Coaching Philosophies: Perceptions from Professional Cricket, Rugby League and Rugby Union Players and Coaches in Australia

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ABSTRACT
This paper reports on the perceptions of effective coaching based on interviews with male professional coaches and players from cricket, rugby league, and rugby union in Australia. It is part of a larger research project into effective coaching in professional sport where the coach’s philosophy reflected a key ingredient of a coach’s perceived effectiveness. The findings from the current study show that coaches in these professional settings develop programs to assist players in acquiring on- and off-field skills. In addition to this, there is a tendency to focus on learning and improvement as opposed to a win-at-all-costs attitude. These philosophies highlight elements of a Humanistic approach to coaching which focuses on the total development of the person.

Key Words: Coach Effectiveness, Humanistic Approach, Personal and Professional Development, Welfare Manager

INTRODUCTION
The word philosophy takes on many meanings and within the coaching context, the development of a clear philosophy for the individual or team has often been stated as a key ingredient to coaching success [1-4]. For Karpel [2], the coach’s philosophy reflects the foundation that ultimately guides and directs coaching practice. Similarly, Reynolds [3] stated that a coaching philosophy clarifies many aspects of the coach’s delivery and presents their core values and coaching methods. According to Parkin [5], coaches should develop a system for conducting their coaching based on personal truths, principles, attitudes and values. Further to this, Parkin [5] states that a coach’s system or philosophy can and should change over time yet provides clear guidelines for consistency, trust, cooperation, understanding and expectation, as it relates to discipline, teamwork and communication between all parties.

When investigating the perceptions of 12 NCAA Division I collegiate head baseball coaches, Karpel [2] found that the philosophical principles practiced by these coaches evoked a strong sense of purpose and connection between the coach and their athlete(s). This is because a strong bond between a coach and athlete often leads to higher levels of
commitment and athletic performance [3]. As such, a coach’s philosophy may underpin their leadership style and preferences for teaching, organising and managing the coaching environment while also having a significant impact on athlete motivation.

Lyle [1] proposed a Humanistic model of athletic coaching as an educational model devoted to the total development of the individual. Lyle [1] claims that the Humanistic approach to coaching “is a person centred ideology that emphasises the empowerment of the individual towards achieving personal goals within a facilitative interpersonal relationship” (p. 174). It is athlete-centred, and focuses on enhancing the athlete’s self-awareness, growth and development. As such, the coach encourages and supports athletes as they develop into authentic and valued adults.

Lyle [1] argues that sport has enormous potential for personal growth and development if it is centred on Humanistic aims. However, Lyle maintains that performance coaching, which involves extensive participation, intensive commitment and a focus on competition goals, does not have this essential purpose as winning often provides the measure for player and coach development at the professional level. As such, Lyle [1] believes that the Humanistic approach to coaching provides a viable theoretic proposition for coaching, but it is yet to be determined if the parameters of this model are practically viable in professional sport.

In a recent review of coach effectiveness literature, Côté and Gilbert [6] suggest that coaching effectiveness involves: “The consistent application of integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes’ competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts” (p. 316). This definition supports the notion of Humanistic coaching where the coach’s application of knowledge improves both the physical and personal charter of the athlete. Interestingly, Côté and Gilbert [6] claim that while some coaches of professional athletes may exhibit behaviours consistent with developing athletes’ competence, confidence, connection and character, this is not inherently required in the professional context. They contend that in the professional sport context, the main task of a coach is to manage the talent necessary to win championships and to make sure that fans are entertained. Given the perspectives from Great Britain and North America [1, 6], it is necessary to investigate where, if any, Humanistic ideals shape the coaching environment within the professional sport setting in Australia.

In some cases, coaches at the professional level have expressed the need to be concerned about athlete welfare and not solely focused on performance-based criteria. For example, Wayne Bennett, a professional rugby league coach for more than 20 years in Australia, insisted that his players were there to learn and develop skills, knowledge and expertise not just in football, but also life [7]. In support, Kevin Sheedy [8], a former coach of one professional Australian Rules Football (AFL) team for 27 consecutive seasons, recently suggested that one of the most important aspects about playing football at his club was to develop as a player and the person. Additionally, Kellett’s [9] research on professional AFL coaches revealed that all tasks constructed in the training environment were based on the philosophy of developing the players as athletes and as people. These ideals reflect a holistic approach to coaching that considers players’ various on- and off-field needs as integral to professional sport coaching.

While previous studies have confirmed various Humanistic ideals form part of coaching philosophies within the North American university context [see 10-11], more research is needed in order to examine further the coaching philosophies and aims of various coaching programs in a professional sport context. This is particularly important given the concerns raised by previous literature [1, 6], which speculates whether Humanistic aspects feature in professional sport coach philosophies.
Why should coaches pay attention to a humanistic approach when the aim of professional sport teams is often considered to win, make money and entertain? Lyle [1] claims that the interpersonal dimension of the coaching process and having humanistic aims has a fundamental and wide-ranging impact on effectiveness, athlete satisfaction, as well as coach and performer roles. If the coach does not consider the interpersonal dimension of coaching, there is potential for the coach-player relationships to break down which ultimately may influence the effort, interest and motivation of the athletes. These forces may have a considerable effect on the overall performance of the team.

In addition to the above point, professional sports people are often considered role models for the younger generation. Findings from previous research have shown that one of the coach’s major roles is to develop amicable, responsible citizens who can contribute in a meaningful way to society [7-11]. As such, personal growth and development may be an appropriate goal for the coach [1] in order to satisfy the on- and off-field needs of the athlete and develop appropriate role models for society. Research that specifically investigates the extent to which coaches employ a certain coaching philosophy is necessary. As such, the main aim of this paper is to explore the coaching philosophy of professional coaches from cricket, rugby union and rugby league in Australia.

**METHODOLOGY**

This article reports specifically on coaching philosophies of professional coaches and is part of a larger research project into effective coaching in professional sport. The study aims to provide a rich description and interpretation of the participants’ feelings, thoughts, emotions and beliefs about those experiences. While quantitative research emphasises the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, qualitative research attempts to capture the individual’s point of view and examines the constraints of everyday life to secure rich descriptions of the social world [12].

The current study employed a multidimensional case study method and Grounded Theory (GT) research strategies based on the methodological frameworks outlined by Yin [13] and Glaser et al. [14-15]. Multidimensional case study research is useful for assessing a coach’s knowledge and their practical application of coaching skills. Studying the components of coaching based on a case-by-case scenario provided great clarity regarding the similarities and differences exhibited across different professional sport teams and codes. In fact, Yin [13] claims that case study research allow perceptions of important events and situations to speak for themselves. This is an important feature of this research.

Pidgeon and Henwood [16] make a distinction between GT research and research using GT. The former is characterised by following the precise procedures outlined by Glaser et al. [14-15] while the latter pertains to elements of GT that have been used with other ideas from social science research methodologies. In this project, GT research strategies were used, rather than conducting GT research.

**PARTICIPANTS**

Professional coaches and players from the following team sports were recruited to participate in the current research: National Rugby League (NRL); Super 14 Rugby (rugby union); and the Sheffield Shield, One-day and Twenty-20 competitions (men’s national cricket league). These competitions are the highest level of professional sport in Australia and are conducted at the level below international representation (i.e., representing a national team at international sport competitions – for a more detailed description of the research context, see Bennie [17]). Three male, professional sport teams participated in the
present study. In order to investigate a broad range of perceptions regarding effective coaching, head and assistant coaches as well as a balance of early career (i.e., in their first two years of participation in professional sport) and experienced (i.e., eight to ten years of participation) players from a variety of positions within the team (e.g., in rugby union, a mixture of forwards and backs) were included in the sample. Details of the interview participants are included in Table 1.

Table 1: Interview Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Average Age (years)</th>
<th>Average Professional Coaching Experience (years)</th>
<th>Average Professional Playing Experience (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cricket</td>
<td>1 Head Coach</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Assistant Coach</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 Players</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby League</td>
<td>1 Head Coach</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Assistant Coach</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 players</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rugby Union</td>
<td>Head Coach</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Assistant Coach</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 Players</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data collection process involved semi-structured interviewing with coaches and players. When constructing interviews, Berg [18] and Patton [19] recommended that the sequence of questions should flow from general and descriptive questions to questions that more specifically target the proposed research area. Hence, the thematic categories of the interview schedule followed this protocol in order to explore the professional coach and player perceptions regarding effective coaching. The semi-structured nature of the interviews enabled the researchers to explore pertinent information in line with the research aims yet allowed for additional information to be collected from topics that were not included on the interview schedule.

The first interview question *Could you give me some examples of the things that you think make a coach effective?*, aimed to elicit detailed responses in relation to the topic of effective coaching. A topic that surfaced in response to the first interview question related to what coaches and players described as the coach’s philosophy or direction for the team. The categories within this concept also emerged when coaches were asked to elaborate on the aims of their coaching programs or the types of responsibilities delegated to assistant coaches and players. Further to this, coaches and players were asked about key roles within the team (e.g., *What do you consider your main role as a coach? How do you go about achieving this role? and to the players: What do you consider the main role of a coach?*).

DATA ANALYSIS

The principal researcher conducted and audio taped all interviews. The data collected was then transcribed verbatim into Microsoft Word. He then utilised the constant comparative analytic procedures [14, 20-25] to examine perceptions of professional coaches and players both within and across each context investigated. This involved several stages including: a) creating tags, b) creating properties, c) creating categories, and d) developing a conceptual
model [22-23]. Such a procedure enables information to emerge inductively (i.e., from the data) rather than being established prior to data collection and analysis.

CREATING TAGS, PROPERTIES, CATEGORIES AND CONCEPTS
This procedure begins by identifying ‘meaning units’. These were established based on text segments that contained one idea that was appropriately coded with a provisional descriptive name [21, 26]. The meaning units were refined and given ‘tags’ when illuminating interview content emerged. For example, the meaning unit “So I think effective coaching comes down to ... how you develop them on and off the field” (Ronnie, union assistant coach) was assembled into the tag called Develop the player and the person. Creating ‘properties’ involved the development of higher-order groups based on similar features from the initial level of analysis [21]. In this case, the principal author re-read and re-analysed previously coded text and tags to see where similarities and differences existed. Where there were similarities across each context tags were assembled into the ‘property group’, Player Development On and Off the Field as new ‘tree node files’. Further analysis of the data identified similarities between the property groups, which the principal author then collated to make up the ‘category’ of Coach Philosophy whereby relationships were identified and organised into higher-order groups [20].

ESTABLISHING TRUSTWORTHINESS
Qualitative research is regularly criticised in relation to the authenticity of findings based on subjective communication. Various techniques outlined by previous research [15, 19, 27-30] were used to ensure trustworthiness in the present qualitative study. To minimise the possibility of misrepresentation, data was triangulated by using multiple perceptions to clarify various explanations of the questions asked [13, 15, 31]. Triangulation was achieved through a combination of participants (both players and coaches) and was used to verify the meanings and interpretations of the coaches against the players and vice versa.

Rigour in data collection and analysis occurred in the form of detailed descriptions of reported findings, peer examination (or auditing) of findings, and through member checking techniques [19, 29-30]. Merriam [29] points out that the aim of qualitative research is not to produce replicability in the same manner as quantitative research, but to provide results that are consistent with the data collected. This was ensured by triangulating data collection and analysis, and developing an audit trail of accounts that outline and authenticate how data was collected.

Case studies based in qualitative paradigms attempt analytic as opposed to statistical generalisations where essentially, the generalisation is left up to the reader. The researchers’ goal may be to expand and generalise theories or to generalise findings from a single case into a multiplicity of cases rather than enumerating statistical generalisations. This article does not attempt to provide generalisations beyond the contexts investigated; rather, the aim was to provide rich descriptions of data so that readers could make their own generalisations from the findings. Finally, pseudonyms were used throughout the research to protect the identity of the participants.

RESULTS
A total of 953 raw data units emerged from the analysis process, of which, 85 were relevant to the Coach Philosophy category. These units included comments, statements and quotations from a few words to entire paragraphs. Further inductive analysis reduced the data to 4 tags and one major property within the category referred to as Coach Philosophy. The
principal researcher used the terms from participants that best described each of the concepts as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Tags and Properties in the Coach Philosophy Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coach Philosophy Category</th>
<th>Property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role of the coach</td>
<td>Player Development On and Off the Field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the player and the person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate the players</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not purely focused on results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was impossible to include all the participant perspectives throughout this section. Given the enormity of data generated, but selected statements and comments were used that best emphasised important concepts from interviews. This meant that at times there are a disproportionate number of responses from certain participants in some of the topic areas explored. Unless expressed otherwise, it can be assumed the results reflect the responses of all participants from each context explored in this research.

The results from the data analysis indicate that the philosophy of the coach reflects the coach’s goals, actions, values and approach to coaching, which in turn is underpinned by personal qualities and skills. The coach’s philosophy forms the basis of what the coach believes is necessary to: coach effectively, develop a successful program, and guide player development. Ultimately, the head coach’s philosophy influences the manner in which he communicates with players and staff, organises the training environment, leads and manages the team. This relates to what Cassidy [32] identified as “why coaches coach as they do” (p.55).

The results from the current study show that the articulation of a philosophy is critical to providing the team with direction, endowing players and coaches with on-and-off-field responsibilities, and developing an appropriate framework for the team. This needs to be communicated not just to the players, but also to all those involved in the organisation from assistant coaches, to support staff and ultimately those in key administrative positions (e.g., Chief Executive and the Board of Directors). As suggested by Cyrus (cricket head coach): “You’ve gotta have the basic philosophy of what you think is right and ... that’s gotta be relayed to the players and the people that you’re working with.” Each coach’s philosophy evolved from personal experiences as a professional player, previous employment, observing other coaches, and from reading literature based on coaching. It must be acknowledged, however, that the coaches described their own philosophies, which they inherently believe to be effective. They did not suggest from their experiences, what they thought other effective coach philosophies included, yet the analysis of data reveals some similarities across the three sports contexts.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT ON AND OFF THE FIELD

One of the common aims described by the coaches and players in the present research is the need to focus on player development, player education and trying to get the best out of each individual. This means that the coach’s role involves developing the player and the person both on and off the field as shown in the following examples:

... I think coaching ... look[s] at the person as a whole, not just the sporting side of it so ... you know what their background is, what their
work thing is what their family is ... if they’re happy in that, it’ll help the other side of it as well. So there’s more of a responsibility than just trying to produce a bloke who can bat or bowl ... (Cyrus, cricket head coach)

So I think effective coaching comes down to ... how you develop them on and off the field. (Ronnie, union assistant coach)

I think coaching is … not just about footy, [it] is about knowing how to manage a player’s life. (Lenny, league player)

The terms ‘responsibility’, ‘develop’ and ‘manage’ used by the above coaches and players are interesting because they describe the broad range of tasks bestowed upon coaches working with an individual or team. In each context examined during the current research, coaches and players claimed that players are there to learn and develop skills, knowledge and expertise not just in football, but also life. In this respect, part of the coach’s role is to encourage players to seek outside interests beyond the scope of day-to-day training. For the players in the present study, this was crucial. According to Curtis (cricket player), one of the reasons why this is important relates to the significant amount of time that players and coaches spend together:

I think you need to have something off [the] field just purely because of the amount of time you spend with each other. You can’t be talking about just cricket the whole time you’re around each other so I think you need to have something a bit different from the game itself ... I think that the coaching and communication can be about not just the game itself but life in general ...

The ability to talk about life and general matters was particularly important if players were experiencing personal issues that required consultation and direction from the coaching staff, as shown by the following quote:

I s’pose someone that you have the confidence in that you can go to, if you’ve got a problem with your game or something or some part of your life, that you’re pretty certain that they’ve got the answer for it ... (Lloyd, league player)

Lloyd provides an example of how coaches can utilise their knowledge of individual players to help develop players’ physical and personal capacities even during challenging times. Rex (union head coach) provides a further example of the significant role coaches play in being understanding of players’ off-field issues, as these factors may influence their players personally and professionally:

You need to be… more tolerant of individuals that have external factors at play, cultural and family circumstances … we worked for nine months to try and get a solution to his [Ronald, current player] family and cultural issues … we allowed him more latitude [with attendance at training] … because there were problems for long time…
The philosophy outlined here reflects an interest in assisting players when they have off-field issues that may affect their performance and ultimately, the team’s ability to be successful. This is important because:

... an athlete or a player is a reflection of what he is when he isn’t here more than what he is when he is here. So if they go away and they can’t relax and they can’t be themselves when they’re away, ... they can’t recover properly ... if things aren’t good away from the football training paddock and the game, you won’t get an effective result in those areas. (Ronnie, union assistant coach)

I think the first part’s gotta be making sure that rugby league players have got their own lives in order ... that he’s ... happy at home ... he’s using his finances to set himself up for the future ... if he’s got everything around him happening in good order ... then he can concentrate solely on his rugby league. Then I think the next thing as a coach is to take the individual and concentrate really heavy on the individual becoming a better player, a more skilful player, a player that continues to learn and improve ...

(Leonardo, league assistant coach)

In this respect, the professional coaches in the present study develop an awareness of each player’s personal context to create an environment in which the players are comfortable and able to reach their potential, whatever the circumstances.

These findings lend support to the Humanistic ideals of coaching [1] and suggest that a professional coach is interested in a holistic approach to developing the players in their team. The focus on developing the player and the person is a stance also highlighted in academic research with professional AFL coaches [6] and anecdotal evidence by two of Australia’s most successful and long-standing coaches: Wayne Bennett (rugby league) and Kevin Sheedy (AFL) [7-8]. In fact, one recent study on expert gymnastic coaches suggests that reducing the coach’s role to merely one that is focused on increasing athletic performance misjudges the kinds of influence that coaches have on their athletes [33].

Informal conversations with players and coaches in the current study indicate that players are actively encouraged by coaches to pursue study or work in their spare time away from training. Players in the present research are not required to carry out any additional work or study, as is the case in high-school and college contexts. However, in the rugby league team, for example, two players recently developed a small business while another player was studying to become a physical education teacher. This is becoming more widespread in modern Australian professional sport settings where there is a greater focus by coaches and their clubs to help players achieve a work-life balance while playing sport full-time.

In addition to this, clubs now play a greater role in the career transition of players from professional athletes to the workforce after they cease their professional playing commitments. For example, each of the professional teams involved in the present study employed a Welfare Manager who was responsible for organising workshops about life skills (e.g., nutrition), financial options (e.g., investments) and education (e.g., tertiary studies). This person also held regular meetings with individual players to discuss career transition from a professional sport person to everyday member of society. These results highlight that it is very important for coaches to consider the personal context of each player while also
helping them develop into respectable and productive people both on and off the field. The philosophy of player development outlined by the coaches in the current study is resonant with previous research in individual [23] and team sport contexts [10-11]. Similar to the philosophy of the coaches of gymnastic, volleyball and basketball coaches [10, 23], assisting players reach their individual goals and performance outcomes or finding areas to improve in the player’s game are far more important than winning in the eyes of the coaches and players interviewed in this research. Collectively, the participants in the current study felt that winning or success on the field is a consequence of first developing the individual player and the team. As such, the coaches involved in the present research centre their philosophies on player improvement, educating players and setting the club up to function effectively in the long term. Below is an example of Leopold’s (league head coach) views regarding this topic:

I more teach improvement and personal best rather than winning. I’ve had that as a philosophy. Winning comes as a result. A lot of coaches see winning as the only thing and often are short term in that respect. I see myself more as a long-term coach in a club in that I’m prepared to sit down and say that we will improve as we go and we will get results …

Cyrus (cricket head coach) has a clearly articulated coaching philosophy and highlighted five main points that focus on individual and team development as the key areas to achieve success both on and off the field:

... my basic philosophy ... I’ve always worked on is, One – The team ... we always use the philosophy or the acronym [TEAM] “Together, Each, Achieves, More” ... The second thing that I have is pride in who you’re playing for ... and those two combine together pretty closely ... The third thing I’ve always worked on is a strong work ethic ... if you’re going to play, you’ve got to work hard ... the fourth thing is planning ... You’ve got to have a full understanding of the opposition ... but I think that one of the most important sort of things is planning for ... your own team game ... And my fifth thing, and I think it’s the most important ... is enjoyment ... and I’ve got to create an atmosphere and a culture that has people enjoying what they’re about ... getting people to realise that if you have got a successful team, the individual success will follow.

These comments demonstrate that a primary role for the modern-day coach involves a wide range of ‘off-field’ tasks before the players begin any on-field preparation. Interestingly, the coaches in the present research did not explicitly refer to winning matches as an essential component of effective coaching despite the incessant demand to win matches at a professional level. In support of the above, several players claimed that a focus on winning was an ineffective philosophy to employ within the professional setting. For example, Riaan (union player) claimed that “… there’s a lot of pressure that we create on ourselves [when we] talk about ‘we’ve got to win’, ‘we’ve got to do this’…”. Cain (cricket player) and Cyrus (cricket head coach) provided further evidence to support this notion:
I think being purely results based can be a downfall for some coaches. Purely looking at what happens as a result of ... [whether] you lose the game or you bowl poorly, taking that as just being whether you succeed or not ... that can be a downfall, there’s more to it than just the actual end result.

I know that in some places, you’re expected to win trophies and that but I don’t see it like that. I get most satisfaction out of seeing players improve and going to the next level...especially in [making the] Australian cricket [team]...

Perhaps the goal of winning matches in professional sport need not be explicitly stated given the constant pressure to win at this level.

Jones [34] maintained that the “call to coach holistically has gained credence in recent years and such a stance recognises the social nature of coaching and the need to ensure the rounded development of athletes” (p. 9). Côté and Gilbert [6] support this sentiment and claim that coaching effectiveness at all levels is centred on developing athlete competence, confidence, connection, and character – four features that reflect personal and professional skills of the athlete. Similarly, Lyle [1] stated that the Humanistic approach is a person-centred ideology that encourages and supports athletes as they develop into authentic and valued adults. At the professional level however, Côté and Gilbert [6] suggest that these aims are often superseded by the coach’s primary goal of winning competitions While Lyle [1] argues that sport coaching has enormous potential if it is centred on Humanistic aims, he also believes that these values are not inherent in the current performance-coaching context. This, he claims, is because performance sport is driven by commercialism and a lack of concern for ethical standards and conduct, and is reinforced by a reward system for both coaches and athletes that emphasised outcome success.

The findings from the current study support the notion of developing a more holistic approach to coaching, but contest the fact that these approaches cannot exist in professional sport. As each of the professional Australian coaches in this research emphasised a strong focus on the Humanistic goals of developing the total person both in and out of the sport context, it is evident that various Humanistic ideals underpin coaching in the current professional team sport environment in Australia.

STUDY LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research paper illuminates player and coach perceptions from cricket, rugby league and rugby union in relation to the topic of coaching philosophy. Given that the focus was on the coach’s philosophy, the coach’s voice was more prominent than the player’s perceptions of what constitutes an effective coach philosophy. Future investigations could complement and improve on these results by eliciting deeper perceptions from the players while also gathering more evidence from the coach’s perspective in a range of other professional sports.

Other parameters that influenced the outcome of this research include the small sample size and the varied time of year in which data was collected. Although a large and detailed amount of data was gathered, the limited number of teams included in the current research restricted the breadth of views to just three of the professional sports codes in Australia. Ultimately, the number of participating teams was limited due to the difficulty in gaining access to a sample of professional teams and the amount of time permitted by each organisation.
There may have been some discrepancies in the opinions of participants because of the time of season in which data collection took place. For example, two of the teams were in their competition season whilst one team was in its pre-season phase. This, along with whether or not the team was winning or losing, may have influenced the participant views regarding the concept of effective coaching. Being involved with a team or several teams during away fixtures or over an entire season would provide a more detailed insight into the varied coaching techniques of coaches across discrete contextual conditions. These are issues that deserve further research with a larger budget.

It would be prudent to carry out further research that specifically explores how coaches develop their own philosophies of coaching and why they perceive the strategies they employ to be effective. Future studies may also consider exploring other professional sport settings to determine whether a humanistic philosophy exists, is able to be maintained and considered necessary to be perceived as an effective coach. These studies could involve ethnographic research where observations over an extended period of time (e.g., an entire season) are combined with qualitative interviews to provide a detailed account from the specified coaching contexts.

**CONCLUSION**

The present study highlights that the development of the total person is a high priority for each coach. They believe that if you develop the player and the person, this will likely result in on-and-off field success. This reflects a shift from merely developing the players’ competitive skills, to the total development of the person, and supports previously stated Humanistic aims [1]. The participants in the current research outlined that professional coaches possess their own unique philosophy of coaching with each coach describing their main values, attitudes and objectives for why they coach as they do. The coaches and players in the present study place a strong emphasis on Humanistic goals for their coaching programs with their desire to develop the player and the person. In fact, one of the key findings in this research is that the Humanistic ideals of developing the player and the person – once thought to be incompatible with principles of performance sport [1] – now form a prominent part of the professional sport landscape in the contexts studied. According to recent research [34], this emerging trend highlights the importance of the social aspects of coaching.

**REFERENCES**
