



Meaningful Competition & The Role of the Coach

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Sport for Life



The Concept



Elizabeth Walker- Young



What was your most meaningful medal win?

"In Athens, I came third in a race where you couldn't tell who won bronze, silver or gold. All three of us broke the world record. To be in that field of competition showed how far Paralympic sports had come. I was just as pleased with that bronze medal as I was with my gold four years later"

WHY?

Meaningful Competition

Original Thinking

- Close competitions are best
- Minimize blowouts
- Objective number (score, spread) to identify meaningful

Additional Elements

- Meaningful,
Non-Meaningful,
Potentially Meaningful
- **Role of the Coach**

Basketball Canada

A game can be considered meaningful if:

- There is a point spread of 10 or less at half-time and not more than 30 at full time
- There is a point spread of 10 or less during the second half, and not more than 30 at full-time
- The winning team overcomes a half-time deficit, as long as the spread is not more than 30 at full-time
- The losing team is able to maintain or reduce the point spread during the second-half, as long as the point spread is not more than 30 at full-time

Meaningful Competition provides experiences that support learning for competitors. It supports a “we can get better” attitude that encourages athletes to improve during and after the event.

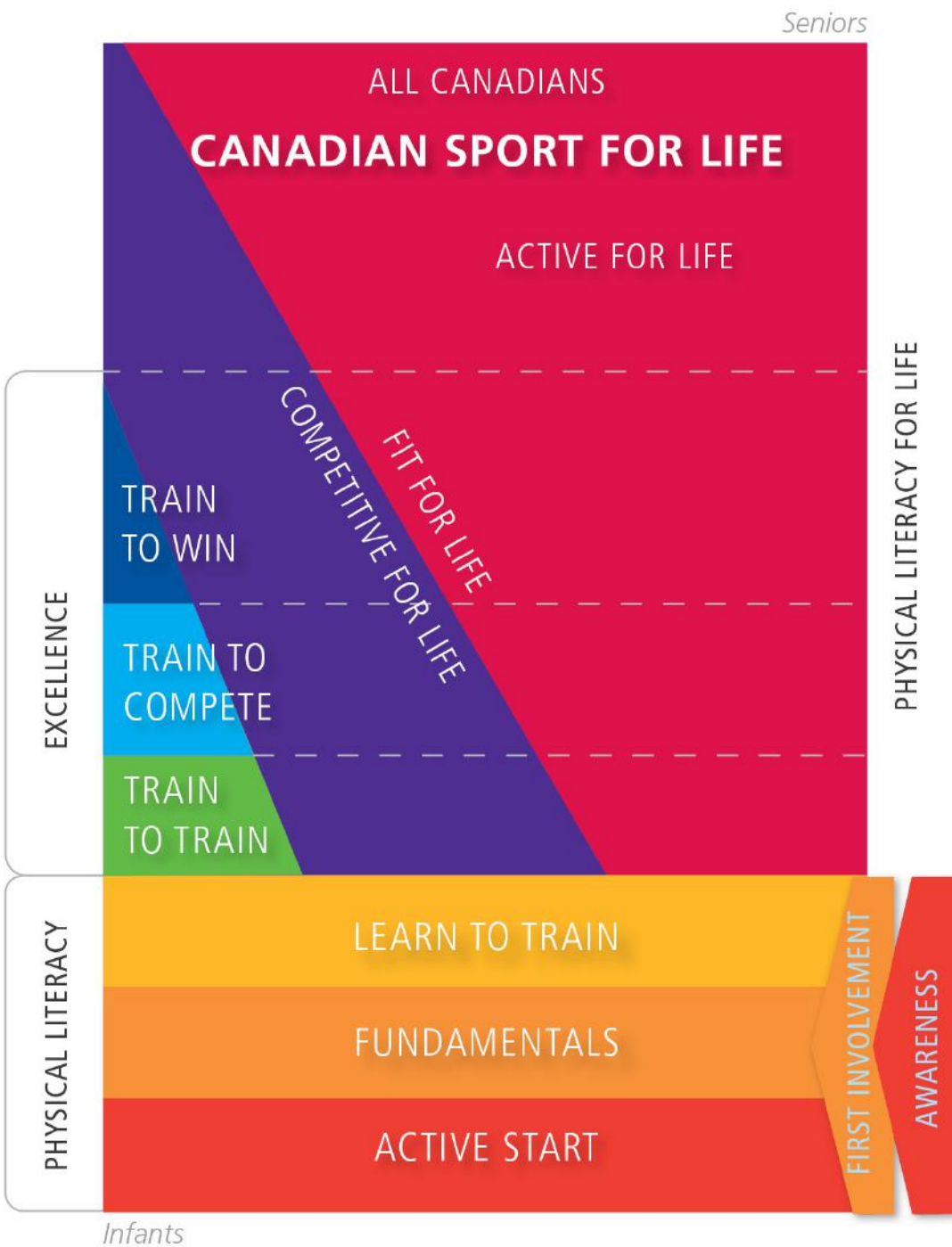


Adapté de : Paul Jurbala, dans Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly (1990). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*

Meaningful competitions are....

- **structured to reinforce the development of LTAD stage-specific skills and abilities.**





Meaningful Competition

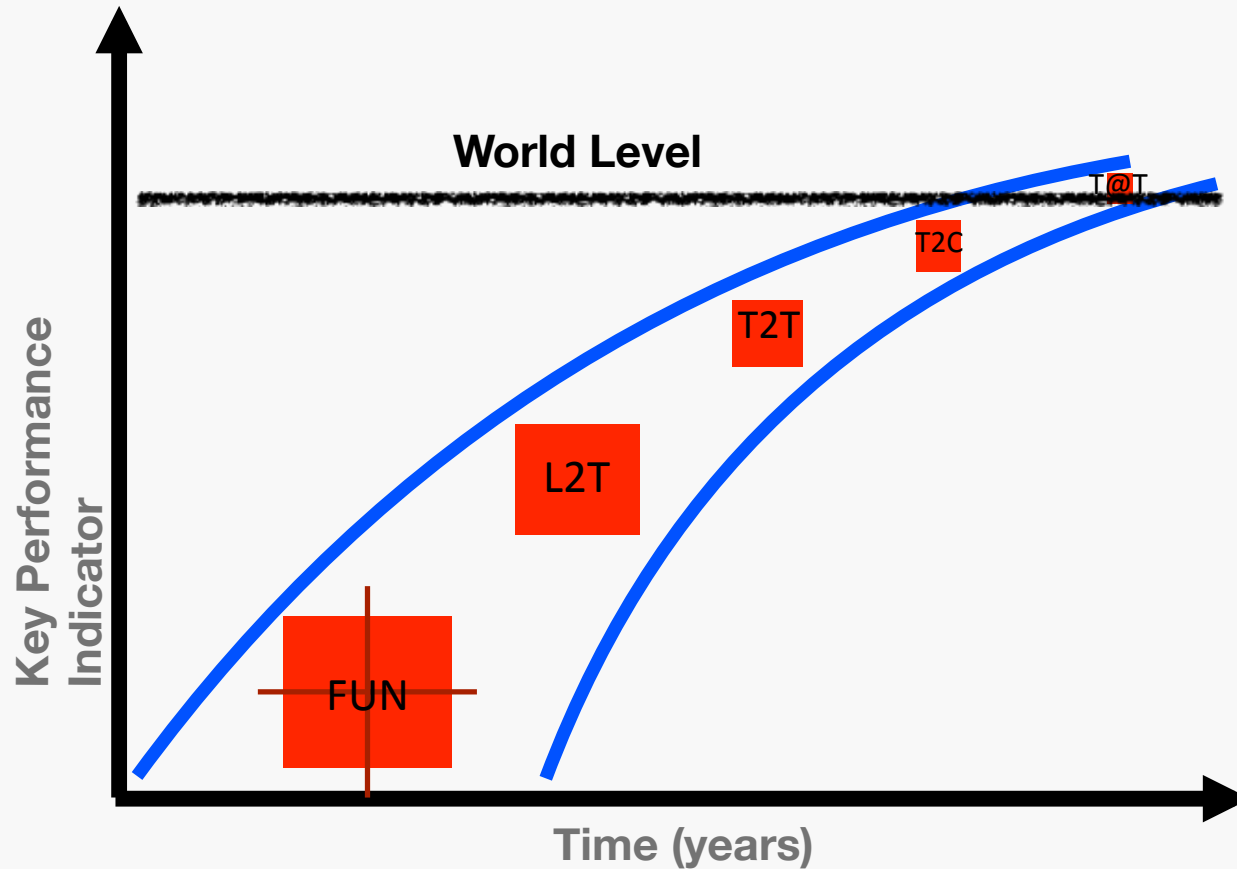
Can Create

Sense of belonging

Baseball Canada

- Baseball is currently looking at a different way to score the traditional game
- A system where the execution would be rewarded is being explored
- Defensive and offensive execution points would create more incentives for coaches to work on these skills in a practice setting

Performance “Envelope”



Norris, 2010

HEAT



MIAMI HEAT

Expectation to Win

Meaningful competitions lead to results that are relatively close and not predictable



Competitors

- are matched with others of a similar level of ability
- are challenged to be the best they can be at that moment in time
- believe they have a chance for success
- remain fully engaged throughout the competition

Meaningful competitions is.....

- Athlete-centered, **coach-led** and system-supported



Athlete-Centred

- “We can get better” Opportunity for learning
- Encourages improvement (during and after)
- Stage appropriate skills and abilities
- Competitors test and perform skills they have learned and practiced in training environment
- Athletes of similar ability together
- Chance for success / remain fully engaged

The **sport system**, including sport organizations, event organizers, coaches, officials and others is responsible for defining competition formats, rules, schedules, and eligibility to support the objectives of meaningful competition.

Competition should contribute to the positive development of all athletes.

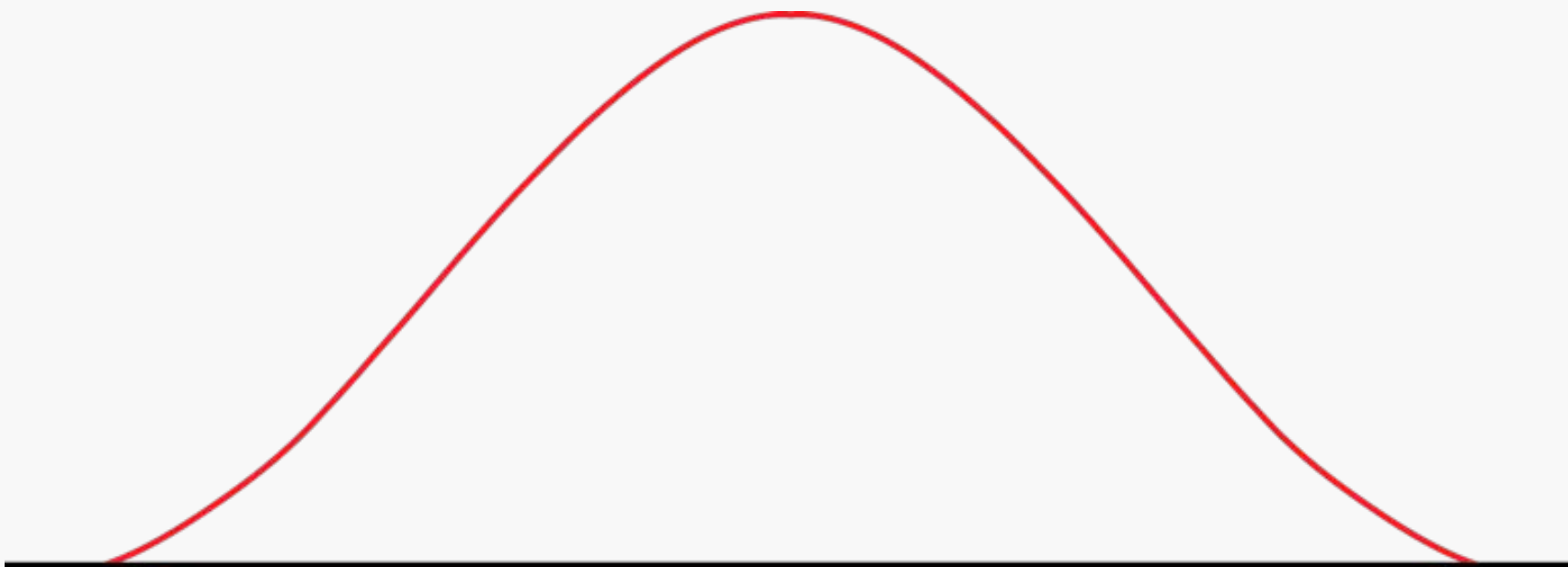
System-Supported

- Competition formats, tiering, scheduling
- Levels / categories /athlete divisions (a place for everyone)
- Rules, qualification and mobility
- Scoring process, judging criteria, results
- Alignment with LTAD model and skills matrix
- Competition review considerations

Coach-led

- How can coaches support a meaningful competition experience by:
 - Choosing events?
 - Preparation?
 - Goal setting?
 - Data tracking and analysis?
 - Reflection?
 - Seasonal planning considerations?

Where are your athletes?





**THINKING
DIFFERENTLY ABOUT
COMPETITION**



**CANADIAN
SPORT FOR LIFE**

Swimming Canada (LTAD model)

Competition schedule guideline (L2T, T2T, T2C)

- 3 below athlete's level competitions
- 2 at athlete's level competitions
- 1 above athlete's level competition



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Coaches Role:



- Consider a coaches role in contributing to the positive competitive experience
- What choices/options does a coach have that can contribute to a meaningful competitive experience?

Conclusion

- Coach as a teacher
- More athletes in the challenge zone
- Similar ability athletes/ teams competing
- Reframing a competition
- What do we score?



