

P2P News

Official Newsletter of the Pathways to the Podium Research Project



May / June, 2012

Issue 9

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From the Research Team

Hello and welcome back to another issue of P2P News. As I write this month's newsletter I am en-route to Honolulu, Hawaii to present some of the findings from the Pathways to the Podium Research Project at the [North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity conference!](#) (It can be a rough life being a researcher...). I am very excited to be attending this conference, not only because of its exotic location, but because I will be giving 4 presentations, each discussing a different component of the Pathways to the Podium Research Project. The program looks fantastic so I look forward to sharing my review of the conference with you during the next issue of P2P News. In the meantime, over the coming months, details of our presentations will become available on our [website](#) and [The Expert Advantage](#) blog. Don't forget to follow us on [Twitter](#), like us on [Facebook](#), and subscribe to our [blog](#) to receive instant notification when these articles become available.

Also in this issue of P2P News, P2P research team member Dr. Damian Farrow reviews his recent trip to the Ice Hockey World Championships, and I share some of my favourite sport science blogs and websites.

Until next time,

Melissa Hopwood
Lead Researcher
Pathways to the Podium Research Project

The Expert Advantage

The latest post on The Expert Advantage shares the first of our presentations from the North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity Conference in Hawaii.

This post "Faster, higher, stronger... and younger?" looks at the relationships between birth order, sibling sport participation, and sport expertise development. To wet your appetite, here are a few of our major findings:

- Elite athletes were more likely to be later-born children while lesser skilled athletes were more likely to be first-borns
- Siblings of elite athletes were twice as likely to participate in physical activity on a regular basis during the time living together than siblings of non-elite athletes
- Siblings of elite athletes were more likely to have participated in competitive sport at the elite and pre-elite levels than siblings of non-elite athletes

Keep on reading more at:

<http://expertadvantage.wordpress.com>

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 /
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International Ice Hockey Federation Coaches Conferences

Pathways to the Podium Research Team Member, Damian Farrow, was recently invited to deliver two presentations at the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) Coaches Conferences in Helsinki, Finland. Two conferences were organised, one focused on youth coaches and the other professional coaches (including a number from National Hockey League Franchises), and were run on consecutive weekends during the World Championships. Some 300 coaches from around the globe attended the 2 conferences.



Damian's presentations focussed on developing decision making skills, and he said of his experiences:

"It was a valuable exercise in observing how a major international sport organisation administered a key part of their coach development initiatives. The conferences contained themes consistent with many of our National Coaches conferences including presentations on skill learning, sport psychology and performance analysis."

During his trip, Damian also met with Coach Development staff from the Finnish Olympic Committee, staff from the International Ice Hockey Centre of Excellence which is based at Vierumaki, home of Finland's largest Olympic training centre, and visited a regional Olympic training centre in Kisakallio where the Finnish rowing and gymnastics programs are predominantly based. He noted that while the facilities at the training centre were very good, albeit lacking in any supporting sports science infrastructure such as laboratories and facility based video-analysis systems, a key point of difference is that these centre's are open to the public as a holiday destination.

Damian also enjoyed watching his first live hockey match!

Useful Resources

As an avid social media user, I follow a number of blogs that post interesting and informative articles related to skill acquisition, sport expertise, and athlete development. Of course I highly recommend our own Expert Advantage blog, but I would like to share some of my favourite blogs and websites that I suggest you add to your reading list.

If there are any other sites that you recommend that I may have left off this list, please send us a message via email at podium@yorku.ca, [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#). We'd love to hear about your favourite sites!

[The Axon Potential](#) – For all things related to the sporting brain

[The Talent Code](#) – For all things related to the development of talent

[Developing Sporting Talent](#) – For more on the development of talent

[Brian McCormick Basketball](#) – For all things related to motor learning (not just basketball!)

[Mom's Team](#) – For all things related to youth sport

[The Science of Sport](#) – For 'scientific comment and analysis of sporting performance'

[Sweat Science](#) – For 'surprising discoveries from the science of exercise'

Happy reading!



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.

Pathways to the Podium Research Project Supporting Organisations:

