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Developing players' self-esteem through recognition

BWF

Becoming an elite player – relevant competences

The traditional perspective:

- Tecnical skills!

- Tactical skills!

- Physical skills!

- Mental skills!

But how do we understand these issues?

Mental skills: the role of self-esteem

- It is a parameter in our identities – how we see ourselves and how others see us.

- It is fundamentally about mental well-being – feeling happy with yourself as a person (Lyobormirsky et al, 2005)

- It gives you a feeling of control and mastery in your activity and environment.

- It means that you are internally motivated, willing to take the initiative, able to handle negative feedback and learn from it, able to reduce anxiety etc. (Leary et al., 1995; Lyobormirsky, 2005).

High self-esteem and performance

- High self-esteem…
- enables you to make choices (in general, but especially on court)
- means you are not afraid to take the risk that comes with making those choices
- makes it easier to learn from your mistakes and bad choices
- means that you play because it's fun and it's important to you
- All this leads to better results!

So how can we develop players' self-esteem?

- If you are recognized for unique skills and contributions to the group, you will develop self-esteem (Honneth, 1993).

- In order to develop self-esteem, you have to feel you make a difference to other people.

- If you are a coach, and want to develop your players' self-esteem, you will need to delegate responsibility to the players.

My PhD research: Creating environments that develop self-esteem

- Seven-month intervention in a Danish 1st division badminton club
- Case study, using action research
- 8 players participated as informants.
- Each participant had a specific area of responsibility.
- I looked at how their self-esteem developed over the seven-month period.

Methods

- Two interviews were done with each informant – one before and one after the intervention period.

- Observations were done at practice and team matches during the intervention period.

- All data were analysed using narrative analysis.

Results

- 3 out of 8 informants had a dramatic increase in self-esteem.

- 4 out of 8 informants had no development in self-esteem.

- 1 of the informants started with a positive development in self-esteem, but ended with a dramatic decrease in self-esteem.

Discussion

- The nature of the task was essential to the possibility of developing self-esteem (as the 8 informants had different tasks).

- Tasks that were "open", included dialogue with other players, were truly unique, and were accepted by the group, created possibilities for recognition and development of self-esteem.

- Informants had to share the value system of the group in order to develop self-esteem.

- *Examples of the development of specific players*

Conclusion

- It is possible to develop environments that help players experience social recognition, and thereby develop self-esteem.

- Such environments will probably increase the players' performance, and as a consequence, the players will achieve better results.