

2019 High Performance Coaching Seminar Summary

We (CAD) have received quite a bit of quality feedback following the High Performance Coaching Seminar (HPCS) held in Canmore at the beginning of May and thought it would be beneficial to share the associated appreciation and learning.

There were over one hundred people in attendance (including presenters), coming well within the targeted goal. Representation was well balanced through most of the divisions, however some concern has been expressed relating to Canmore being the default hosting venue and how that impacts the attendance of coaches from the East part of the country (particularly the Maritimes.)

From a broad perspective the seminar and presentations were very well received. A decision was taken during the planning process to go beyond the traditional/typical magistral presentations featuring a broad variety of current research and instead target elements identified of current interest through the coaching community.

From the comments received, attendees recognized and appreciated the thread focusing more on the relational/psychological side of coaching as contrasted with the more technical/empirical flavour that characterized previous presentations. The value of the presentations is inherent in the comments from coaches of several who have already begun to directly apply garnered concepts.

Of particular note, there has been much lament over not all coaches being able to participate in Professor Cote's Sunday morning workshop. Being limited in capacity we decided to nonetheless go ahead with a split program and we are so glad we did so. Feedback indicates a strong impact for those who participated. Many suggested that all should have been included and this raises an important reflection of not only that workshop, but our role coming out of the weekend. That being our responsibility to share and disseminate what is important into and throughout the divisions. As noted throughout the seminar, we hoped (and in large part succeeded) to establish some common narratives in the national coaching culture; and for this to deliver the greatest value, the onus is upon each of us to assume a leadership role in not only applying but also in sharing and modeling the practices and perspectives within divisions and clubs.

Some key takeaways

Content

For future presentations it is recommended that we:

- As up to date and state of the art information as possible and tailoring specifically to skiing and the community needs.
- Ensure detailed and practical information moving quickly from the basics and into the cutting edge.
- Build in participation, presentations and perspectives from the US.

- More fully benefit from our own success stories and demystify what is happening within our own system; e.g. how has Louis worked with Alex.
- More exchanges on current practices and orientations across the country.

Format

- Maintain and even increase the exchanges and interactions related to the theory components.
- Provide some form of worksheets, templates or structure for coaches to better capture information and highlight important points.
- Have some form of social media coverage for real-time sharing key points and learnings.
- Better time management to ensure that we respect all the intentions laid out.

Much comment has been shared around the importance of the final HP pathway discussion closing out the Sunday afternoon. As noted, this exchange was integrated (and disrupted) the original schedule to address common concerns captured in the room. Having captured the perspectives of stakeholders, the importance will be to continue the conversation through the appropriate process.

The adaptation of the original schedule did create some disappointment (regarding the snowmaking presentation) and we will be offering a follow-up opportunity for that exchange in the near future.

Nest steps

Following on the intentions for the seminar, notably offering coach development support, there are a few items of recommendation that we will seek to implement:

- Smaller scale on-going learning opportunities that are cross-country ski specific and can be delivered more regionally (e.g. East-West). An example of suggested topics is current trends in strength development.
- Slides and videos of the presentations will soon be available, and links will be communicated as soon as all are ready.
- Snowmaking will be presented as a webinar soon.
- Implementation of a system of summary notes and key learnings for future presentations that can serve as learning reinforcement and extend to the broader community.
- A high focus on evidence based knowledge in selecting topics and presentations.
- Topics and pathways need to be community driven, consultation is an essential part of the developmental process.

Thank you all for your attendance, engagement and insights – Stephen

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