

More with Less: the greatest challenge sport has ever faced

by Wayne Goldsmith

The **greatest challenge sport has ever faced** in upon us.

It affects **coaches**.

It affects **teachers**.

It affects **sports scientists and sports medicine practitioners**.

It affects **sports administrators, managers and sporting organisation Board members**.

It affects the **parents, carers and partners of athletes**.

Are you up to the challenge?

In the next 800 words, I aim to change your life and convince you that if you do not change the way you do things... and change them now ... your time of **relevance** in sport - no matter what your role in the industry may be - **is coming to an end.**

Work through this logic with me:

1. Sports performance will improve in the future - that's a given. World records will be broken, athletes will get faster, stronger, more powerful and better in the years to come. It is insanity to think otherwise .. **and**

2. Society is moving more and more towards a quick fix, instant gratification, immediate satisfaction.

Kids under 14 - **the Generation I** - (as in **I**-pod, **I**-phone, **I**-Instant, **I**-Internet and **I** - **It's all about me**) are growing up in a world of instant, immediate information where their attention span is timed in seconds not minutes or hours... **and**

3. Families have increased pressures of time and money - even worse in the current economic crisis. Families have less and less time to give to sport - particularly sports which demand high levels of commitment for training and competition, e.g. swimming, cycling, gymnastics, rowing, athletics so....

4. We will have less time available to enhance the performance of athletes: we will have to achieve **better results in shorter time** in other words...

We will have to achieve more with less.

That is, in all probability, changes in society will demand that you will have to find ways of **improving the performance** of your athletes, players and teams in **LESS time**.

Think about this for a moment:

- You will have to help your athletes **go faster** but finds ways to do it **with less training time available;**
- You will have to make players **more skillful**, but have to do it **in fewer sessions;**
- You will have to **break that world record**, but you will have to do it **with less coaching time.**

I know, I know, I know.

Some of you are reading this and saying, "That's rubbish. This guy doesn't know hockey or baseball or whatever...". And some of you are saying, "It will never happen in my sport".

Well think again!

Society and it's broader trends will not change for soccer or rugby or swimming or cricket or basketball.

It's like saying a train travelling at full speed will divert it's course because a mouse is on the tracks!

Sport is one very very very small part of society and as such is bound by changes, trends and shifts in society.

In the "old days" (of only a few years ago), you could ask young athletes to repeat skills, drills and fitness activities over and over and over until they got it right. Now, after only a few repeats, kids are bored and looking for something else to keep their mind engaged.

In the "old days" coaches could rely on **repetition** to achieve success - now it's about **the four E's** -

Entertainment, Engagement, Excitement and Enjoyment.

So, it's here. The greatest challenge we have all faced. You can't run from it. You can't ignore it. You can't close the door to your training gym and lock the gate to your training fields and hope it goes away. It's here - and like any challenge, **you will either thrive or just survive.**

Are you up to the challenge?

Will you accept the "more with less" challenge and become more innovative, creative and original in your coaching and professional work, than ever, or, will you be one of the "old school" and try to fight off society's influence for as long as you can, blaming the Internet, blaming Nintendo, blaming parents and saying things like **"you just can't coach this generation - they are too different"**.

This challenge is no different to any other you face as a sports professional - you either rise to it and find ways of overcoming it, or you keep doing things the way you always have done and never realise your potential - **an unacceptable outcome for both you and your athletes.** See my (WG) next post.....**20 ways to do more with less!**

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If you do what you've always done ... you'll get what you've always got ... or, will you?