing" (p. 25) and includes metaphorical language such as "indefensible claims," "attacking weak points," or "strategizing." This type of metaphor is *more* than merely attempting a higher level of eloquence or poetics, as the language does actually apply to the target domain as well—that is, wars can be won or lost as can arguments. It is this type of metaphor that is of most relevance to the present study. Second, orientational metaphors rely on a spatial interpretation, including ideas such as "the future is forward" or "the past is behind." The third metaphor type comprising CMT are ontological metaphors that incorporate other types of figurative language such as personification, zooporphism, and chremamorphism, where the qualities of one person, object, or thing are transferred to another.

These metaphor types within CMT are able to occur independently of each other or in combination. The development of CMT has had a significant impact on the understanding of metaphor use in relation to a range of cultural domains (Koller, Hardie, Rayson, & Semino, 2008). Some notable examples include Chilton's (1996) discussion of metaphor use within political discourse and Cameron's (2003) emphasis on the educational domain. Furthermore, Brown (2003) highlights the manner in which science discourse and communication has employed metaphors, while Koller (2004) draws out metaphors in relation to business media. CMT continues to hold relevance due to its capacity to "provide a mental framework or scaffold for an abstract idea, experience, or concept" (Shields & Bredemeier, 2011, p. 29).

CMT has guided the majority of scholarly work in relation to metaphors within the domain of cognitive linguistics since its inception. However, it is also important to acknowledge that there are similarities to be observed between the cognitive linguistic approach and that of more rhetorical treatments of metaphor. These similarities have tended to be drawn through shared epistemological standpoints and the implications for meaning-making. In addition, CMT has not escaped criticism, and it is important for this to be acknowledged. The primary concerns relate to the top-down approach used to study conceptual metaphors and the conceptual mapping that occurs from the linguistic metaphors to the target domains (Semino, Heywood, &

Short, 2004). In relation to this, Jaworska (2017, p. 165) states that "often research-ers too quickly map a very small set of conventional linguistic metaphors onto a larger conceptual mapping and then draw conclusions about human thought." How-ever, these misgivings have been countered by Kövecses (2008, p. 172) who has argued that establishing the actual conceptual metaphor is just an initial step, but the critical part of the process is to "see which elements of the source correspond to which elements of the target domain. These are the correspondences (or mappings) that crucially constitute conceptual metaphors." It is this approach of mapping different elements of the source to elements of the target that we adopt in this study.

The 'Sport is War' Metaphor

The structural metaphor of 'Contest is War' can be applied to various domains as indicated in Koller's (2002) documentation of the prevalence of marriage and war metaphors in relation to business mergers and acquisitions. Boyd (2003) has also discussed the war metaphor in the context of business with a focus on hostile takeovers. Examples such as these are extensions of the 'Contest is War' metaphor and are representative of what Shields and Bredemeier (2011) term "metaphoric chains," a situation where one metaphor can be reconfigured to form another. For instance, in the studies mentioned above, 'Contest is War' can be recalibrated as 'Business is War.'

The target domain of competitive sport is another one that war has been applied to as an extension of the 'Contest is War' metaphor, often resulting in 'Sport is War', but as Butterworth (2007) highlights, metaphors of sport and war share a reciprocal relationship, and this reciprocity must be acknowledged to better comprehend the potential of metaphorical expression within these domains. In his study, Butterworth (2007) demonstrates the manner in which former President George W. Bush used the successes of the Iraqi soccer team at the 2004 Olympic Games to transform the team into a metaphor representative of the war in Iraq that was led by his government, creating "a convenient symbol through which he could celebrate the "freedom" that his policies increasingly placed at risk." In this sense, Burke (1984) previously commented on the political potential of metaphors conflating sport and nation and argued that metaphors provide a tool with which one can establish a position and purpose in their everyday world, a position endorsed by Serazio (2012, p. 309) who states that "sports have often served as a metaphorical index for the state of the nation." This is a position that bears a marked similarity to the broad description of metaphors provided by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). This conceptualisation is further evidenced by Butterworth (2008) in assessing the similarities in the metaphorical rhetoric surrounding the protection of the American people from foreign threats and that of the promotion of drug-free sport. In this study, the Burkean approach is again adopted in utilising the conceptual metaphor of 'Baseball is Nation.'

In reciprocation, Elcombe (2012, p. 209) points out that the war metaphor has been present within sports for some time, "instrumentally framing the ways we

experience sport and reflect upon its meanings." Related to our earlier point concerning how sport often places nation against nation in a battle reflective of war, Semino (2008) contends that sport and war are so frequently metaphorised in relation to each other due to their close association in terms of cultural history. In fact, Burkhard (2006) claims that of all metaphors that can be applied to the sporting context, the war metaphor is the most central in sporting competitions. Denotations such as passion, commitment, patriotism, sacrifice, courage, and bravery play a significant role in further strengthening the alignment of the sporting world with the world of military conflict.

The 'Sport is War' metaphor can carry both positive and negative associations. It has been stated in the literature that the use of war metaphors in sport can have significant implications as it "ultimately devalues the war experience by trivializing its horrors and further conflates war and sports in the minds of the public" (Jenkins, 2013, p. 247), which it can be assumed is not the intention of those utilising the metaphors in most cases. On the other hand, from within the domain of argumentation and rhetorical studies, Aitkin (2011, p. 251) mounts a defense of the use of war metaphors in argumentation (which can be linked to sport through the notion of contest and similarities in the language employed), arguing against the belief that they lead "one to make vicious moves in argumentative contexts" and stating that they are a necessary tool for use within argument exchange. Examples of more negative associations can be seen in the example of a metaphorical chain and the adoption of a different source domain by Charteris-Black (2004) who utilises the metaphor of 'Sport is a Struggle for Survival' through the use of war-related terminology such as *battle* or *kill*. In certain other instances such as, "The Dallas Cowboys went on the attack in the NFL draft and took all the right prisoners" (King, 1991), which uses a negatively connoted word in "prisoner" to express a positive outcome, the lines between positive and negative association within the 'Sport is War' metaphor are often blurred and indistinct.

To date, the sport that has received the most attention has been professional football in its various forms inclusive of soccer, American football, and Australian Rules football. This is effectively exemplified in Chapanga's (2004) study of war metaphors deployed in commentary of professional soccer matches in Zimbabwe. Adopting a similar theoretical approach to the current study, Chapanga found frequent collocations that aligned with the metaphor such as "explosive battle" or "Herculean battle." Other terms used in the commentary employed militaristic terms such as "gunman" to refer to an offensive player, "ammunition" to refer to player skill levels, or "marksman" to refer to a top goal scorer. Chapanga (2004, pp. 66–67) suggests that "the whole tournament, footballers, their emotions, their characteristic traits, actions on the pitch and activities of spectators are transformed into a war scenario through the commentary."

With a focus on Australian Rules football, Kellett (2002) targeted the front pages of newspaper sport sections and analysed the text and images present for how they demonstrated the structural metaphor 'Football is War.' In support of this metaphor,

it was found that the images and text did provide reference to supporting structural metaphors, primarily 'Coach is General' and 'Athlete is Soldier.' The prevalence of war metaphors within NFL television coverage has also been discussed previously by Trujillo (1995) who found that a militaristic narration was often used with reference to players as soldiers or similar war-related terms as well as utilising comparisons to weapons. In relation to the NFL, King (2008) references a moratorium placed on military metaphors following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in New York. However, after a short respite from such metaphors as "quarterbacks throwing bombs" or an "aerial attack" of completed passes, they returned and "coaches and journalists blithely peppered their pregame talks and postgame commentaries with liberal sprinklings of death and destruction" (King, 2008, p. 530). King's study was significant, as it exemplified the innate nature of the 'Sport is War' metaphor and the difficulty associated with removing it from sport discourse.

Although it is important to note the various football codes and the manner in which war metaphors are deployed within them, it is also necessary to point out that the development of the metaphor cannot be described as simply a linguistic phenomenon. This is especially the case within the U.S. context and in relation to the NFL, from where a large portion of sport/war metaphor research has emerged. For instance, although the sport and its features can themselves be elucidated through the use of metaphorical expression, acknowledgment must also be made to the historical development of war metaphor within the sport that aligns, organically or otherwise, with the cultural values of the nation (Gems, 2000). Thus, we feel at this juncture that it is important to state that although the linguistic expression of war metaphors within sport (namely road cycling) is the primary focus of the current study, it can equally be said that relevant cultural contexts must also be taken into consideration in order to best understand war metaphors within sport.

Moving on from the domain of football in its different formats, war metaphors have also been noted in other sports such as tennis. Caballero (2012) investigates the manner in which metaphors were utilised in tennis news reports and associated forums to describe the 2012 Wimbledon final between Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer. The range of metaphors encountered included those related to power such as 'Tennis Tournaments are Kingdoms' (e.g., "*Lionheart* Nadal *dethrones* Federer in Wimbledon epic") and 'Players are Rulers' (e.g., through the use of terms and phrases such as "new sheriff in town", "lord" or "dominion"), or those related to motion such as 'Tennis Tournaments are Paths' as can be seen in comments such as, "[Federer] showed little resemblance to the reserved gentleman whose six-match journey to the final had seemed but a pleasant stroll through an English country garden." The extensive list Caballero compiled also included 'Tennis is War.' The metaphor was supported through the use of nouns including "soldiers" and "combatants" and phrases such as "...to witness the world's best tennis players wage war for the right to be crowned the best on grass." Although studies such as Caballero's (2012) have shifted the focus beyond the various football codes, the literature remains scant in relation to other competitive sports, including professional cycling.

Contextualising Cycling Commentary as a Site of Metaphor Production

Professional cycling is a competitive sport that demands and respects many of the emotional or personality traits and characteristics associated with war (e.g., sacrifice, perseverance, and discipline). In moving from 'Sport is War' to 'Cycling is War' as a structural metaphor, we contend that there are several reasons cycling is an appropriate sport for the use of metaphorical language in its broadcast commentary. The first reason relates to the long duration of the events. On a Grand Tour such as the Tour de France, riders will cover around 21 stages over a 3-week period. This presents a unique challenge for broadcasters who are responsible for hours of commentary during which there might not be much action to report upon. For example, on stages with no mountains, riders typically stay together in the *peloton* (the main group of riders) and ride together towards the finish. On stages such as this, the most exciting part for the viewer is the final 400–500 min or 20–30 s when the riders sprint for victory at high speed, but the stage itself could be anywhere from 150 to 200 km in length and last for 3–5 hr. Thus, the commentators are responsible for engaging the viewer and maintaining their interest, and this usually involves the creative use of language in combination with the insertion of short prerecorded interviews with riders and other cycling information and discussions related to the local region that the race is passing through in terms of tourism and history.

Aside from the demands of commentating for extended periods of time, the structuring of races such as the Tour de France provides a platform for the incorporation of war metaphors, with professional cycling being a very tactical sport in which riders of a team have a very specific role to play, much like in military settings. Professional cycling involves working as a team to support a team leader and using strategic timing in relation to when to exert maximum effort in order to expose an opponent's weaknesses. In support and protection of the team leader, individual members sacrifice their own chance at glory for ultimate team success, which is not dissimilar to military strategy.

A final area in which cycling offers a different perspective relates to globalisation and international cooperation. Typically, team sports at the highest level see nations facing off against one another, with one nation to emerge victorious while the other is defeated. However, Bairner (2001, p. 1) suggests that "as a result of the process known as globalization, the relationship between sport and national identity is self-evidently unravelling to reveal an increasingly global sporting culture." Cycling is a great exemplification of this, being unique in that in the team aspect of the sport, the members are typically a mix of riders from different nations. A team constructed of various nationalities will celebrate victory together if the team leader is able to secure the fastest overall time at the completion of all stages. However, at the same time as a team celebration occurs, an individual celebration also occurs, with the victor's home nation also claiming the victory, such as when Sir Bradley Wiggins won the 2012 Tour de France. Such individual victories are also marked by the playing of the individual rider's national anthem. In relation to this, Chadband (2012) wrote that Wiggins's victory heralded "one of the most glorious fairytales in a century of British sport."

Thus, in cycling a situation exists where a team is comprised of riders of different national backgrounds who sacrifice themselves in order for their leader to claim victory for the team as a whole but also for the home country of the leader alone. This represents an intriguing instance of global and international cooperation not often seen in sporting contexts and can be seen to support the idea that "sports do not simply demonstrate the nature of globalization. They are generative of it" (Tomlinson, 2005, p. 14). This serves as an important point of difference between sports such as American football where metaphors have tended to relate to ideals such as moral virtue and heroic sacrifice, understood from a uniquely American perspective. However, the international cooperation and alignment with the tenets of globalisation that cycling presents has the potential to see war metaphors articulated differently.

Given the numerous connections between professional Grand Tour competitive cycling and war, the following study refocuses the 'Sport is War' metaphor to 'Cycling is War' giving particular attention to how this structural metaphor is established and developed through metaphorical language use. This opportunity exists due to the relatively narrow focus on the sporting contexts of football (primarily) in previous studies, and the lack of any study on metaphor use in professional cycling. In addition, where most sports are categorised as *either* an individual *or* a team sport, a valid claim can be made that stage-race cycling is in fact *both* an individual *and* a team sport, which provides another element to the uniqueness of cycling as the focus of such a study. Finally, with reference to the domain of communication studies, this study's focus on professional cycling can add to our awareness of the widespread nature of war metaphors in communication discourse and to expand upon preexisting understandings of war metaphors within sporting contexts through showing the unique ways they are utilised within professional cycling.

Method

Our methodological approach consisted of four phases. We first investigated what access was available to the Tour de France commentary other than short excerpts posted on YouTube. We discovered that the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) network website in Australia (the primary network for cycling events throughout the year, both domestic and international) had unrestricted access to the 2016 and 2017 Tour de France footage in highlight form in the streaming area of their website. As the 2017 event was still ongoing at the time of conducting the study, we limited our analysis to commentary from the 2016 event. The highlight commentary comprised approximately 50 min of highlights from each of the 21 stages. Thus, we were able to view and listen to a total of 17 hr and 40 min of highlights from a total of 21 individual stages, which we believed was more than enough for the purpose of the study. The commentators working for the SBS network included a combination of Australians (former cyclists alongside cycling journalists/experts) and Britons (the "voice of cycling" Phil Liggett and Paul Sherwen). The vast majority of the commentary was carried out by the British pair (about 35–40 min of each highlight package).

It is worth also noting that although the footage was taken from an Australian network, the actual video footage is captured and produced by France TV and sold to networks around the world, where commentary is added. Further, we would like to point out that the audio commentary is not representative of an *only* Australian experience of or engagement with the sport. For instance, the primary commentators are not Australian and are well known in cycling commentary (Phil Liggett also commentates for Independent Television (ITV) in the United Kingdom and National Broadcasting Company (NBC) in the United States for the major events, while Paul Sherwen regularly joins Liggett in commentary for NBC in the United States), and the metaphors used are specific to both cycling and the English language but not country or culture. Thus, we make the argument that the commentary for the current study is appropriate on the grounds that it is conducted primarily by commentators well known in cycling commentary internationally and that the footage available for the study was suitable and ample.

Next, we each independently watched and listened to the highlights of each of the 21 individual stages and followed the Metaphor Identification Procedure guidelines (Pragglejaz Group, 2007). This involved noting down all examples of what appeared to be metaphors. Then, in order to determine whether a word was being used metaphorically, the contextual meaning was compared to the prime meaning as shown in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED; 2017) online, and if a discrepancy existed, it was designated as a metaphor. For example, the word "prey" relates to animals only, defined by the OED as "an animal that is hunted and killed by another for food." Thus, in the extract "as the roads open up the main *peloton* will have their prey in their sights," it was determined that prey was being used metaphorically, as cyclists are not animals hunted or eaten as food. These notes and examples of metaphors collected were then compared between the two researchers, and a final list established.

Finally, the collected metaphors were categorised in relation to whether they supported the 'Cycling is War' metaphor or were from other source domains. Examples of metaphorical language aligned with the focus metaphor were collated and categorised as being either structural or ontological metaphors, with structural metaphors forming the vast majority of the data. Further, the examples were further categorised in relation to what aspect of professional stage-race competitive cycling they explained and then used for the data analysis and discussion. Finally, once the data collection and organisation was completed, we advanced the following research questions to guide the analysis and discussion.

Research Question 1: How is the structural metaphor of 'Cycling is War' presented in the professional stage-race competitive cycling commentary studied?

Research Question 2: How does the use of this metaphor explain aspects of professional stage-race competitive cycling as a sport?

Research Question 3: How does the analysis build on previous understandings of sport/war metaphors?

Analysis and Discussion

After listening to the commentary and comparing notes, we had compiled a list of 149 instances of metaphor use. We considered this substantial, especially considering the data comprised highlight packages, meaning that approximately 4 hr of commentary for each stage was unable to be included in the study. The categorised examples of metaphorical language in alignment with the 'Cycling is War' metaphor totaled 71 of the 149 or 48% of all metaphors recorded. We were able to assign the 71 'Cycling is War' metaphors to one of five thematic categories related to different aspects of professional stage-race cycling—competition, strategy, power, teamwork, and sportsmanship. The overall distribution of the 71 metaphors among these thematic categories can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Overall Distribution of War Metaphors by Category.

Theme	Number of Metaphors	Percentage of Total War Metaphors
Competition	28	39.4
Strategy	15	21.1
Power	11	15.5
Teamwork	10	14.1
Sportsmanship	7	9.9

In the following sections, examples from each of the five thematic categories are presented and discussed in relation to how and what these war metaphors explain about different aspects of the sport of stage-race cycling and the connection with the source domain of war.

Competition: The Quest to Emerge Victorious

Metaphors within this category emphasised the pursuit of victory. In professional stage-race competitive cycling, riders will typically "attack" rivals from other teams on mountainous terrain or climbs rather than on flat sections of the course. The use of the term "attack" as common cycling terminology is fitting, given rivals need to defend their position when attacked, expending a great amount of energy to do so. Likewise, a rider who undertakes an attack calculates their own energy levels in relation to their rivals in order to select the best place on the course from which to launch the attack. Mignot (2015, p. 212) testifies to this in explaining that cycling attacks occur at a significant cost to the attacker as "an attack has to be abrupt or it will not enable the attacker to drop his opponents."

    C1:   Bardet *launching an attack* here.

    C2:   They will *launch their attacks* on the last climb of the day and go *head-to-head*.

    C3:   I think he's going to *unleash* a pretty *violent attack* when it comes to the final climb of the day today.

C4:   They're *attacking* each other *with acceleration*.

C5:   We are going to see a *major assault* by the heads of this Tour de France.

Example C1 here shows the most common terminology deployed, in the collocation of "launching an attack," which stands as an obvious reinforcement of the war metaphor. Example C2, adopting the above collocation in talking of two riders, references the "head-to-head" aspect of a duel, showdown, or personal battle, which relates to metaphors of conflict, violence, and war, albeit perhaps more historically than in contemporary militaristic settings. Example C3 demonstrates how just like in the context of military conflict, attacks upon an opponent can be spoken of in terms of degrees of severity. Stronger language is incorporated such as "unleash" and "violent" to describe a potential attack on the final climb of the stage. While an attack in cycling is not literally violent, it can be interpreted in this way due to the physical toll it takes upon the riders. Concerning Research Question 3, this conceptualisation of the war metaphor adds to the work of previous studies in that typically a sporting attack is spoken of as a move that will result in a score or a team gaining an advantage, and once this is achieved, the opposition must deal with the outcome. However, "violent attacks" in cycling can just as easily have a significant negative impact on the attacker if, for instance, the opponent has more residual energy than originally calculated, or if the degree of suffering for the attacker is more than can be managed.

The inference to be made here is that whomever the attack is unleashed upon will either physically suffer and fail or physically suffer and emerge victorious; regardless, we can understand that there will be casualties in that someone will not be the victor of that competitive vignette. The ability of a rider to suffer physical and mental hardship yet still emerge victorious is widely seen as the mark of a top-level rider. In addition, we are able to see a different expansion of the war metaphor here, as within literal war contexts, it is unlikely that an attack would be launched if there was a reasonable likelihood that the outcome would be defeat—thus, within cycling, we see the war metaphor involving the term "attack" as taking on a new meaning. Furthermore, we can see the conceptual boundaries of sport and war metaphors being expanded here as attacks in cycling inflict metaphorical violence on both parties, not merely the attacked. Thus, rather than such language being used in a colourful sense, there is a significant alignment with the reality of war that exists in terms of the investment required and the physical costs to be paid.

In Example C4, reference is made through an ontological metaphor to explain the competition occurring in that moment. Again, the commentary is describing an ongoing attack, but on this occasion, reference is made to the weapon being used—in this case, "acceleration"—which represents another structural metaphor whereby 'Acceleration is a Weapon.' Although not as significant overall as the broader 'Cycling is War' metaphor, examples such as this play an important role in reinforcing the overall structural metaphor. Finally, Example C5 uses the term

"assault" in place of attack seemingly in an attempt to intensify the emphasis on the combative nature of the competition, where the result of the attack cannot be predicted, but the effect on both attacker and the attacked will be significant.

Strategy: Planning a Means of Survival

Several diverse metaphors emerging from the commentary related to the strategy involved in professional stage-race competitive cycling.

ST1:   Froome is *nailing his colours to the mast* now.

ST2:   He's going to be a *marked man* here.

ST3:   Nibali is no stranger at all to these *long raids*.

ST4:   With three riders here, they have the *artillery* required to take this to the end.

ST5:   He'll ease off to *reload his weapons* here.

In Example ST1, the commentator employs an expression derived from naval contexts and that is often used idiomatically in everyday contexts. This refers to an expression of intent or a signal of one's plans through the undertaking of certain actions of commitment. The expression is utilised as a means of relaying to viewers that the rider, Christopher Froome, was putting in a significant physical effort to try and win a stage not only to improve his own position in the race but also as an attempted display of dominance over his competitors. Example ST2 denotes reference made to a rider who had left the *peloton* as a solo breakaway rider. This position within cycling is understood as being the most physically demanding, as the individual rider must attempt to survive alone for the duration of the stage, holding off the *peloton* which is armed with significantly greater resources. Thus, the expression "marked man" is adopted, which reflects war scenarios in relation to a sniper, of having a target in one's sights. In fact, it is interesting to note that the variety of figurative language used to describe the main group chasing down a breakaway was perhaps greater than for any other purpose. Although, as in this case, war metaphors were sometimes used, more often it was the case that other ontological metaphors were used to create breakaway/*peloton* comparisons such as fish (to be reeled in)/fisherman, prey/hunter, or rabbits/(to be brought back to) the hutch.

In Example ST3, the Italian rider Vincenzo Nibali is the subject of the commentary in relation to his familiarity with "long raids." In this context, these raids refer to his ability to be in the leading position of a group and have the group behind him work together to catch him. The relevance to the tactics of Nibali is that the commentators are referencing his experience as a rider, so although they may not know exactly what his tactics are, they expect he will be able to counter any attacks from the other riders in this particular instance. This is also supported by Hoenigman, Bradley, and Lim (2011, p. 40) who state that "riders are autonomous individuals with physical attributes, such as power output and knowledge of strategy" and that these things determine the abilities and success of a rider's situations such as that in

Example ST3. Further, in relation to the source domain of war, the term "raids" conjures images of air raids or attacks on a city. Thus, this in some way establishes a secondary structural metaphor whereby 'Leader is a CIty Under Siege.'

The final two examples both reflect clear strategies—one from the team perspective and one from the individual rider perspective. Example ST4 can also be seen as being aligned with teamwork, with commentators emphasising the team's strong position as a result of having three riders left working together (i.e., the more riders left in contention for the stage victory until the later parts of the stage, the better off a team is). In doing so, the commentators deliver an instance of chremamorphism where the riders are likened to "artillery." Further, it could be argued that another structural metaphor is present here in 'Riders are Artillery/Weapons.' Similarly, chremamorphic expression is used in Example ST5 but in reference to an individual rider and the rest period involved in between attacks on a climb. Thus, "easing off" relates to the recovery period required after the high intensity energy expenditure involved in an attack. The war metaphor is drawn in through the use of the expression to "reload his weapons." The logical metaphorical correlation for weapons is the rider's legs but could also be interpreted as his entire body, particularly the cardiovascular system. The examples presented in ST4 and ST5 give a further indication of the manner in which war metaphors are uniquely encapsulated within the sport of cycling and associated commentary. It is obvious that there is a tendency to draw on the notion of weaponry, but this is deployed in cycling not only in relation to overall team personnel but also to parts of an individual rider's body. Interestingly, in relation to team personnel, the term "artillery" is chosen here as opposed to a military word actually meaning 'personnel' such as 'soldiers' or 'warriors.' This is likely in an attempt to emphasise the notion of power and dominance that can be better carried by such metaphors.

Power: Individual and Collective Resource Management

Numerous references were made to the power or strength of individual riders or riders as part of a collective team. Typically, this was in relation to either the power required to hold off the opposition or the power required to establish and maintain a lead.

P1:   They have got so much *firepower* to *prevent any attacks*.

P2:   He knew in his mind he had the *firepower* to consolidate.

P3:   I think they're *running out of firepower*.

As can be seen, these examples all use the term "firepower." Example P1 draws parallels to military defence strategies such as anti-aircraft weaponry used during conflicts. In this instance, the term "firepower" refers to strength in numbers. In support of this view, Padilla, Mujika, Santisteban, Impellizzeri, and Goiriena (2008, p. 437) explain that team leaders with a good chance of overall success typically attempt to remain "near the front group trying to keep a few teammates with them.

These teammates support the leader driving the pace and *controlling the opposition riders and teams*" (italics added for emphasis). The commentary excerpt in Example P2 relates to an individual rider rather than a team and concerns the confidence of a rider to build a lead and to maintain that lead over his rivals. This use of the term "firepower" is not dissimilar from the first example, as maintaining a lead also necessitates the ability and energy to be able to "prevent any attacks." Example P3 refers to yet another different context, as the "they" referenced here is not riders of the same team, but a breakaway group of comprised of riders from different teams. The firepower here denotes collective physical resources and represents the group's diminishing ability to remain ahead of the main *peloton*.

   With reference to Research Question 3, these examples consolidate the contribution of cycling to our understanding of sport/war metaphors through further emphasising the team and individual aspects of the sport as well as the interteam collaborative nature. The term "firepower" is seen to denote strength in numbers, energy, and speed and is also used in a collective sense where it is shared by members of different and competing teams and used collaboratively. This denotes a significant difference to other sports forming the focus of metaphor studies such as football as well as offers further expansion of current understandings and conceptualisations of war metaphors within sports. The use of firepower to refer to these varying aspects of the sport reveals important implications in relation to strategy and planning, which correlate strongly with war scenarios, thus narrowing the conceptual gap between the two domains.

Teamwork: Dedication to the Cause

Within professional stage-race cycling, a team typically comprises nine riders, each assigned a particular role. Each team has a team leader or the person who is seen as the most likely to be able to challenge for the overall victory in what is known as the General Classification.[1] On the majority of stages, the main function of the other eight team members is to ride in service of their team leader and this is captured by the title given to many of the other riders—the *domestique*.[2] In fact, it is commonly accepted that "no individual cyclist can win without a well-functioning team" (Netland, Schei, & Sverdrup, 2012, p. 190), which bears a distinct similarity with military and war contexts. The service of supporting team members may include riding in front of the team leader to protect them from a headwind, setting the pace of a race, returning back to a team car to fetch drink or food for the team leader, and protecting the team leader from other riders or literally giving up one's own bike for the team leader should they encounter a mechanical problem.

   Such teamwork means that majority of riders must put aside any personal desires or attempt to claim victory—both individually and for their nation—in order to maximise the chances of their team leader being successful. This willingness to work on behalf of someone beyond the self is seen as an honorable trait within cycling, and riders are often spoken about with reference to their ability and

willingness to sacrifice themselves for the greater good of the team. The notion of sacrifice is clearly linked to the discourse of war, where soldiers are expected to sacrifice themselves, if needed, for the greater good and out of commitment to the country and cause being fought for. Within the cycling commentary analysed, there were specific examples of the 'Cycling is War' metaphor expressed through notions of sacrifice and how such an act is deemed to be honorable within the context of the battle as shown in Examples T1, T2, and T3.

T1: He is *sacrificing* himself.

T2: Bryan Coquard has done this *honorable sacrifice* for his teammate.

T3: We'll start to see Team Movistar start to *sacrifice* a rider or two on this climb.

Further speaking to Research Question 3, in instances such as these, there are of course similarities with other sports where sacrifice is required. For example, if a player is injured in a football match, it would be expected that the player would not attempt to play on if the team would do better by replacing them. However, within cycling, the notion of sacrifice can be seen on two levels, which add to our understanding of this war-related metaphor within sports. First, from the team leader's perspective, the sacrificing is done on their behalf (although this is not to say the team leader does not also suffer significantly for his own efforts) in order for the leader to emerge victorious and claim the victory for both team and their own country. In contrast, from the perspective of the remainder of the riders on the team, it is they who sacrifice with the aim of team success, which they can only experience if the individual leader wins. Whilst sacrifice is indeed present in other sports, it does not manifest in this same way and therefore adds another dimension to how the concept can be interpreted through sport. In extension of this point, it is possible to relate back to the unique perspective cycling offers in relation to globalisation. For instance, being comprised of riders from a variety of nations, a team can be conceptualised as an international alliance. The alliance will never be successful if all parties pursue only their own goals; thus, sacrifice must occur at some level.

A further aspect of teamwork and dedication to the cause that was often expressed through the commentary was the attention given to the ways in which riders are used to protect their team leader.

T4: Alberto Contador is following his *bodyguard* around the bend.

T5: If Alberto had been following the *bodyguard* he would have been safe.

T6: The *cavalry* has arrived to guide him to the foot of the climb and as far beyond that as possible.

T7: Froome with his SKY bodyguards, *layers of armour.*

Examples T4 and T5 reference former Tour de France champion Alberto Contador and team leader of the Tinkoff-Saxo team as recipients of ongoing protection from his teammate. In these instances, Contador was following closely behind his

teammate (an act known as "taking the wheel") to avoid the headwind and to leave pacing duties to someone else. His teammate is not referred to as a teammate, or even by name, but in reference to his role within the team as a bodyguard. As in war and other contexts of violence a bodyguard is understood as an individual who places themselves in harm's way to protect someone else, often a person with a higher status. Examples T6 and T7 expand on the idea of protection, as shown in Example T6 in which teammates are announced as "cavalry," which establishes the war reference with cavalry being the military term for soldiers who fight on horse-back. Therefore, this leads to the understanding that rider = soldier and bike = horse. Example T7 refers to Christopher Froome, team leader of the SKY team, and his teammates are collectively referred to as "layers of armour." The protection offered by teammates is understood in relation to the protection offered by armour in war scenarios, with each teammate representing a layer of protection. This example also represents the use of an ontological metaphor in the form of chremamorphic description, whereby the characteristics of an object are ascribed to humans. Onto-logical metaphors such as these are important in providing support to the broader conceptual metaphor of 'Cycling is War', as well as presenting interesting and creative uses of figurative language in their own right.

Metaphorical expressions such as these expand on previous understandings of sport/war metaphors in that there seems to be a similarity with cycling and the general organisation of military institutions, even linking with the political domain where the team leader could be seen to represent the symbolic equivalent of the nation and the other team riders the military with the duty of protecting the nation or their leader. This is an interpretation not offered in other studies such as those by Butterworth (2007, 2008) and Rowe (2003), which rest at the broader conceptualisa-tion of sport itself as being employed as a symbol of the nation, rather than an individual athlete within a team taking on those characteristics. Thus, within the 'Cycling is War' metaphor, a further structural metaphor of 'Leader is Nation' can be extrapolated where the leader, while not *actually* symbolising any particular nation in the literal sense, does adopt the characteristics of the nation in terms of needing to be protected. There is a certain irony evident in this in that while in 'Leader is Nation', the leader is for the most part not from the *same* nation as the teammates who sacrifice themselves in the name of protection for the leader.

Sportsmanship: The Unwritten Rules of Combat

The notion of sportsmanship was often realised in the commentary through the term "truce." Traditionally, within military contexts (as well as other contexts), a truce refers to an agreement between opposing groups, enemies, or competitors to cease arguing or fighting for a certain period of time. Within cycling, this term is of relevance due to the unwritten rules of riding within the *peloton*, and the etiquette of launching attacks on others. Mignot (2015, p. 221) highlights this in stating that "in cycling, certain norms of etiquette or fairness prohibit riders from attacking when

their opponents are having sanitary stops, going through the feed zone or having mechanical problems." The use of the term "truce" can be seen in the following examples, with the final example carrying the same meaning but in a different form:

SP1:   Now that Alberto has returned, the *truce* will be over . . .

SP2:   Complete *truce* at the front.

SP3:   This *cease-fire* will end the moment he makes it back to the main group and it will *be battle stations* for these teams.

Example SP1 echoes the words of Mignot, indicating that the rider Alberto Contador had dropped away from the main group (it was for mechanical issues), and as a result, the group awaited his return before continuing to fight in accordance with their original strategies. Further evidence for this use of the term is provided in Example SP2 which provides further evidence of use of the term, with "the front" meaning the front of the main *peloton*. The truce only continues as long as a particular rider is away for the reasons mentioned, or a reason deemed to be beyond the riders' control, at which point full competition resumes. This application of the term "truce" can also be seen in Example SP3, in which the commentator mentions a "cease-fire," a term synonymous with truce. However, in this particular remark, the commentator explains that at the end of the cease-fire, the war or battle is to be resumed, much as it would occur in the context of military war. The consequences of breaking these unwritten rules in cycling can be severe with riders who attack others during a truce being shunned by supporters and other riders within the group. Winning a stage in cycling is only seen as victory if the victory was achieved in compliance with these unwritten rules. Such rules might be likened to the rules of engagement within a military context.

Conclusion

Other than providing observational and technical sport-specific information, one of the main roles of sports commentary is to add excitement and generate interest for viewers and listeners, a task made easier through the incorporation of figurative language. The use of metaphors is prevalent in commentary, with arguably the most common being the 'Sport is War' conceptual metaphor. Across many competitive sports, similarities can be drawn between the source domain (war) and the target domain (sport) in terms of contest and combat. In this article, we have used the broad theoretical lens of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) CMT to respond to our first research question and demonstrate the prevalence of metaphorical expression in the sport of professional cycling in the Tour de France in relation to the structural metaphor of 'Cycling is War'.

In relation to our second proposed research question, the use of war metaphors is effective in adding a layer of explanation to aspects of the sport including competition, strategy, power, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Finally, the analysis presented

has demonstrated some of the unique ways that sport/war metaphors are encapsulated in professional stage-race cycling, not previously seen in sports that have been the focus of earlier studies. This has laid the foundation for an expanded understanding of the use of war metaphors within sport. For instance, with team composition consisting of riders from different nations, aspects of globalisation are inherent within the sport, and this in turn finds its way into the metaphorisation used in the commentary, such as in relation to sacrifice. The study has also offered a unique reconfiguration of the 'Sport is Nation' metaphor that has appeared regularly in previous research. For example, with riders riding for their leader (from a different country), the leader can be conceptualised metaphorically as 'Leader is Nation' where it is no longer the sport that symbolises the nation, rather the team leader who takes on those characteristics in terms of being defended and protected, and sacrificed for. We have also presented novel interpretations of war-related terminology such as the term "truce." Cycling helps expand our understanding of sport-war metaphors through its adoption of this term to emphasise the importance of adhering to the unwritten rules of the *peloton*. Insights and interpretations such as these and others presented permit further insight into sport and war metaphors as well adding a layer to previous uses of this form of metaphorical expression.

It should be noted that there are limitations to the present study that might be addressed in future work to further advance understanding of sport/war metaphors within the context of professional cycling. First, although the footage studied here was comprehensive, and we believe representative, we were unable to capture *every* minute of *every* stage. Thus, it is likely that the volume of metaphorical language used was far greater than that collected in this study. Second, the focus of this study has been long multistage races—in particular, the Tour de France. Professional cycling also comes in other formats such as 'classic' single-day races such as Paris-Roubaix, or track cycling. It would be interesting to see further studies in other formats of the sport and what they might offer in terms of deepening understanding of metaphor use, and war metaphors, especially within the cultural context of professional cycling.

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Notes

1. The general classification category is used in races with multiple stages to denote the overall classification of riders according to their cumulative time across the various stages, and the winner of this classification represents overall race victory; therefore, it is the most prestigious.
2. Based on the French word meaning "servant" the role of *domestique* denotes a team member whose primary role is to ride for the benefit of others as opposed to seeking individual glory.

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