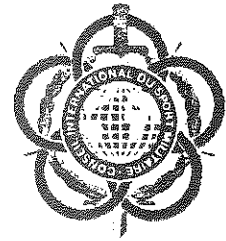


International Symposium on *Sport for all!*



THE EFFECTS OF A PEDAGOGICAL SPORTS CONCEPT ON PHYSICAL FITNESS

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PRELIMINARY REMARKS:

The following article critically deals with the trends of development to increase physical performance.

The aim of this presentation is to direct attention to the fact that the effectiveness of sports and physical training cannot be sufficiently assessed by the quality standard of „condition/physical fitness“ alone.

In this connection, it is assumed that the way of addressing this problem - particularly in organised sports - is strongly marked by insights gained from top competitive sports.

It will, of course, not be possible within the framework of this presentation to discuss this problem area exhaustively. Nevertheless, the attempt is made to give you some food for thought.

Compared to the status of scientific training and methodical findings, which is the basic assumption, one is still very much in a vacuum regarding the overall topic of „improvement of the physical performance capacity“.

INTRODUCTION:

The fact that sports fascinates millions of people and is very popular has again been impressively shown by the Olympic Games in Atlanta.

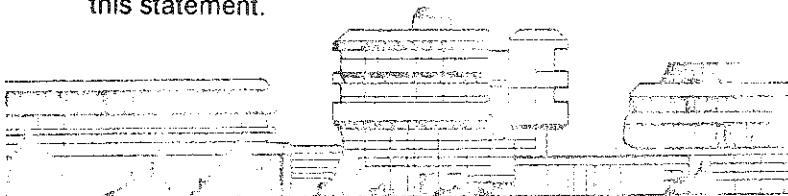
Apart from public excitement, all sorts of bustle by the mass media and immense profit-seeking at all levels, we are still unable to answer the question as to what causes the fascination of sports: Is it new world records, the jogging sessions on Sundays, the cheering about goals in the stadium, or throwing and kicking the ball on the beach, in the street or in the backyard? Other worlds of experience such as school sports, sports in the armed forces, and in police departments etc. ought to be mentioned as well.

What is the reason for the fact that the frequently claimed „most pleasant matter of secondary importance“ is blown up to a „state occasion“ in many places and has now become the centre of life for many people?

Sports is also used to open up new markets aimed at influencing the life style of the people.

In other words, is sports nothing else but politics or does it have a meaning of its own?

Many factors and functions would have to be explored in order to derive an explanation from this statement.



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pools and they want to vary their aquatic activities. In the same way the soldiers show motivation aquatic activities and practising them.

AQUATIC PROGRAMS FOR THE ARMED FORCES

In the first place we have to say that the great quantity of facilities that exist for aquatic activities does not indicate a great knowledge of these activities. many centres are used only as a pastime. They never have had a programs that takes advantage of all the possibilities of the centre.

To avoid this happening in our swimming pools, I am going to briefly describe programs that should be implemented in Military Centres.

BASIC PROGRAM

Learning to swim. As part of military training for combat and special forces qualification. Nearly 50% of troops come into the army with very poor swimming skill and a greater percentage wouldn't find themselves prepared for start with special forces training in the water.

HEALTH PROGRAM

Keep fit. program directed to facilitate all military personnel in their physical training doing aquatic activities. This is appropriate for all ages and more for nature people.

COMPETITIVE PROGRAM

To obtain results. Program directed to perfect swimming competition or other military sports: Military Pentathlon, Naval Pentathlon, diving, Swimming with flippers, Submarine Orientation, Waterloo. Moreover special skill for combat in the water may be included.

LEISURE PROGRAM

Pastime and motivation. Program to enrich leisure activities in the swimming pool and to motivate towards practising aquatic activities. It includes recreation and initiation in aquatic sports.

SWIMMING AND HEALTH IN MILITARY CENTRES

Now, we will look at the program in our centres. Military personnel need to know how to train for fitness in the water and to ensure good health.

As a guide I am going to comment on three ideas:

- Swimming as a low impact sport;
- Aquatic exercises, just for you;
- Therapeutic swimming.

SWIMMING. LOW IMPACT SPORT

Speaking of health programs, we are not including the good swimmer for whom swimming is his favourite sport. I am referring to the average military person whose programs include sessions in water and particularly for officers with a low level of physical fitness or with joint problems. For them jogging can be stressful, painful or just simply monotonous. They come to the pool with no fixed plan or no much idea of what to do as how making progress or how improve their stroke. I have included with this work a guide which can be followed by anyone.

AQUATIC EXERCISES

In the water there is non movement resistance and the action of the gravity is changed. We can use it to design exercises of strength and flexibility. These exercises are more appropriate for the average military personnel than those done outside the water. In the water we don't need any special device and it's easy to select the resistance. You only have to accelerate or not the velocity of the movement. If you choose a physical program in the water those kind of exercises must be part of the ordinary session.

THERAPEUTIC SWIMMING

The therapeutic swimming program is directed to ensure good health and to be used like complementary therapy for some health problems. It is specially fitting for illnesses, injuries and growing problems of the vertebrae and some chronically diseases. The most important are:

- scoliosis, hyperlordosis or hypercyfosis;
- arthritis and other rheumatic diseases and back pain;
- chronic diseases: diabetes, coronary illness, respiratory illness, old age.

Speaking only about backache, 85% of the population suffer from it some time in their lives, specially between 30 and 35 years old. Moreover, the military way of life maximises this figure: repeatedly burdened with equipment and repeated jumping when is parachuted or simply go down a tank.

For all those reasons we need therapeutic programs in our aquatic facilities.

SPINE AND AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT

It was more than 20 years ago when water was first used as a complementary method in back treatment. It is very usual for a doctor to ask patients to do aquatic exercises and they come to the swimming pool asking for it. The first meeting of spine and aquatic environment was celebrated in Madrid in 1989. Then a specific qualification for swimming coach and technicians started.

Therapeutic swimming is to prevent and to improve health. It can never substitute an other therapy and may be used directed by a specialist. It includes two areas:

- Programme for growing problems of the back directed for people for 6 to 13 years old.
- Programme for diseases or injuries in adults.

This second one is named aquatic health and contains special designed exercises of swimming, swim the common strokes with modifications, aquatic strength and flexibility, and corrective gymnastic.

The special designed exercises consist on series of swimming exercises directed to minimise the curve of the spine that is injured. We are going to strength the muscles of the spine than get down the curve and flexibilized the muscles than provoke it.

Swimming the common stroke with modifications permit us to improve the fitness without injuries or painful movements. We use overall the backstroke and change something of crawl and breaststroke. The butterfly is forbidden.

Aquatic strength and flexibility and corrective gymnastic are used to balance the body position. Usually the hips are in position no correct and this affects all the spine.

There are other areas of action like life habit and appropriate weight. The persons must be careful with work habit (sit down too much time, stay in a position, rest in no appropriate place) and must take care with overweight that is the main problem for the joint and spine.

CONCLUSION

I hope that you have known the advantage of aquatic activities and have decided to improve the use of your aquatic facilities. I think that having specialist and directors that implement aquatic programs the people will pleased it.

I hope too that you think on therapeutic swimming as an important program to implement in the swimming pools of the Armed Forces.

I want to emphasise that people that are not athletes and use the physical activities to improve their health. They are a lot of people and need assistance.
