



NEWSLETTER

**Specialists in Long Term
Athlete Development**

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Welcome to our June 2008 newsletter. The aim of our newsletter is to not only keep people informed of recent developments at Movement Dynamics UK, but to continue to provide information to those individuals responsible for the 'practical' implementation of Athlete Development.

Talent Identification

As more and more organisations and individuals conduct a Physical Competence screening of their athletes, certain factors are emerging that confirm what research and anecdotal evidence has suggested.

The stage of maturation that an individual is at appears to be a key issue in the 10-16 year age group. For those who are fortunate enough to be born in the early part of their school year there is the probability that they will score higher on the Physical Competence assessment. The reason is that this period is one of growth and accelerated hormonal development. The athlete born earlier in the year can have the advantage of up to 12 months of growth and development on their classmates. This advantage is reflected in many of the Movement Dynamics Physical Competence Test battery exercises and other Athlete Profiling measures.

This age group (10-16 years) coincides with the period where Talent ID structures are put in place for many sports. Invariably the screening process contains only those usual 'end-stage' tests that we have all become accustomed to – short distance speed tests, 'Beep' endurance tests, vertical jump etc. If the statistics are right then the decision on which athlete is selected for inclusion in special squads can be flawed if these are the only assessments used. Choosing the young athlete just because they have matured earlier due to their birth date does little for talent development plans in the long term.

Our recent visit to Abu Dhabi reflects these factors. We noted that 85% of the Soccer squad (a squad formed after a selection process using end stage tests and the 'he can play' coaching evaluation) were born in the first half of the year, with 50% of them born in the first quarter.

Born in 1st Quarter – 50%
Born in 2nd Quarter – 35%
Born in 3rd Quarter – 10%
Born in 4th Quarter – 5%

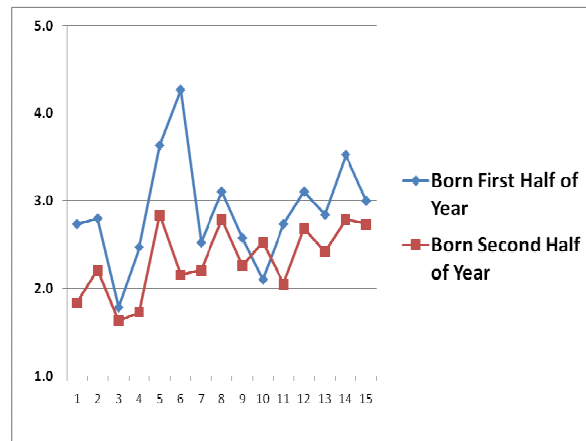
Steps are underway to find processes in the Abu Dhabi Talent Search plan that will accommodate all aspects of the maturation phenomenon as well as strengthen the required multi-discipline approach needed for long term athlete development.



We also conducted Physical Competence screening on a group of schoolboys and out of the combined groups (Soccer group and Schoolboy group – all born in 1995) the boys born in the first quarter of the year scored 20.7% higher than those born in the last quarter.

We are working hard to reflect this critical factor by creating 'Quarter' based scoring standards. In this way we can offer a suggested standard for each quarter of the year.

Fig 1 ~ the effects of birth date on Physical Competence



Talent identification is just that, an identification period, and not the final selection stage. Talent identification is followed by a Talent Confirmation period which should be over a number of years. With so many changes (Physical, Cognitive and Emotional) during the 10-20 years age group the chosen talent development strategy must be flexible and patient enough to cater for all maturation rates.

The plan should embrace an ongoing process of Athlete Profiling that includes: Physical Competence Assessment – Muscular-Skeletal Screening – Performance Indicator Tests

Strategic Sports Development (SSD) – A New Initiative Kelvin Giles and Vern Gambetta

A worldwide service for elite and developmental sports performance.

SSD provides consultancy in the areas of:

- **Annual operational reviews of all performance areas.**
- **Strategic planning.**
- **Talent Identification and Development pathways.**
- **Coach recruitment and professional development.**
- **Athletic development screening and intervention processes.**

About Us

Strategic Sports Development was created based upon the profiles and experience of its founders Kelvin Giles and Vern Gambetta. Two coaches and educators with experience across the entire sporting continuum, Vern and Kelvin have made significant contributions to world leading entities including:

- British Athletics
- The Australian Institute of Sport
- Chicago White Sox Baseball Team
- Brisbane Broncos Rugby League Team
- London Broncos Rugby League Team
- Australian Rugby Union
- New York Mets Baseball Team
- Queensland Academy of Sport
- University of California, Berkeley
- Abu Dhabi Sports Council

"Our aim is to deliver tangible improvements to our clients in a way that is characterised by professionalism and innovation."

Supporting your focus and goals

Operational and Strategic

- **Special Projects**

Keeping abreast of all current research and processes across the full spectrum of sports development and performance attainment is often impossible to do in today's exacting work environment. While your staff deal with 'today' SSD can help in keeping a watchful eye on 'tomorrow'.

We are able to support your long term plans by innovation, discussion and operational reviews. An operational review evaluates conformity with plans and resource allocations, organisational structure, operating procedures, processes, and controls. In today's volatile marketplace, organisations must do everything possible to ensure their operations are running most economically and effectively to maximise desired results. In such a competitive environment, operational reviews have become increasingly important.



Performance Issues

- **Improving Physical Competence in the developing athlete**
All sports specific skills and movements require the athlete to produce, reduce and stabilise force in a multi-plane, multi-directional and multi-joint environment. We offer a full **Athlete Profiling** system for your recruitment program that will allow you to invest your resources wisely. This service is tailored to each of the important Training Stages of an athlete's progression – from Development to High Performance
- **Reducing injuries**
It is imperative that your program reduces those 'controllable' injuries that blight selection and performance. SSD can deliver a balanced program of Functional and Athletic development that will reduce the toll that injuries have on your program. In addition
- **Improving return to Training and Competition processes after injury**
We offer guidance in the critical areas of 'Return to Training' and 'Return to Competition' processes. All coaches need their best athletes to compete consistently and regularly – these plans are crucial to this end. This critical process is deserving of much thought as it clearly illustrates the systematic control and delivery required to return your best athletes back to competition without the risk of re-injury.
- **Improved Speed, Agility, Strength, Power, Endurance, Flexibility**
These High Performance qualities are central to all sports performance and the world is full of many 'spells, potions and gadgets and magic programs'. Having the ability to provide evidence based 'best practice' processes is a vital component of all sports models.
- **Maximising your human resources**
Increasingly organisations are looking to ensure that they both improve and retain their best staff. SSD can deliver a range of professional development workshops that are designed to keep your staff at the cutting edge of their specialist area. Your staff would be exposed to recognised benchmarks and current research in their task area.
- **Integrating support services – Sports Medicine, Sports Science**
The role and coordination of other service providers in your performance process is a critical element of all High Performance models. The recruitment of the best practitioners and the coordination of their efforts are vital. Kelvin and Vern have been at the leading edge of some of the world's leading Institute and Academy networks and can weave this element together for all organisations.
- **Optimise training time**
Planning the program to the required standards is a 'must-do' for all organisations, coaches and participants. SSD has the demonstrated experience in short, medium and long-term planning of management and training issues.
- **Staff Recruitment**
Vern and Kelvin have recruited, mentored and placed some of the world's leading Athlete Development specialists. SSD is experienced in recruiting the best practitioners for your organisation and continuing the ongoing professional development of these vital human resources. Wading through CV's will be a thing of the past when your organisation is confronted with staff changes.

