

BRIEF REPORT

Sport Psychology Training Program

Michael Linden, PhD, and Benjamin Strack, PhD

Mission Psychological Consultants/Attention Performance Centers, San Juan Capistrano, CA

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This brief report describes a sport psychology training program using an evaluation based on quantitative electroencephalograph (QEEG), biofeedback stress profiling, continuous performance tests, reaction time assessment, and personality tests. The training includes heart rate variability biofeedback and neurofeedback. Graduates of the program include professional and amateur athletes in a variety of sports, including some athletes with special challenges, such as attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder or Asperger's disorder.

The sport psychology training program at Mission Psych Consultants and Attention Learning Centers was developed by Ben Strack and Michael Linden in 2005.

Our initial step is a thorough assessment, which may include quantitative electroencephalograph (QEEG) brain mapping, biofeedback stress profiling, continuous performance tests, reaction time testing, and personality profiles. We consult with coaches to provide additional information and improve the generalization of skill improvement.

The training program incorporates several training modules to help elevate performance. We use state-of-the-art computer technology to enhance sport performance and to help prevent many of the mental breakdowns that can hinder progress. Our technology includes heart rate variability biofeedback and electroencephalography (EEG) biofeedback/neurofeedback (concentration). More recently, numerous athletes and professional and Olympic teams have been using neurofeedback to eliminate obstacles to achieving peak performance states and gain more frequent control of and access to the "zone." Other modules include more traditional mental skills such as imagery, stress management, distraction control, pre-performance routines, confidence building, and leadership skills. Over the past 7 years, we have worked with professional and

amateur athletes in many professional sports including PGA, MLB, professional surfing, soccer, and hockey as well as in many Olympic sporting events.

A more recent development in our sport psychology program has been assessing and training athletes with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and Asperger's disorder. We estimate that up to 20% of professional athletes have ADHD, compared with 4% to 8% of the general population of adults. In addition, many athletes with Asperger's are undiagnosed and excel at technical positions (i.e., catcher, relief pitcher, field goal kicker, goalie, surfing, running, martial arts). Many athletes who have mild to moderate ADHD and Asperger's are able to excel in sports if they find the right fit. If their ADHD or Asperger's symptoms are more severe, most of them will need to be treated. Many individuals and athletes have both ADHD and Asperger's. The use of medications is not allowed in most professional sports. We use biofeedback and neurofeedback to increase attention and socialization while decreasing anxiety, impulsivity, and obsessiveness.



Michael Linden



Benjamin Strack

Correspondence: Michael Linden, PhD, 32122 Camino Capistrano, Suite 200, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675, email: dr mike49@aol.com.
