

## **Careers in the area of Sport**

### ***Dr Paul Gustin***

*Course Director, Bachelor of Exercise and Sport Science  
ESSA Accredited Exercise Physiologist and Sports Scientist*

I have been involved in education and exercise and sports science for over twenty years. Initially trained in physical education I pursued further study in Exercise Physiology. This led to initial work in corporate health and tertiary education and opened the door to opportunities in high performance sport. I have worked in a fitness and rehabilitation role at an AFL club and as head of sports science at the Victorian Institute of Sport. Further development of my career involved six years in the UK working as a technical manager at UK Sport. In 2007 I returned to Australia to re-establish a career in education and research in exercise and sports science.

### **Interview**

#### **What are the main types of careers in the sport area?**

These are many and varied and my career path highlights that many of these can be pursued (e.g. education, research, corporate health, sports science, sports management, consulting). A career tends to evolve over time and is guided by interests, qualifications, experiences, opportunities and personal circumstances. Changing paths is not uncommon and previous experiences tend to shape future possibilities.

#### **What are the main responsibilities involved in the above sport careers?**

I will focus on sports science and applied work in performance sport. Responsibilities will be determined by the specific role but will be guided by the objective of improving athlete performance and supporting the individual, team or organisation to succeed. This may include planning and supervising training programs, athlete and squad assessments, data recording, analysis and reporting, supporting coaches and liaising with colleagues to provide multi-disciplinary support. Effective communication and organisation along with a passion for sport and work ethic are essential.

#### **Who are your colleagues/clients?**

Clients and potential employers range from individuals to local, state and national sporting clubs and organisations, institutes and academies of sport, and may even extend to sports commissions, local councils and government organisations.

Colleagues can be found in all of these organisations working in coaching, sports science, sports medicine and athlete welfare roles, as well as educators and researchers in universities.

#### **What experience and qualifications do you need to work in the area of sport?**

A degree qualification in exercise and sport science or related field is essential, while further study can be helpful in time. This needs to be combined with appropriate experience and development of skills required within sports science. Experience as an athlete or working with athletes and within sport is very important. This is often initially achieved through voluntary roles and practicum experiences, which can help build an attractive CV to potential employers and/or provide valuable networking which can lead to job opportunities.

**What are the highlights?**

Working in sport provides many highlights. On a day to day basis it is interacting with motivated athletes and coaches who are aspiring to be the best they can be. Specific highlights for me include being the physiologist for the slalom canoe team at the Sydney Olympics in 2000, working with the Western Bulldogs and Geelong FC in the AFL, and helping to shape the emerging success of Olympic and Paralympic sport in the UK.

**Advice for students who are interested in working in the area of sport?**

Get involved, stay connected, work hard and look to build unique and valued skill sets. Seek and take opportunities as they present themselves and recognise that your career will evolve over time just as you do.