

P2P News

Official Newsletter of the Pathways to the Podium Research Project



**VICTORIA
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From the Research Team

Issue 4 of P2P News comes to you from a very excited research team.... After 9 months of participant recruitment, the online Developmental History of Athletes Questionnaire has closed, and data collection for the Pathways to the Podium Research Project is complete!

I am happy to confirm that over 635 athletes from over 55 sporting organisations across Canada and Australia participated in the Pathways to the Podium Research Project, providing us with a very large database of information that we now need to sort through and make sense of!

While you wait for us to analyse the data, please enjoy this issue of P2P News which includes an introduction to the latest Expert Advantage blog post, a short profile of Research Team member Dr. Clare MacMahon, and details of some excellent external coverage that the Pathways to the Podium Research Project has received over the last few months.

Please also note that we are currently updating our website to reflect our transition from data collection to data analysis. Please bear with us while we construct our new site and check back regularly for a new and improved look at <http://www.yorku.ca/podium>.

Thank you once again for your assistance and support in recruiting participants for the Pathways to the Podium Research Project. We look forward to sharing our results with you!

Melissa Hopwood
Lead Researcher

Pathways to the Podium Research Project

The Expert Advantage

The Pathways to the Podium Research Team is:

Melissa Hopwood
Victoria University /
York University

Dr. Joe Baker
York University

Dr. Clare MacMahon
Victoria University

Dr. Damian Farrow
Australian Institute of Sport /
Victoria University

Since the last issue of P2P News, a new article has been posted on our sport expertise blog, The Expert Advantage.

The most recent post is the second in a 3-part series discussing various pathways to elite performance. This particular post addresses elite performance via diversification:

“Diversification is also sometimes referred to as sampling or delayed specialisation, however all three terms refer to the same concept – participation in a variety of different sports before deciding to concentrate all efforts on the pursuit of elite performance in one single sport... Numerous studies have consistently highlighted that delaying specialisation until at least mid to late adolescence is not a disadvantage when it comes to elite sports performance.”

To continue reading this post and view earlier articles in the series on pathways to elite performance, check out The Expert Advantage at:

<http://expertadvantage.wordpress.com>

Pathways to the Podium in the News



During recent months, the Pathways to the Podium Research Project has received some fantastic online coverage from a number of external organisations. While we frequently appeared on the websites, Facebook pages, and Twitter feeds of our participating organisations during the data collection phase of our research, the Project is gaining considerable international recognition, and other interested parties have started to share links to our websites, re-tweet our tweets, invite us to their sport discussion forums, and even write their own blog posts about our research!

While I do not have room to formally thank and recognise everyone that has disseminated information regarding the Pathways to the Podium Research Project to their followers, there are a few special mentions that I would like to share with you:

Podcast interview with Steven Hobé for Madog in Motion series on innovation in Canada:
<http://madog.ca/madoginmotion/>

Feature on the Axon Potential blog dedicated to the brain and athletic performance:
<http://axonpotential.com/>

A rebuttal to our Expert Advantage blog post on elite performance via early specialisation by Neil Welch on the NW Conditioning blog:
<http://www.nwconditioning.com/>

Invited contributor to Sportball Canada's Community Voice online forum for discussion surrounding issues in youth sport:
<http://communityvoice.sportballkids.com/>

Please check out these sites and show your support for those that are supporting the Pathways to the Podium Research Project.

Research Team Profile: Dr. Clare MacMahon



Dr. Clare MacMahon has continually combined Cognitive Psychology and Kinesiology throughout her training and work. She received a BA from McGill in Psychology, an MA from the University of Ottawa and a PhD from McMaster University both in Kinesiology. She then held a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Post Doctoral fellowship in the Cognitive Psychology Department of Florida State University.

Clare moved to Melbourne, Australia in 2006 to work at Victoria University in the School of Sport and Exercise Science. She is currently a Senior Lecturer in Motor Learning and Skilled Performance, focusing on talent identification, and the cognitive basis of skill acquisition and movement judgment. This applied research is supported by partnerships with Cricket Australia, the Australian Football League, Tennis Australia, the Australian Institute of Sport, and the Australian Sports Commission.

Clare is currently on sabbatical in the Sport Psychology Institute of the German Sport University in Cologne, and the Institute of Sport Science at Westflische Wilhelms-Universit Münster in Germany until the end of November, 2011.

Thank You!

The Pathways to the Podium Research Team would like to acknowledge the support of the following organisations that have joined us since the last edition of P2P News. Your assistance is invaluable to the project, and the quality of our research will benefit greatly from your involvement. Thank you very much to all coaches, athletes, parents, and administrators from the following organisations:

ACT Academy of Sport

Canadian Cycling Association

Canadian Sport Centre Calgary

École Secondaire Catholique Régionale de Hawkesbury Kodiaks

Ottawa Rowing Club

Pathways to the Podium Research Project Supporting Organisations:



The Pathways to the Podium Research Project is being conducted by a team of sport scientists from Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia, York University, Toronto, Canada, and the Australian Institute of Sport, Canberra, Australia. This project aims to gain a detailed understanding of the pathways that elite athletes follow on their way towards attaining peak performance. Most importantly, we are interested in how the pathways of elite athletes differ from those of lesser skilled athletes. The information obtained from this research will be used to provide recommendations relating to the conditions of sport participation and practice that are optimal for the development of sport expertise. Visit www.yorku.ca/podium for more information.