

Virtual Issue: Sport Psychology

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The study of sport psychology has a history spanning over 100 years. Ever since Norman Triplett's (1898) ground-breaking publication on social influence on cycling performance, which is often cited as the first experiment in social psychology, psychologists have taken an interest in sport. Coleman Griffith was an educational psychologist who worked as a consultant for collegiate and professional sports teams in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. Several prominent psychologists around the world also applied their theories and research in sport contexts following Griffith, but this work was conducted sporadically and did not begin to have a noteworthy impact until more recently.

The early years of sport psychology tended to be characterised by the adoption and application of theories and models from the wider psychology field. The pioneers of sport psychology in the 1960s and 1970s, normally coming from an academic background in physical education, drew heavily on existing psychological theories and models which appeared to them to be relevant to the topic in question. Very often, however, these adopted theories and models had been developed to consider personal and social phenomena in specific contexts including educational, occupational and clinical settings, and the justification for generalizing to other contexts, including sport, was not always obvious (Lavallee, Kremer, Moran, & Williams, 2012). In more recent years, sport psychology has become more sophisticated in its approach and research in sport context has been published across a range of journals. This virtual special issue highlights some of the important studies in sport that have advanced knowledge across the [British Psychological Society journals](#) in different areas ahead of the London 2012 Olympic Games. These are just a selection of studies, and interested

scholars can find classic (e.g., [Pickford, 1941](#); [Vernon, 1928](#)) and more recent (e.g., [McRobert, Ward, Eccles & Williams, 2011](#); [Sagar, Boardley & Kavussanu, 2011](#)) publications when searching the database.

References

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