



Investigating Player Coaches' Experiences in a Men's Masters Basketball League

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Abstract

There are a number of distinct ways in which Masters sport is different than youth sport, one being the phenomenon of players who are also coaches of their team (player-coaches). This study analyzed the environment of MAs through the perspective of player-coaches (PCs). The purpose was to investigate the experiences of MAs who also assumed coaching roles over the course of a season. Specifically, the research question was: What are the roles and responsibilities of men's Masters basketball player-coaches? Interviews were conducted with three players and four PCs (including the league's director) to gain an understanding of their roles and responsibilities on their teams. In addition, field notes were taken during observations at weekly games. Data was analyzed using the Adult Oriented Sport Coaching Survey themes (Callary, 2019), which is a validated survey based on a framework that explores adult learning principles in Masters sport. Findings provide recommendations for ongoing development of player-coaches within the men's league.

Key Words: Masters Athletes, Andragogy, Qualitative Research, Adult Learning Principles.

Introduction

Coaching is an interactive activity in which it is critical to build functional relationships with athletes in order to facilitate learning and improve athletes' overall performance and experience within sport (ICCE, 2013). Coaches of Masters Athletes (MAs; adults typically over 35 who train and compete in organized sport), build these relationships in a peer-to-peer context (Currie, 2019). Some Masters appreciate being referred to as 'athletes' whereas others are reluctant to be labeled as such, however, they all typically acknowledge that they engage in practice or training to prepare themselves for a sport event (Young, 2013). We have much to learn from dedicated MAs because they represent a group of individuals who, as they age, have made the conscious decision to train and compete. In a line of research exploring Masters coaching, previous studies have explored the needs and expectations of MAs (Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2015) and the perceptions of coaches working with MAs (Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2017), with a focus on the lack of coach education programming specific for coaches to learn appropriate relational and psychosocial approaches when working with adults (Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2018). While research in this area is growing, there has been a lack of research specifically understanding the phenomenon of player coaches, who both compete as MAs and coach their fellow MAs. This emerging line of inquiry, that of coaching Masters Athletes, is important considering that sport performance is multi-faceted. The purpose of this qualitative research study is to investigate the experiences of MAs who also assume coaching roles over the course of a season. Specifically, the research question is: "What are the roles and responsibilities of men's Masters basketball player-coaches?"

Literature Review

Supporting Masters Athletes Participation In Coached Sport

It is critical for society as a whole to recognize the importance of supporting adults to maintain their health, physical and cognitive functioning, and their engagement with life. The relationship between being physically active and being engaged with life is important since physical activity is a modifiable lifestyle factor that can impact all components of health (Liffiton et al. 2017). Often times, individuals use sport as an outlet to release stress and stay physically fit. Thus, supporting MAs through effective coaching is important to help these aging adults get what they want out of sport, keep physically active and healthy, and perform at their peak.

The importance of considering the psychosocial conditions embedded within a specific sport environment has been illustrated by prominent coaching models. For example, the Coaching Model (Coté, Salmela, Trudel, & Baria, 1995) implies that coaches must consider how athletes, coaches, and the environment interact, and that all three must be in harmony to create a successful sport experience. Previous research has identified coaching strategies that MAs preferred, such as how a coach communicated with them, and managed training around their lifestyles. For example, Callary, Rathwell, and Young (2015), established that Masters swimmers believed that they should not be coached like youth, but instead wanted to be treated as adults. After listening to Master Swimmers (MSs) stories about their coaches, Callary and colleagues interpreted that coaches influenced MAs' self-efficacy, performance, and interest in swimming. One swimmer explained the importance of feeling as though there is someone "rooting" for you. The increase in self efficacy also increased the athletes' confidence, thus, resulting in overall better performance. In addition, another MA explained the importance of having a swim coach who had previous experience within sport. She identified respect as a correlating characteristic

with a coach who was also well versed in the sport. Lastly, in terms of communication, having “people skills” was important to MAs and meant coaches needed to pay close attention to the individual needs of swimmers. Therefore, from a sport perspective, it is important for coaches of MAs to understand andragogy (teaching adults), especially in regards to the way in which they support, improve confidence, show their own athletic abilities, pay close attention to MAs and communicate well with them (Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2017). Of particular interest to this study is the importance that MAs placed on having coaches who could play the sport, who competed alongside them, and who were therefore able to understand the training and competitive realities of aging bodies.

Furthermore, social support is associated with sustained coping and behavioural persistence and facilitates adherence and compliance to exercise and physical activity (Carron, Hausenblas, & Mack, 1996). Coaches who established a family-like environment and who took an interest in athletes’ personal lives fostered a positive team environment that included support, caring, and mutual trust (Becker, 2009). Currie (2019) also contended that social support and a family-like culture enabled successful team performances and engendered positive and sustained engagement in a Masters synchronized skating team. Many older adults perceive personal and environmental barriers that may significantly constrain the adoption and maintenance of sport participation and may also limit the efficacy of broader-scale community interventions to promote sport (Young, 2013). However, Callary, Rathwell, & Young (2017), and MacLellan, Callary, & Young (2019) note the importance of developing bi-directional communication and levelling the inherent power-position of coaches in Masters sport. With this, Ferrari, Bloom, Gilbert, and Caron (2016), conducted a study which examined the experiences of competitive Masters Swimmers (MS) by asking them to describe desired coaching characteristics and

perceived benefits associated with masters swimming. The results made a unique contribution by identifying various coaching behaviours and characteristics that this particular group of MSs felt promoted ideal training and competition environments that led to improved social, health, and performance outcomes. Participants in the study had full time jobs, children, and five out of six were also married. These contextual factors can create stress for MAs in terms of the amount of time they spend away from their families and work. As such, the results highlight the importance of coaches having individual meetings with MAs to learn about their family and work lives so they can incorporate this information when setting seasonal training plans and performance goals (Côté & Salmela, 1996; Young et al., 2014), thereby increasing alignment between athlete preferred behaviours and coach required behaviours (Young, 2014).

Since MAs want more one on one and bi-directional communication with coaches, and appreciate coaches who take the time to consider their athletes' lives outside of sport, as well as building a family-like culture through sharing responsibilities and power, Player-coaches may be well suited to provide ideal support for coached Masters sport participation, but research is needed to flush these ideas further.

Coaches of Masters Athletes

Coaches are an instrumental resource for Masters athletes. In previous work, the coaching needs and expectations of adult athletes was explored (Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2015) as well as the perceptions of coaches working with adult athletes (Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2017). In Callary et al. (2015), simultaneously coaching, training, and competing at a Masters level was deemed an attractive coaching attribute to the Master Swimmers involved in the study. The MSs felt that having experience playing a sport gave coaches a unique insight into the abilities of their athletes and suggested Masters coaches can influence both external and internal

assets, including confidence (Callary et al. 2015). Callary, Rathwell, and Young (2017) then focused on the psycho-social coaching needs of adult Masters athletes. The purpose of their study was to explore how coaches described approaches with their MAs to discover how they align with adult learning principles, or andragogy (Knowles et al., 2012). The findings highlighted the importance of Masters coaches recognizing adult learning principles when coaching their adult athletes. However, in both Callary and colleagues (2017) research, as well as Rathwell et al., (2015), some coaches and MAs noted that some MAs may be seen as less trainable than others, due partly to their belief in their inability to change. This could be a difficult issue for Player-Coaches to navigate because, even if they know all of the andragogical principles, they can only offer as much support as the MA is willing to accept.

Coaches of MA are tasked with facilitating learning and enhancing performance and quality of experience specifically for an adult cohort (Callary, Rathwell, Young, 2017). I wanted to explore adult learning principles from previous research in my current study because these principles have been relevant in past Masters sport and I wanted to explore how they exist in an understudied coaching role (player-coaches). Thus, in a league of adult players, we need to take into account how the benefits of having a coach translates when certain players who are considered leaders take on the role of “player-coach” for their team, and how their roles benefit both the athletes and teams. According to Becker (2009), athletes viewed their coaches as teachers, mentors, and friends. This reinforced the notion that great coaching cannot be solely determined on the basis of win-loss records or media attention. In Becker’s study, the true essence of greatness was captured in athlete experiences of who their coaches were, what they did, how they did it, and how it influenced them. Overall, the findings provided a greater understanding of the perceived benefits and preferred coaching behaviours for MAs (Becker).

All in all, the findings, as set within the adult learning principles, provide rich and descriptive information derived from coaches themselves to help enhance future refinement of coach education curriculum for individuals working with MAs and to provide guidance for public policies within sport organizations and government.

Peer-coaching in Masters sport

Callary, Rathwell, and Young (2015) investigated benefits what Masters swimmers (MS) wanted to derive from coaches, how they wished to be coached, and what they liked about coaches in their study. During their interviews, seven MSs noted they liked that their coach had knowledge from being a coach or swimmer, because it made them appear competent. More specifically, one MS noted that she appreciated not only her coach's ability to swim, but also how strong of a swimmer he was. She explained how his physical ability to demonstrate techniques gained him more respect as a coach. In addition, MAs and their coaches are peers, usually with a relatively small age gap between them. With this, MAs have the unique situation of potentially having their coaches compete at the same event and maybe even directly against them. Although this can be detrimental to the coaches' impact at competition since they have to allocate time to themselves and not solely on their athletes, one MS shared her positive experience competing alongside her coach and how it gave her coach a new perspective to develop feedback from. She also explained his notable effort to catch her coming out of the pool or to take photos during her event. Despite the uniqueness of this situation, all swimmers spoke positively about this experience, as it was motivational, and helped with their perception of the coach's ability as well (Callary et al. 2015). The coaches in Callary and colleagues (2018) study did express difficulty in coaching and being an athlete at the same time, and so we need to know

more about these challenges, benefits, and overall experiences to understand how to support player-coach experiences.

Despite the growing context of Masters sport and the commensurate growth of Masters coaches to facilitate adult learning in sport, the Masters coach, as a distinct and defined concept, does not always exist. The reality of adult sport participation means coaches are not necessarily needed in order for Masters sport to happen, yet players have an expectation when they are paying to play that coaches will help them improve (Rathwell et al., 2015). While research points to the benefits and importance of a Masters coach, other models of leadership appear to exist within Masters sport, such as players on teams taking leadership roles that are akin to coaching. As of now, there has been limited research conducted about player-coaching specifically in Masters sport. Thus, this research project will seek to diminish the gap in research and help provide a better understanding of PCs roles.

Legendary University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) basketball coach John Wooden, defines leaders as the servants, and explains this as he describes the idea of looking through the eyes of your followers and the art of inspiring followers to play with you, rather than for you (Jenkins, 2014). From a player-coach perspective, they might easily be able to put themselves in their athletes' shoes, therefore I would like to understand how the player-athletes in my study like to be treated and how it aligns with how they communicate with their athletes and teammates. Jenkins highlights key characteristics of this leadership style such as listening, developing trust and strong relationships, commitment to the growth of people, negotiating win-win agreements, and providing help upon request. Servant leadership possesses a lot of characteristics that are congruent with andragogy and how Masters Athletes like to learn which has been uncovered in previous research. For example, in developing trust and strong

relationships, key characteristics of servant leadership include, listening, commitment to the growth of people, negotiating win-win agreements, and providing help upon request , which is akin to the experiential learning principle of adult learning that is described in andragogy (Knowles, 1977).

Methodology

Ethical approval for this research study was granted by Cape Breton University (November 22nd, 2018; see appendix A), before participants were recruited.

Framework

Recently, the Adult Oriented Sport Coaching Survey (AOSCS), was created and validated by a research team (Rathwell et. al, 2020). The AOSCS has been developed in Masters research as a means to help MCs self-assess how they perceive themselves as coaches. This survey was created to help MCs identify areas in which they self-score high and low on different aspects of working with MAs. Afterwards, researchers examined how the AOSCS relates to athlete outcomes including self-determination theory (SDT), coach athlete (C-A) relationships, and liking the coach, and found that there were strong correlations between all of these outcomes when athletes thought their coaches were applying adult learning principles as described in the AOSCS (Motz, 2019). The themes from the AOSCS are therefore relevant to explore how PCs may be using them. The five themes are: imparting coaching knowledge, respecting preferences for effort, accountability & feedback, creating personalized programming, considering the individuality of athletes, and framing learning situations (Callary, 2019). Taken directly from Callary (2019), the five themes are defined below:

- *Imparting coaching knowledge* is when the coach enriches the learning environment by sharing his/her own relevant athletic experience, coaching knowledge, and professional coaching development.
- *Respecting preferences for effort* is when the coach adapts his/her approach by considering how each adult athlete wishes to be held accountable for working hard and giving effort, and how they wish to receive feedback at practice.
- *Creating personalized programming* is when the coach considers and tailors aspects of scheduling (practices and competitions), season-long programming, and coaching support at competitions, to an adult athlete's needs and abilities.
- *Considering the individuality of athletes* is when the coach considers and tailors his/her approach to each adult athlete's experiences and motives in the planning, organization, and delivery of practice.
- *Framing learning situations* is when the coach frames learning situations for his/her adult athletes through self-discovery, problem-based scenarios, modeling, and assessments.

These five factors will be used as a base for analyzing the information and personal experiences shared by the athletes in this study. This framework will help analyze the information and feedback provided by both the PCs, and players to identify patterns in the roles and responsibilities of PCs across the league.

Moreover, Jenkins (2014) explains the famous John Wooden's Pyramid of Success in his article which focuses primarily on servant leadership. The Pyramid of Success contains the foundation of Wooden's leadership, defined his code of conduct "characteristics that I valued, both on and off the court", and is what he attempted to model his own behaviour with. Wooden defined success as nothing to do with accumulating material wealth or gaining prestige but rather

was a peace of mind from doing one's best. His Pyramid of success comprised of five tiers. At the base of his Pyramid were the cornerstones of Industriousness and Enthusiasm. The blocks of the second tier of the Pyramid are Self-Control, Alertness, Initiative, and Intentness. Wooden regarded these personal qualities as more cognitive than those of the first tier which were "essentially values of the heart and spirit" (Jenkins). The "Heart of the Pyramid" is essentially the "formula for teaching basketball", what Wooden calls Condition, Skill, and Team Spirit in the middle tier of his Pyramid. The blocks of the fourth tier of the Pyramid are Poise and Confidence. Poise is defined as "being true to oneself, not getting rattled, thrown off, or unbalanced regardless of the circumstance or situation". Lastly, the apex of the Pyramid, Competitive Greatness, refers to being at your best when your best is needed: "Enjoy the thrill from a tough battle" (Jenkins). I considered Wooden's Pyramid alongside the AOSCS during observations, specifically for the PCs as a means of measuring their personal success as a player-coach and identifying some of the roles and responsibilities as a player coach.

Purpose

Masters sport is a growing cohort of athletes, supported by research that indicates that these individuals age successfully, and have distinct psychological profiles that help them to better navigate the aging process. Having a coach who understands the physiological, psychological, and performance potential of MAs may facilitate a more positive experience for MAs. Young (2014) proposed that coaches could positively influence Masters athletes' involvement and continued participation in sports by creating structured training sessions, which may also help athletes to navigate commonly cited barriers to being active such as motivation and time.

While research for Masters coaches is growing, there has been a lack of research specifically understanding the phenomenon of player coaches, who both compete as MAs and coach their fellow MAs. Additionally, it is important for coaches of MAs to understand andragogy (teaching adults), especially in regards to the way in which they support, improve confidence, show their own athletic abilities, pay close attention to MAs and communicate well with them (Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2017). Finally, there is a great lack of knowledge in regards to the process of peer coaching at the Masters level. The coaches in Callary and colleagues (2018) study did express difficulty in coaching and being an athlete at the same time, and so we need to know more about these challenges, benefits, and overall experiences to understand how to support player-coach experiences.

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to investigate the experiences of adult athletes who also assume coaching roles over the course of a season. The objectives of this study are valuable because this study is will uncover new knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of PCs in Masters sport. The question regarding this research paper is: “What are the roles and responsibilities of men’s Masters basketball player-coaches both as players and as coaches?”

Participants

Seven participants (See Table 1) in a male Masters basketball league, from a city located in Eastern Canada, consented to be part of semi-structured audio-recorded interviews. Prior to each interview, participants received a recruitment script (see attached) which outlined the purpose of this study and background information about previous research regarding Master athletes, and required their signature for informed consent. The research participants included: four PCs (including the director of the men’s basketball league), and three fellow teammates who participate in the league. Each were given pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality.

Table 1. Participant description

Participant	Role and Background Information
Alex	Well respected by the basketball community, Alex is the men's basketball league creator and director for ten years. Each year, Alex organizes the player draft prior to the start of the season. On the court, Alex is a PC, and has been since the beginning of the league.
Lloyd	A very well-respected PC, Lloyd has experience as a former varsity athlete. As a quiet leader, he motivates teammates through his actions and has been a PC in the league for the past ten years.
Brent	Brent, is a PC. He is a multi-sport athlete, playing in a very competitive softball league in the summer. Being well versed in athletics he tried to translate his experience into the men's league and has been part of the league for the past ten years.
Carl	Carl is a PC, and is Brent's brother. He is a multi-sport athlete, playing in a very competitive softball in the summer, and has been part of the league for the past ten years.
John	Has playing experience from playing on youth teams growing up, recently joined the league as a player. As a recent university graduate, John uses the league primarily to stay active.
Mark	A ten-year veteran of the league, and its eldest members, Mark has lots of experience from both playing on various teams and being a coach. In the men's league he takes on the role of a player.
Daniel	Daniel has been part of the league for over five years, as a player, although he has past coaching experience coaching youth teams.

The league director, Alex, approached researchers with the project idea. Afterwards, the primary researcher met with Alex to discuss the structure of the league and how we could implement research. Then he pointed out the PCs of each team at the games. PCs were subsequently asked if they would be part of the study. The other research participants were recruited by the primary researcher who attended games and spoke to them directly. Since Alex was both the league director and a PC, he was interviewed twice, first as at the league director in December 2018, and again, as a PC in November 2019. Participants were selected based on their role on the team (every player-coach was selected), and there was an attempt to speak to both

veterans of the league and newcomers, to gain understanding of the progress the league has shown over the past decade.

Data Collection

Observations were taken at weekly games to observe PCs and MAs in their respective sport environment. Afterwards, select players were chosen for semi-structured, audio recorded interviews.

Observations

With early approval from the Cape Breton University Ethics department, observations began in March 2019, at The Simon Chiasson Memorial Basketball Tournament (aka The Simon), in Eastern Canada. Teams travel from all over Atlantic Canada to participate in this very popular alumni tournament. This four-day tournament, which reunites high school alumni teammates and coaches, featured four divisions including girls under-16/under-18 as well as the under-35 women, under-39 men competitive and over 40 men divisions. As the culminating competitive event of the season, this is a very popular event for athletes and MAs of all ages. This was a great opportunity to contextualize the data that I was going to be collecting in the following year because The Simon is the competitive event that the athletes and player-coaches practiced for within their weekly scrimmages. From November 2019 to the end of March 2020, each week, the four teams would each play one game on Sunday evening. For three of these weeks, field observations were taken, accumulating to 9 hours of total observation. Through the game, players idiosyncrasies were noted. Some of these included, roles taken during timeouts, players communication on court, as well as non-verbal communication. These observations created an opportunity to observe PCs in a game environment.

Semi-structured interviews

Furthermore, semi-structured, audio recorded interviews (see attached for interview guides) were conducted with the league director, the four PCs, and three players. Similar to previous work conducted by Callary, Rathwell and Young (2017), this study concentrated on the participants using direct experiences, using a phenomenological methodology.

Phenomenological psychological research aims to clarify situations lived by persons in everyday life (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008). With this, we are looking for a “universal experience”, by examining lived experiences of individuals based on a shared phenomenon (Allen-Collinson, 2016).

There were three interview guides for this study (see appendix B). The first guide had specific questions for the league’s director, the second for the PCs, and the third for the players. It is important to note that Alex was interviewed twice since he is both the league director and a PC. Since this study is focused primarily on PCs and their relationship with teammates, the three interview types varied in length. For the interview with the league director questions included , "Why do you think this league has been successful in its execution over the past decade?", “What do you think the goal is for most of the athletes in participating in the league?”. The interview for the MAs began with questions to help gain background information, such as, “What is your relationship with basketball?”, “How long have you been part of this league?”. Interviews with the PCs included “Have you ever had any leadership or coaching experience?”. This section allowed me to gain an overall better understanding of the PCs motives and expectations for coaching MAs, as well as the MAs background with basketball and reasons for participating in the league.

Data Analysis

Interviews were transcribed verbatim (20 single-spaces pages total) making only minor edits to correct for grammar. A total of 130 minutes of interviews were transcribed. The interview data were then organized thematically; thematic analysis refers to identifying emerging patterns and themes within results to generate meaning across a qualitative dataset (Braun, Clarke & Weate 2016). Prevalent and recurring themes that emerged were recorded and considered throughout the analysis of responses. Thematic analysis is typically tied to a specific theoretical framework, and does not come with methodological stipulations about how to sample data, thus allowing more flexibility within research. The AOSCS was used as a framework in this study. There are five factors of the survey which include: Imparting coaching knowledge, respecting preferences for effort, accountability & feedback, creating personalized programming, considering the individuality of athletes, and framing learning situations (Callary, 2019). These five factors were used as a base for analyzing the information and personal experiences shared by the athletes in this study. These methods helped us analyze the information and feedback provided by both the PCs, and players and identify patterns in the roles and responsibilities of PCs across the league.

We identified two overarching themes: *the roles and responsibilities of player-coaches*, as well as how data coincide with *the five themes in line with the Adult-Oriented Sport Coaching Survey (AOSCS) (Table 2)*. The main theme of, *roles and responsibilities of player-coaches* also has 5 sub-themes (*outline individual responsibilities for peers, using their platform for positive communication, game management, taking initiative to display accountability and lastly, controlling playing time*). In line with the AOSCS, the rest of the data fell under previously discovered themes (*imparting Coaching knowledge, respecting preferences for effort,*

accountability & feedback, creating personalized programming, considering the individuality of athletes, framing learning situations).

Rigour

Since the director of the league asked us to conduct the research, he did not need to be recruited. Right away this makes the research purposeful because regardless of the outcome, the data will be used by the director. In addition, because of our promptness with the ethics board, observations commenced a year in advance to gain basic background information by observing the Simon. Furthermore, as of January 2020, weekly observations became difficult as there were three separate occasions where games were cancelled due to inclement weather, and COVID19 isolation measures closed the season early (so that the Simon was cancelled this year). I was required to re-adjust my personal schedule to accommodate make-up dates of missed games.

Results

What is a Player-Coach?

According to the league director, Alex, a player coach (PC) is, “Someone who has experience, not necessarily coached at that level before, but some experience coaching in general or being captain.” In addition, upon selecting player coaches, he is looking for specific personal qualities, “I need to see some leadership qualities that it takes to be able to take some players off and actually give feedback without rubbing them the wrong way. For me it’s all about balance... Can they get out there and give 110% while still keeping it fun, and competitive but not crossing that line of too intense to the point where you’re difficult to play with.”

Table 2. Themes

Main Overarching themes	Subthemes
Roles and Responsibilities of Player-coaches	Outline individual responsibilities for peers Using their platform for positive actions Game management Taking initiative to display accountability Controlling playing time
Themes in line With the AOSCS	Imparting Coaching Knowledge Respecting Preferences for Effort, Accountability, & Feedback Creating Personalized Programming Considering the Individuality of Athletes Framing Learning Situations

Roles and Responsibilities of Player-Coaches

Outlining individual responsibilities for peers

Upon observations during league games, it was clear that each player had different roles and they knew their roles. For example, the four teams rotate times in which they play every week. Rarely do the same teams play the earlier game more than two weeks in a row. Regardless of which team was playing, there were always athletes doing similar roles to get the court ready to start on time. Some of these roles included sweeping the floors, preparing shot clock and time for student score keepers and having chairs ready on the sidelines.

On the court, it was evident who the PCs were based on their confidence to speak and provide direction to teammates whether it was from the sidelines or on the court, whereas others took more of a listening role. With that said, everyone had equal opportunity to speak up during timeouts and on the court. It is important that the PCs and MAs both feel that their roles are valued because, depending on the game, their impact could be the difference. Daniel, a member of the league for over five years, explained his positive experience with his team's PC:

He's just as much of a player as he is a coach and everyone helps each other, it's not just one guy, it's every guy. There are some nights your best player can have their worst night and worst player can have their best night so it's important for everyone to feel important on the team so they play their part.

This quote speaks to the importance of having different roles played by different people on the team in order to accomplish tasks. PCs take on more responsibilities in this league both on and off the court. Thus, defining teammates' roles and responsibilities and delegating tasks at the beginning of the season allows for a more harmonious team and season.

Using their platform for positive actions

The transition into Masters sport can be difficult. Some come from strong athletic careers, playing varsity athletics in college or university, whereas others may be newer to the sport. Nonetheless, these PCs have a responsibility to use their coaching platform to encourage positive actions. One PC, Lloyd, uses his platform to strategize the game, "When I'm out there and I can in a way, control who goes on because some people work better with others and having the driver's seat, that gives an advantage because it gives the league bit more strategy and structure." Lloyd explains the benefit of sitting in the driver's seat and having the ability to pair players who have strong chemistry together on the court, in order to foster positive communication amongst peers.

Game management

As the league director, Alex chooses the PCs. In fact, most coaches in this study have maintained the role of PC for many years. Aside from wanting PCs who are strong athletes themselves, Alex selects PCs who understand how to manage a game and also who can create a

positive environment for their athletes to want to play. He chooses wisely and ensures these PCs keep their players' best interests in mind:

There is a time and a place to kind of step back and maybe let someone else take the last shot. If they make it great, if they don't it's something that we can laugh about because it happened and its Rec so it stays on the court. Really my job is to make sure everyone is enjoying themselves, I tell the guys you know this is your time away from your family you're paying for this so let's make good use out of this time, clear our minds and just have fun playing basketball.

From an athlete's perspective, John shared insight to his experience playing alongside player-coach, Lloyd:

Compared to my team last year, it's really different because Lloyd is a great player but he's also a great coach because he understands the dual role. He's not only looking for an open shop for himself but he makes the play for the people around him so that makes it easier as players but also as a team we succeed more because of this.

As shared by John and his experiences with PC Lloyd, Alex chooses PCs, based on their character and athletic ability. Since each team encompasses players from all skill levels, it is important that PCs, as stronger athletes can do their part to make each member of the team feel useful, and at times that might mean giving them the opportunity to take the game winning shot.

Taking initiative to display accountability

Like any coaching role, PCs take the initiative to lead by example and show strong accountability. Part of their accountability is showing up to games and, on days when they are unavailable, having a clear understanding of who is the next player in line to step into this

position to get the team in order. Within his first few seasons with the league, John shared his team's struggle when their PC was absent:

One of the disadvantages would be, we rely on him so much, that when he's not there since we kind of fall apart. Like in a game if we don't know what to do we usually look to our player coach for that guidance and when he's not there people don't get the same respect and they get shut down when they try and speak.

Although a PC's role is to be present and lead by example, they are also accountable for who steps up on their behalf if they are unable to be present themselves. Although they are chosen for the role of PC because of their dedication, it is important for them to prepare teammates with competence and autonomy in order to be accountable when the PC is unable to attend.

Controlling teammates playing time

Another role of the PC is to be aware of playing time, their power to control who is playing, and not to take advantage of that power to play themselves or their friends more than others. All four PCs saw the role of managing playing time as the one predominant downfall of being a PC. In particular, Lloyd shared his opinions towards playing time:

I'd say a disadvantage would be, personally — I don't like playing a lot of minutes so I have to decide who's in and out and even though there are some times where I know I should be out there, I kind of sit myself out because I don't want to be that guy that's just taking over and playing over other people who may not have played as much.

As a leader, Lloyd expressed his struggles with wanting to be an active team leader, without taking away from his peers experiences on the court. In addition, PC Brent revealed his difficulties with creating equal opportunity for all players:

It's a fun league, where we're all looking for fun but, at the same time you get some guys who want to play 35 minutes of a 40 minute game. So some guys only get 10 minutes. And so as a player coach you need to learn how to balance, when you tell these other adults how many minutes they should or shouldn't be playing. But then you also have a responsibility to each teammate to make sure they're getting enough minutes too.

In an environment where these MAs are paying to play and be part of the league, it is important that these PCs recognize the importance of making an effort to give each athlete the opportunity to play and have the opportunity to be an impact on the game. In Masters sport, equal playing time is difficult because often times there are strong interpersonal relationships that might affect how playing time is distributed.

Themes In line With the AOSCS Model

Imparting Coaching Knowledge

Alex created this league around his past experiences. This quote below speaks to imparting coaching knowledge by having experience in other leagues and trying to reproduce certain approaches within a different context, including jerseys, moving gyms, and coordinated organization. Upon being asked about previous coaching and leadership experience, Alex shared his motivation to start a local league based on experiences from overseas:

Yes (Regarding having past experiences), just in men's leagues, different leagues around the province and Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, a little bit in Scotland actually which was a great experience.... I went out there in 2004, I found a league, I joined in and played for a team called Phoenix. There was a higher league and someone who coordinated when you played, we had real jerseys,

played around in different gyms, you moved around a lot and played in multiple areas, so I took some of that with me when I came back here and tried to build it in to this league.

Additionally, being multi- sport athletes, Brent and Carl discussed the differences between the nature of different leagues they are part of. They shared past experiences and moments from the very competitive softball league they participate in during the summer, and brought those lessons into their PC roles in the basketball league. Since these two leagues they are part of have very different dynamics towards winning and the overall level of competitiveness, the two brothers actually go beyond just using previous experiences, and think through how the context means that they need to coach differently, Carl explained:

We're also the player coaches on a softball team. I think there's a difference like — for our softball league it's very competitive, and there's usually money on the line. I think the advantages of being a player coach is that you've got to know what you're doing you get to dictate the strategy and all those decisions. So I think there's a benefit in that sense. For this league, I think you are still going to be a PC if you're someone who is doing it for the right reasons, you get to control those things like playing time, like trying to keep that relatively fair for these kind of leagues.

Carl expressed his efforts to dictate the strategy of the game in the position of a PC. With that said, Brent explained his view on adapting to the nature of the league. Although it is valuable for these brothers to bring previous PC experience to the basketball league, it is important to have the ability to differentiate between contexts and adapt accordingly as a coach. Brent outlines his approach in the following:

I think my role changes based on the nature of the league. Personally, where there's nothing on the line, I try to just take a “lead by example” approach. It's kind of a different level, trying to coach the game like you want. For example, not to get too technical, but we were collapsing when people were driving on our zone and that wasn't good because they could shoot really well. So I wanted them to stay out, so I was constantly saying that — telling the wings to stay out and they weren't listening and I just let it go. But, if it was in a more competitive league, I would call a timeout. I would've maybe had a bit more conviction when telling them what to do.

Overall, these results demonstrate the importance of not only imparting coaching knowledge from prior experiences but also understanding how these values from past experience may have a different look depending on the new environment which they are applied in.

Respecting Preferences for Effort, Accountability, & Feedback

It is important that PCs consider how each of their MAs wishes to be pushed during play. Some individuals are more familiar with a coach-athlete relationship and prefer direct feedback, whereas others may not be as comfortable with feedback and their preferences should be respected. Alex discussed player-coach relationships in terms of communications and the benefits of being comfortable enough to be ‘upfront’:

It makes it easier when there are times where you have to be more upfront because if people respect you it's a lot easier to deliver communication without having people read between the lines. If you're going to say this to them right now, there's a reason. And you know, it's really important to find that balance, of intensity but also keeping it enjoyable for everyone on the court. So I try and

build a strong interpersonal relationship with my peers and a means of understanding how we can communicate better.

Alex highlighted the importance of earning his peers' respect before he delivers feedback since it is easier to speak from a platform that is well respected first. He demonstrates the importance of taking measures to better understand what each adult athlete wants in terms of coaching feedback. Furthermore, Lloyd's teammate John, expressed positive feedback in regards to their relationship:

My relationship with my player-coach is pretty good, I've been playing basketball with him for a long time so I've been around him, everything flows well, and for the most part he knows how I like being talked to in terms of feedback. Like I prefer feedback while I'm playing so I can fix it while I'm playing, rather than after the fact!

As explained by John, Lloyd is especially considerate of how he communicates with his peers. Building an interpersonal relationship is important as a PC to ensure you can deliver info at the time it needs to be delivered, as opposed to shying away from an opportunity to coach. Even though he has difficulty instructing older members of his team, Lloyd recognizes the need to respect preferences for effort, but hesitant based on ages of participants:

Yeah, for the most part it's in the game I do definitely pull people aside if I notice things, but it is hard to because a lot of the younger guys it's easier to do that for but there are older guys that are on my team that I'm not as comfortable with trying to coach and kind of telling them what to do so I just let them do what they want.

Lloyd has received positive feedback about his coaching style from his teammates, however, there are still some areas in regards to coaching MAs, such as delivering feedback to older peers, where he can improve on.

Creating Personalized Programming

One of the most prominent characteristics of the league's creator is his consistency in always attempting to do his best to accommodate the players. With that said, part of ensuring the players are getting their time and money's worth, he spends his time finding credible locations to play, along with real referees and score keepers to run the clock. This pulls participants to want to join the league and keeps players coming back since it adds legitimacy to the program. Alex explains the planning he puts into the structure of the league and obtaining funding to keep it running:

I tried to do some research and asked around and tried to figure out what it would look like if we put a little more money and invested into this league, to make it credible and legit. And that means finding a facility that's up to code, finding referees, that could keep that part of the game in check, so to speak, besides having little mishaps. And then even going out to some businesses and making it a community image. We partnered with CB post, and some radio stations and we have our Facebook page and we said, "Ok, let's create something that we can be proud of and also generate some awareness around the fact that we have a league". So that's where we wanted to start it, from a pick-up game and then legitimize it. So, I started the league, back in 2007 and went for a couple years, then I went back to school and when I finished school I started it back up. So it's been on and off for about 9 or 10 years now.

With this, there is no question that Alex genuinely cares about maintaining this successful league and he understands that the only way to keep the league going is to keep the athletes engaged so he caters to their needs. When asked about his goals for the league and how he leads by example, Alex shared:

Yeah, it would be more about just trying to establish what we want to get out of the league and the recreational league in with that it's just trying to get to know the players and understanding what does each player brings with them. Did they just leave work? Are they late because they ran late from work? Are they tired? Or maybe did they have an issue with a family member? So it's just trying to get engaged with them and learn more about them so that I can help with my communication.

Aside from Alex, the league director, no other PCs discussed creating personalized programming. Since the role of PC already entails additional responsibilities, perhaps PCs do not think they need to create personalized programs. Based on personal observations, it seemed as though PCs were considerate of each athlete in terms of the positions they were put in on court.

Considering the Individuality of Athletes

As a Masters Basketball league, individualized coaching for each adult athlete based on what they have been able to do in past experiences is important since some may be more physically able than others. For example, the oldest member in the league has some insights to share on his physical health. Thus, it is important for player-coaches to be considerate of all their athletes needs as for some a proper warm up and cool down may be the difference between finishing a game with no injuries. Mark explains his experience in the league, as a member of ten years, and now the oldest player:

Well, my body doesn't do what it used to, I have to warm up a lot more. But I think you have to keep playing, I'm by far the oldest guy here, I'm 51, Alex is number 2 and he's only 40. So one of the challenges is that every day I get a little worse and the younger guys get better. But I find most guys don't stick with it, like you have kids, jobs and you stop playing and as soon as you stop, it's a tough sport to get back into. We've seen a few guys, in the pick-up games we have every other Monday. And a few times we'd see some guys who were athletes in college and still coach so they are on the court every few nights, but they haven't played in a while and they get injured right away so you have to keep moving! Especially basketball because it's very unforgiving!

As a dual role like a player-coach, it is important for these athletes to be able to listen to peers as a teammate and apply feedback from a coach's perspective. In addition, there's no problem in PCs asking their athletes about their past experiences to help plan their training. For example, during his interview, Daniel came off as more reserved, however in terms of constructive criticism, he prefers to develop a relationship with a PC before receiving feedback:

Honestly, I think it depends on the person, but personally I'm always up for constructive criticism. I'm not the best basketball player so I'm open to really any feedback that's going to help me be better and be better for my team. With that in mind, sometimes it can be a little bit annoying because it is a pick up men's league, so you don't want anybody breathing down your neck but fortunately for me my player coach is not like that and he understands what I need as a player without pushing the limits.

Daniel's piece is important because it connects the idea of coaches needing to know when, how, and to whom to give feedback.

Framing Learning Situations

As a PC, it is beneficial to encourage MAs to learn by exposing them to higher skilled peers, competitors, or role models. Upon being asked about what advice he would give a first-time player coach in regards to understanding the position better, one player coach, Carl, explained what his first order of business is in the role of player-coach:

I would say primarily understanding the competitiveness of the league, I don't want to be super competitive in a fun league but in a league where for example, you're going to nationals you have to get things done and in order to do so sometimes you have to take on a more authoritarian role. Whereas in a fun league you have to remember what you're playing for, knowing when to say something went to back off, in order to keep people coming because nobody wants to come back when you keep telling them they're doing something wrong even if you're doing it in a positive way it might not be received that way because they might not be into it the way you are.

His brother, Brent, added to his point:

Yeah, I would agree with that just kind of outlining team goals.... Overall, I think the biggest key is to just keep talking to people who have done that or been in that position. Ryan and myself, we have experience but we don't know everything, so we're still learning and I think it's important to just go into situations with an open mind and go in as somebody that's a learner and not going in with, "OK I know everything there is to know about coaching and playing", but rather give-

and-take to and from your players to make their and your own experience is better.

Furthermore, according to one veteran of the league, and a teammate of PC Alex, Mark explained how sometimes there is a lack of initiative from team members to put the plans into action:

We'll have a timeout and people will speak up but the coaching isn't consistent. A lot of times what people say is right and everyone listens respectfully but we get back on the court and not one really does what we just talked about. I've worked with the highlanders, the pro basketball team that was here, and I find that even those guys, pro players, they still miss out the fundamentals so when you're not practicing the basics, the coaching can't go that far. You can identify what's wrong but you can't make someone physically do it. It's one thing to work on in practice, but to do it on the fly is different. Sometimes I'll see things and I don't say anything because I know nothing will really come from it.

Mark shared his feelings towards lacking the 'buy-in' from his peers. With that said, maybe his peers do not have the skill to listen and implement what was suggested, and thus, perhaps Mark needs to spend time figuring out how he can frame the learning situation in ways that his team will understand.

Discussion

Previous studies have explored the needs and expectations of MAs (Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2015) and the perceptions of coaches working with MAs (Callary, Rathwell, & Young, 2017), with a focus on the lack of coach education programming specific for coaches to learn appropriate relational and psychosocial approaches when working with adults (Callary, Rathwell,

& Young, 2018). While research in this area is growing, there has been a lack of research specifically understanding the phenomenon of player coaches, who both compete as MAs and coach their fellow MAs. The purpose of this qualitative research study was to investigate the experiences of MAs who also assumed coaching roles over the course of a season. The current study investigated player coaches' experiences in a men's Masters basketball league to determine some of the roles and responsibilities of PCs of Masters sport. There were several findings that connected with previous research, and past discoveries of peer coaching in Masters sport.

Firstly, when we were asked to study the men's league, we needed to consider whether this league, and the player-coaches associated with it, were indeed Masters Athletes. The athletes were over the age of the high performance trajectory for basketball and were involved in recreational competition in a registered league. However, in the definition of MAs, there is a stipulation that the athletes prepare (practice) in order to participate (compete). Every participant in this study addressed The Simon Chiasson Memorial Basketball Tournament (aka The Simon) and their intrinsic motivation to use the men's league as a means of getting in shape for the tournament. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, this year's tournament was cancelled. However, we deem this motive as being the rationale for their involvement as MAs. Thankfully, ethics approval for this project was received in November 2018, and so, the primary researcher was able to conduct observations and speak with spectators at the March 2019 tournament. After speaking with spectators and watching the competitive nature of the sport grow throughout the four day long tournament, this allowed for a contextual understanding of the quality of the tournament, the competitive drive of the MAs, and the classification of their status. Despite the growing context of Masters sport and the commensurate growth of Masters coaches to facilitate adult learning in sport, the Masters coach, as a distinct and defined concept, does not always

exist. The reality of adult sport participation means coaches are not necessarily needed in order for Masters sport to happen, yet players may have an expectation that coaches will help them improve (Rathwell et al., 2015). While research points to the benefits and importance of a Masters coach, other models of leadership appear to exist within Masters sport, such as players on teams taking leadership roles that are akin to coaching.

John Wooden defines leaders as the servants, and explains this as he describes the idea of looking through the eyes of your followers and the art of inspiring followers to play with you, rather than for you (Jenkins, 2014). Thus, player-coaches can appear to take on less obvious coaching characteristics (the traditionally authoritative leader), and be someone who inspires followers. With that said, findings showed that aside from Alex, the league director, no other PCs discussed creating personalized programming. Since the role of PC already entails additional responsibilities compared to the other MAs, perhaps PCs do not think they need to create personalized programs. This may be a shortfall of peer coaching. Based on personal observations, it seemed as though PCs were considerate of each athlete in terms of the positions they were put in on court.

In relation to past research regarding servant leadership conducted by Welty, Peachy and Burton, they described servant leaders as those who empower their followers, which leads to more sustainable sport organizations. Welty et al. called attention to servant leadership and discussed the differences and similarities servant leadership possesses from other forms of leadership, including transformational. Transformational leadership and servant leadership focus on followers by extending leadership beyond task goals to emphasize a vision for followers. From the perspective of this study, these PCs had the opportunity to bring teammates together, as well as communities, from team community to community outreach, much like servant

leadership. PCs cannot only build a team, but they also have the ability to build a community within a team. This was evident especially in terms of the league director, Alex, who demonstrated his ability to not only bring a community together but keep it together for over ten years through the development of the men's league.

Additionally, Chelladurai's Multidimensional Model of Leadership (1978) explains how effective coaching depends on the relationship between athletes' interpretation of actual coach behaviour, preferred coach behaviour, and situational contexts. This means that a coach who does not acknowledge the unique contextual factors of MAs and adjust their behaviours accordingly, might not facilitate successful outcomes from the view of their athletes. In relation to the findings of this study, all four PCs (Alex, Lloyd, Brent and Carl), expressed their efforts to create strong interpersonal relationships with their teammates. Being that this league has been sustained with many of the same players over the past decade, this could be an attribute to the success with interpersonal relationships.

Overall, the findings from this study were congruent with previous findings regarding peer coaching in the Masters context (Callary, Rathwell, and Young, 2015). In this study, both John and Daniel expressed their appreciation of having a PC who is physically able and competent at basketball. Therefore, of particular interest to this study is the importance that MAs placed on having coaches who could play the sport, who competed alongside them, and who were therefore able to understand the training and competitive realities of aging bodies.

League Sustainability and Growth

Within every interview, athletes and PCs addressed the league director's work-ethic to maintain a successful league over the course of the last decade. They were all consistent in the fact that without his dedication to volunteering his time to collect money, call school gyms and

structure games, there would be no league. According to Alex, he credits his persistence to the league's success thus far, along with his determinations to find credible playing arenas and high quality refereeing, "whether it's having the league out of [the university facilities], we've also had the league out of facilities that are good quality...we're always trying to grow reffing... and the caliber of ball is always good so people know what they're getting into." This also includes finding leaders who can be effective player-coaches. Overall, Alex strives to bring back his core players to keep the quality of the league high, and he is always looking for more players to grow the game, which includes targeting the international populations at the university, along with generating more interest from local MAs who may be unaware of the league. Alex is always eager to determine ways he can grow and diversify the game in Eastern Canada, for instance, he mentioned starting a women's league in the local community. Considering the results of this study and previous implications which have sustained this league for the past decade, we propose five recommendations for continued growth:

1. Personalizing Programs - Aside from Alex, there were not many PCs who expressed ways in which they were creating personalized programming for MAs. With MAs of all ages it is beneficial to consider MAs' individual needs and create personalized programming for the athletes. This might be accomplished by asking MAs what are their goals for the season and getting PCs to try to support them in accomplishing those goals.
2. Framing Learning Situations - Mark mentioned how strategies were discussed in team huddles, however they were not being implemented on court. Thus, there could be more opportunities to frame learning situations in ways that the MAs can implement. For example, if there was one night a week, or every few weeks, depending on gym

availability, where all four teams could gather and practice plays and game strategy, this could improve game play over time across the teams.

3. Growing Confidence Amongst Teammates - Daniel and John expressed the difficulty of achieving success when the PC is absent. To overcome this, perhaps it would be beneficial for each PC to outline team goals and expectations or provide a plan for the team and discuss these with other team leaders for when he is absent.
4. Discussing Playing Time - all four PCs unanimously agreed that one of the greatest difficulties in the role of PC is dictating their peers' playing time. To help overcome this, it may be beneficial for PCs to sit down with their teammates and probe them about their personal expectations for playing time, prior to the start of the season. They may want to devise a plan before games to help implement playing time with less friction.
5. Setting Multiple Goals - As mentioned, most of these MAs use the league as a means of preparing for The Simon. However, in the circumstance of unfortunate events, such as this year's COVID-19 pandemic, it could help the morale of the team to set multiple goals through the season and not just rely on The Simon as the end goal. Setting goals which are chronologically closer would allow PCs to check in on their team's success through the season and make adjustments accordingly. For example, teams could receive points per game won or certain games could be weighted as more important in the overall season plan.

These recommendations may be implemented in discussions between the PCs and the director, or may be in a written document that is provided to the PCs at the start of the season. The director and PCs may want to take part in coach development opportunities throughout the year, and might benefit from looking at resources on the website: coachingmastersathletes.com

Conclusion

All in all, the study allowed the voices and feedback of PCs and MAs to be heard, so that they might take advantage of their opportunities to better educate themselves on adult learning, and consequently better the sport experiences of their athletes. Being a PC involves more commitment to the team, because they are not only a player, but a coach as well so there are more roles and responsibilities. With that said, being a PC can be very rewarding in spite of these extra tasks because you can gain intrinsic motivation as an MA, while improving your peers sporting experience. In addition, with the creation of the AOSCS, PCs have the ability to self-reflect and help themselves identify areas in which they can improve. In conclusion, there is still a lack of research in the field of peer coaching in Masters sport. However, this study was successful in its attempt to investigate the roles and responsibilities of PCs.

Declaration

Ethical approval for this research study was granted by Cape Breton University (November 22nd, 2018; see appendix A).

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Appendices

Appendix A

Questions for Men's Basketball League Director:

1. Can you explain how this league was created? Why?
2. Can you elaborate on the approach of how teams are created in this league? 3. How many teams and athletes are involved in the league?
4. As the director of the league, why do you think this league is successful in its execution?
5. What is your goal for the athletes involved and this league?
6. As the league director, what are some of the challenges you face? 7. What role does the community play in this league?
8. What is a player-coach?
9. Describe the roles of a player coach.
10. How do you feel about player-coaches? From your perspective, what are some advantages and disadvantages of player-coaches?
11. Do you have any training for player-coaches? If yes, is there a certification course? If no, how do these player-coaches know how to do what they do?
12. Have you ever had experience as a player coach? If so, what were some of your goals? If no, what would be some of your goals?
13. What are some challenges player-coaches face?
14. What are you hoping to learn from this study? (i.e., when I provide the report at the end of the study, what would you like to know more about?)

Questions for players:

1. Why do you play basketball? How long have you played the game over your entire life?
2. How many years have you participated in this league?
3. What is your role on the team?
4. What responsibilities do you have to the team?
5. Do you know who the 'coach' is on your team?
 1. If no, is there someone who takes the lead on your team? Would you consider them to be like a coach? How so/ how not? (after this question, skip to question 7)
 2. If yes, how do you know? (continue with question 4)
6. How do you respond to a player-coach?
7. How is the player-coach on your team identified?
8. What is your relationship with your player coach like? How is it different from the rest of your teammates?
9. What are the roles and responsibilities of being a player-coach on your team?
10. From your perspective, what are some of the advantages and disadvantages of player-coaches?
11. Would you want to be a player-coach? Why/why not?

Questions for player-coaches:

1. Why do you play basketball? How long have you played basketball and to what level?
2. How many years have you participated in this league?
3. How did you gain the position as player-coach?
4. What is your role as the coach?
5. What responsibilities do you have on the team?

6. Have you ever had any other experience in a leadership role on a sports team? If so, what did you do? How were they similar or different to this leadership role?
7. What's the difference between a player-coach and a team captain?
8. How do you identify yourself as the player-coach?
9. What is your most difficult role as a player coach? What is the most fun role as the player coach?
10. From your perspective, what are the advantages/disadvantages of being a player-coach?
11. Do you separate your roles as a player and as a coach? If so, how?
12. Describe your relationships with the other athletes on your team.
13. How does your relationship with your athletes affect your position as player-coach?
14. Why did you want to be a player coach?
15. Is there training available for player-coaches? If no, is this something that would interest you?
16. How do you find coaching athletes that are close to your age?
17. What are your teams goals? What is your responsibility in achieving these goals?
18. How do you motivate and inspire your team to succeed?
19. What do you do as a player coach that encourages your players to want to listen?
20. Advice would you give to a first time player-coach?

Questions for spectators:

1. Why are you watching?
2. How often do you come watch?
3. Do you or have you played basketball?
4. What do you think of the league? What's good about it/ what do you think could be added or done differently?
5. Just from watching, can you tell who is the coach of the team?
 - a. If yes, how?
 6. Why do you think these athletes play?

Appendix B



22 October 2019

Ciera Disipio
Student, Experiential Studies in Community Sport
Cape Breton University

Dear Ciera:

Re: Research Ethics File # **1819-015**

The first renewal for the ethics submission entitled **“Investigating Player Coaches’ Experiences in a Men’s MastersBasketball League”** has been approved by the Cape Breton University Research Ethics Board (CBU REB).

Ethics approvals are granted for a period of one (1) year. Principal researchers of ongoing projects are required to submit an annual report for review. Any change to an approved protocol must be reviewed and approved through the amendment process prior to its implementation.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Sandra Jack-Malik".

Dr. Sandra Jack-Malik
Assistant Professor, Education
Research Ethics Board Co-Chair

Signed on behalf of the CBU REB

CC. Dr. Bettina Callary