

Summary 2014 ENYSSP Workshop in Leipzig



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The European Network of Young Specialists in Sport Psychology provided its 10th annual Workshop in Leipzig at the Sport Science Department of Leipzig University from October 31st – November 1st. The organizing committee comprised of Peter Schneider (ENYSSP Managing Council), Svenja Wachsmuth, and Max Pelka (both ENYSSP Country Representatives of Germany) were happy to welcome over 100 participants, including over 20 from Germany, from across Europe and beyond. The workshop, themed “Sport Psychology in Youth Development”, provided over 10 seminars, 3 oral presentations, a panel discussion, and a poster session by an eclectic group of international presenters from all over Europe.

German Presence in ENYSSP

The first great success of the workshop was the great increase in attendance of young German practitioners and students. Until recently, German students and practitioners have had little contact and experience with ENYSSP, resulting in a previous record attendance of 5 German nationals at the Gothenburg workshop. Through the efforts of the German Country Representatives Svenja Wachsmuth and Max Pelka, much attention was drawn to ENYSSP this summer through a two-day “Summer School” workshop featuring Prof. Judy Val Raalte (USA) and applied practitioner Marcus Flemming (GER). The success of the Summer School and resulting word-of-mouth campaign brought a great number of young Germans to the ENYSSP Workshop this fall, and should help result in future German participation in ENYSSP events.

Sport Psychology in Youth Development

The complete focus of the workshop's first day was on youth athletes. A panel discussion including applied sport psychologist David Gibas and former professional soccer player Peter Kuračka was moderated by organizer Max Pelka. The discussion focused on characteristics needed to help young athletes succeed in adult sport, and was partially lead from audience questions that were tweeted to the presenter. This provided live feedback as well as increased audience participation. Shortly after the panel discussion, former sport psychologist for Ajax Amsterdam, Wim Keizer, shared his experience and suggestions for those looking to work in the applied field. He demonstrated his new series of informational

“comic books” on sport psychology that use the appeal of comics to teach young athletes important skills they can apply in their training.

In addition to the presentations, workshops including, “FEMPOWER: Mental skills training for female coaches” as well as, “United by sport: Teaching young athletes to appreciate diversity” provided a more in depth view at how young sport psychology practitioners can assist youth development. Participants in these workshops were asked to examine current issues that arise in common places, and concretely develop skills and/or solutions on how to overcome them.

Keynote Speakers

The keynote speakers were Prof. Oliver Stoll (GER) and Dr. Xavier Sanchez (UK). Prof. Stoll presented on his many years of experience as an applied practitioner, with emphasis on his work with elite swimmers and divers. He included the multiple roles a sport psychologist must often fulfill as well as the limitations one has in the field. Perhaps most interestingly, Prof. Stoll took much time to ask the audience to help guide his keynote lecture, providing a new-aged keynote structure that was very much directed to the audience before him.

Dr. Sanchez presented the second keynote on Saturday afternoon. His topic focused on the mental skill of self-regulation, and how the current research in this field can be taken by practitioners and inserted into their daily toolboxes for their athletic clients. Dr. Sanchez spoke of the “promotion focus”, focusing on accomplishments, aspirations and ambitions as well as a “prevention focus”, where there is a concentration on safety and responsibilities.



Additional Workshops

The second day also included two more rounds of applied workshops. Topics covered included: working in teams, sport psychologist – client relationships, self-talk, and even effectiveness of a sport psychology online web-application. Of the twelve workshops that were presented, there were a total of 12 different nationalities presenting, including 4 international groups of presenters. This speaks to the strength of the international networking created by the ENYSSP environment and spurs on further international cooperation in research for young practitioners and researchers.

Poster Session and Social Event

This year ENYSSP was happy to again to present a gift certificate sponsored by Routledge worth 50 GB Pounds in honor of the “Best Poster Award” winner. This year’s winner was Tobias Mierswa, a doctoral student from the University of Bochum. Tobias’ project was focused on lower-back pain, and his poster was selected due to his sound methodology and ability to apply his findings in the real world. You can read summary of his study in this Newsletter. This is the second year in a row that a student from the University of Bochum has won the Routledge “Best Poster Award”, so it will be interesting who can take over the title next year!



ENYSSP was lucky enough to have none other than the Dark Knight himself, Batman, arrive just in time to present and run the social event. The social event included a multitude of tasks for the small teams of 7-10 people grouped together. Tasks included recording an “earthquake scene”, taking a picture with all members in the air, a creative #selfie, and a Just Dance contest. At the end of the event, the majority of participants headed to dinner and danced the night away in one of Leipzig’s coolest clubs!

Summary

The two-day workshop came and went as a blur. Months of planning (and a few weeks of a high stress!) culminated into a wonderful international experience shared by those with a passion for sport psychology. A combination of young (and young at heart!) practitioners provided another spark to keep the fire of sport psychology lit in Europe, and hopefully spurs on further involvement in ENYSSP within the host country, Germany. The organizing committee wishes to thank again all those who were involved and looks forward to the next workshop in Girona, Spain!