



UNIVERSITY OF  
PORTSMOUTH

# PULSE ISSUE 10

Latest news from the Department  
of Sport and Exercise Science



## WELCOME

WELCOME TO THE TENTH ISSUE OF PULSE, THE NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH'S DEPARTMENT OF SPORT AND EXERCISE SCIENCE (DSES). WHETHER YOU ARE A CURRENT, FUTURE OR FORMER STUDENT, OR YOU ARE SIMPLY INTERESTED IN DSES, WE EXTEND A VERY WARM WELCOME TO YOU. WE HOPE YOU FIND THIS READ INTERESTING AND INFORMATIVE.

With *Pulse*, our intent is to help keep you up-to-date with the many exciting and interesting projects in which our staff and students are involved. Please remember that this is your newsletter too, so if you have any projects or successes to share, or suggestions for features, please email [martina.navarro@port.ac.uk](mailto:martina.navarro@port.ac.uk) or [chad.witcher@port.ac.uk](mailto:chad.witcher@port.ac.uk) and don't forget, there is more to watch and read online at [port.ac.uk/department-of-sport-and-exercise-science](http://port.ac.uk/department-of-sport-and-exercise-science).



## DSES SWIMMING CHALLENGE

A number of staff and students took on some fantastic open water swimming challenges this summer. Colin Iggleden (Senior Lecturer), Dave Black (Senior Technician in Biomechanics) and the two Toms (James and Williams - both Physiology PhD students), took part in the Arun River swim, which is an idyllic swim down the river from Ford to Littlehampton. Like graceful swans, our foursome negotiated the twists and turns of the Arun with everybody completing the 2.5 mile swim in under 70 minutes. Honourable mentions should go to Tom James who finished in lead position and to Dave, whose last swim was more than a decade ago and was very much out of his comfort zone.

Colin also took part in the Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon, which starts close to the famous prison island of Alcatraz with a 1.5 mile swim back to San Francisco. The iconic swim was followed by 18 miles cycling around and under the Golden Gate Bridge, followed by a challenging 8 mile run.

Finally, many plaudits go to Heather and her three colleagues, successfully completing a double Channel swim – Yes! There and back! – The route took them from Dover to the Cap Griz Nez (close to Calais) returning to the green and pleasant land of England near Deal, Kent. Heather and the team swam as a relay, swimming for an hour each, repeating this pattern for the duration of the swim, all 27 hours and 27 minutes covering a distance of 58 miles! Unlike the Arun swim squad, warmly snug in wetsuits, Heather and friends wore only swimsuits which, as she will attest to, does not keep you warm nor protect you from jellyfish. Huge respect to Heather and her teammates!

## NUMBER 1 SPORT AND EXERCISE SCIENCE DEPARTMENT IN ENGLAND

(The Guardian University Guide 2018)

## DSES STUDENT REPRESENTING ENGLAND IN AMPUTEE WORLD CUP

DSES student, Kieran Lambourne will suit up for England during the Amputee World Cup held in San Juan de Los Lagos, Mexico from the 24th of October to the 5th of November. Here's his story in his own words:

'I first started playing amputee football 4 years ago when my coach at the local youth team I was playing for got in touch with the England Amputee Football Association (EAFA). A year later Peterborough United set up an amputee football team which I joined and have played for ever since in the EAFA National League.

Early this year I was selected for the provisional senior squad and in April I made the cut for the 13-man England team to go to the World Cup in October. So far this year we have played international matches against Poland and Ireland in Dublin, the USA and Haiti in Houston, and Italy in Milan. Having finished runners up in the European Championships in Turkey last year, playing in front of 40,000 fans at Besiktas' stadium, and most recently winning the Amp Futbol Cup in Warsaw, we are aiming to win the World Cup in November.'

As a charity, the England Amputee Football Association relies on donations to provide opportunities for new players to get involved and to support juniors. Please consider making a donation by accessing the following link: [everyclick.com/amputeefootball/info](http://everyclick.com/amputeefootball/info)

We wish Kieran and his team the very best of luck. Come on England!



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[laj-photography.co.uk](http://laj-photography.co.uk)

[port.ac.uk/sportscience](http://port.ac.uk/sportscience)

# Student success

## ALUMNI UPDATE

The Department of Sport and Exercise Science at the University of Portsmouth has a strong employment record and we are proud of the successes of our former students. In this regular feature we catch up with one of our alumni to find out what they have done since leaving the University of Portsmouth.

## ALUMNI PROFILE Name: Matthew Dwornik

**Course:** BSc Sports Science (Graduated 2017)  
Winner of the career development prize

**What encouraged you to apply for the career development prize and what did you do with the award?** I have always enjoyed everything

to do with gymnastics – training, coaching and judging alike. Over my time at university, I have invested a lot of money in coaching and judging courses, which is obviously something that, as a student, I did not always have in abundance. I had worked out that my level 3 coaching award was going to set me back a further £649, around the same time that the Career Development Prize was advertised, with the potential for £250-500 of funding from DSES. I figured that it had to be worth a shot, even if I only won the £250 runners up prize.

**What was there to lose?** Long story short, I was lucky enough to win the top prize of £500, which immediately fast-tracked my journey up the coaching ladder.

**Has the award helped you develop in a manner that is different from the opportunities provided during your degree?** Coaching awards are different in many ways to my degree. Although I am now nearing the completion of my MSc Sports Performance degree, this doesn't necessarily help me with the specific coaching techniques and qualifications required to be able to continue my path towards high performance (level 5+) men's artistic gymnastics coaching. I aim for my career to lead me along a path whereby I can combine the theoretical knowledge gained from my degrees with the practical and sport-specific knowledge gained within coaching, which I believe can make me stand out as a specialist within gymnastics performance. There are high-performance coaches, and there are professors of human performance, but I have yet to come across a professional with both levels of expertise. The Career Development Prize has allowed me to get significantly closer to that end goal without the financial and time constraints normally associated.

**What advice would you give to applicants?** Go for it! It doesn't take long to write up 500 words and complete a 15-minute interview, and there's nothing to lose, but the award has allowed me to get so much further along this career path which I am so passionate about. Just think carefully, do your research, and above all, be passionate about what you want to do, and be sure to get across how much it'd mean if you could fund your aspirations.

Attention students: For more information on the prize, please access the Employability Moodle site. The closing date for this year's competition is 5pm on **Friday 30th November 2019**.



## DSES 2018 GRADUATION WINNERS

In July we celebrated the achievements of our undergraduate and post-graduate students at Graduation 2018. Congratulations to all for their accomplishments! A special acknowledgement to our award winners who are listed below:

- Outstanding Academic Achievement (Highest MSc Overall Grade) - £100 **Adrian Fautly**
- Most Improved Student (Highest Percentage Increase from Level 5-6) - £50 **Alexander Taylor**
- Best BSc Project Grade (Sport & Exercise Science) Polar Heart Rate Monitor **Phoenix Page**
- Outstanding Contribution to the Department **George Kostakis**
- Outstanding Academic Achievement (Highest BSc Overall Grade) - £50 **Harvey Belcher**
- Contribution to Community Sport - £50 **George Davis**
- Best BSc Project Grade (Sports Development) - £150 **Laura Grubb**
- Best BSc Project- 2 year Graduate Membership BASES **Alex Gould**
- Dr Alex Milligan Memorial Award: Outstanding Master's Contribution **Matthew Moase**

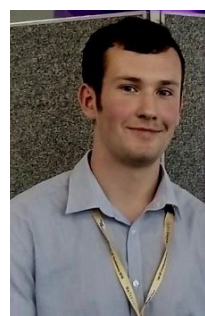
The students pictured in the photo are (from left to right): Harvey Belcher, Phoenix Page, Alex Gould, Joshua Pun, Laura Grubb, and Alexander Taylor.



## Student Sam Wallbanks excels with support from the Cystic Fibrosis Trust

Second year student Sam Wallbanks was awarded an eight-week summer studentship as part of a programme jointly funded by the Cystic Fibrosis (CF) Trust and the British Lung Foundation. Sam follows in the footsteps of alumni Adrian Fautly who was also accepted onto this scheme, under the supervision of Dr Zoe Saynor, two years ago.

The studentships are designed to attract the brightest and best clinicians and researchers of the future into the field of CF, combining clinical practice with research experience at an early stage in their career. Each student is awarded £1,500 for expenses and project costs, and invited to present their work at the annual CF Trust UK conference.



Sam was supervised by Dr Zoe Saynor, Dr Ant Shepherd and PhD student Adam Causer and worked on a project investigating the assessment of glycaemic control in individuals with CF compared to those without CF.

Sam attended the conference in Birmingham on the 10-11th September and was awarded 3rd prize in the poster competition. He will now stay on and complete his 3rd and final year of his BSc studies and continue with this research as part of his research project unit.

# High-quality teaching

## STAFF PROFILE

**Name: Paul Gorczynski**

**What is your background?** I have a Master of Arts in Sport Psychology from Western University and a PhD in Exercise Science with a specialisation in Exercise Psychology from the University of Toronto. I completed my Postdoctoral training in Chronic Disease Management at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, located in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. I am also a Chartered Psychologist with the British Psychological Society.



### What are your teaching duties?

My current teaching duties include being the course leader for the Physical Activity, Exercise and Health MSc Course. I am the unit coordinator for Introduction To Sport & Exercise Psychology and Psychology of Exercise And Physical Activity. I also teach on a number of other units including, Introduction To Fitness Training And Assessment, Current Issues In Sport And Exercise Psychology, Applied Injury And Rehabilitation, and Physical Activity Prescription & Promotion.

**What are your research interests?** My main research interest is improving access to mental health care services for individuals in education, hospital, and sport settings. Currently, my focus is on three major projects:

- 1) Working with specialists in the School of Education and Continuing Studies at the University of Portsmouth, we are examining post graduate students and looking at relationships between mental health literacy and intentions to seek medical support for poor mental health. The project is funded through the Higher Education Funding Council for England.
- 2) I am leading a team of sport psychologists and sociologists from the UK in developing an expert statement and a set of guidelines for mental health literacy training for elite athletes. The work is sponsored by the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences.
- 3) Lastly, I am an active member of the International Olympic Committee Consensus Meeting on Mental Health in Elite Athletes. As part of a group of expert sport medical researchers, I am helping develop a set of strategies to better identify and treat poor mental health in olympians and other elite athletes. For this project, I am the depression and suicide lead and psychosis co-lead.

**What advice would you give students to help prepare for a career in Sports?** I firmly believe that you can never have too many strings in your bow if you wish to work in the sports industry. Use your time at DSES to experience as much as possible; take up a new sport, get involved in staff research projects, say yes to unexpected opportunities, take qualifications, or actively pursue an interest alongside your studies if you have the time. In my experience, you never know when it might be useful in the future to have that knowledge or experience under your belt.

**What's the best thing about DSES?** Hmmm. That's a tough one. There are so many good things about DSES. In all honesty, the staff. I think we're a really great team who do some great work.

## NEW STAFF MEMBER JOINS DSES

In April, we welcomed a new member of staff to DSES. Dr Juliette Stebbings joined us from the University of Birmingham, where she was working as a Post-doctoral Research Fellow. Juliette holds a PhD in Sport Psychology from Loughborough University which focused on coaches' motivation, well-being and interpersonal behaviours. Juliette's research now addresses the role of sport (and the role of the coaches/leaders delivering sport) to engage hard to reach, and challenging young people, in deprived communities and in young offender institutions. This research examines the impact of sport engagement on young people's personal development, and on tackling crime, antisocial behaviour and reoffending.



## DSES LECTURERS AWARDED APEX HEA FELLOWSHIP

In a ceremony hosted by the University of Portsmouth Department for Curriculum and Quality Enhancement on September 26, Dr. Daniel Brown, Lecturer and Dr. Chad Witcher, Lecturer were among those formally awarded fellowships of the Higher Education Academy (HEA). Fellowship of the HEA is awarded to professionals who can demonstrate they meet the criteria of Descriptor 2 of the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education which include: successful incorporation of subject and pedagogic research and/or scholarship, as part of an integrated approach to academic practice and successful engagement in continuing professional development in relation to teaching, learning, assessment and where appropriate, related professional practices. Most DSES academic staff are HEA Fellows and several have been awarded Senior Fellowship status.



## A DAY OUT FOR THE DSES CREW

DSES staff recently enjoyed an away day at the Andrew Simpson Watersports Centre at Langstone Harbour in Portsmouth. It was an opportunity for staff to interact away from the normal work environment and discuss many of the important issues facing the department. Key themes included ensuring successful student progression and widening engagement opportunities. The Watersport Centre was chosen in order to consider it as part of a new student induction programme, giving them the opportunity to mix students and staff. It was agreed that it would be a great idea and a fun way for students to benefit from the team building activities. In addition to the staff meeting, paddleboarding, kayaking and raft building were the order of the day, which created much amusement. A special mention must go to team: Gorczynski, Iggleden, House, Thelwell, O'Halloran, Shepherd and Hughes (pictured above) who took on and dominated all comers in the raft building!



# Research focus

WE ARE PROUD THAT EVERY MEMBER OF OUR ACADEMIC STAFF IS ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN RESEARCH IN SOME CAPACITY. THIS RESEARCH INFORMS OUR TEACHING AND HELPS TO ENSURE THAT WE REMAIN AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF SPORTS AND EXERCISE SCIENCE, WITH A NUMBER OF STUDENTS VOLUNTEERING AS PARTICIPANTS FOR THIS WORK. READ ABOUT SOME OF OUR RECENT RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS BELOW.



## MATCH OFFICIAL RESEARCH GARNERS MEDIA ATTENTION

Recent research from the Referee and Match Official Research Network has made a national media impression. Work from the network is regularly featured in national and international news outlets, however recently the BBC sought more information for a pre-World Cup video on stadium atmospheres and, in particular, following consultation with Dr Tom

Webb, Senior Lecturer, how the atmosphere in a stadium might affect the performance of the match official. Dr Webb's contribution to the video centred around research articles where he examined the decline in home advantage and in a further article, the reasoning behind any such declines in home advantage. Further media coverage followed after an altercation between Serena Williams and the match umpire during the US Open final. Dr Webb provided comments concerning the pressure on the umpire and the impact that such an incident might have on the umpire, given the high profile nature of the tournament and the player involved.

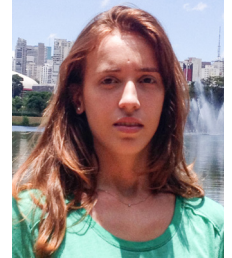
## NEW POSTDOC JOINS DSES

Making a return to DSES, Dr Matt Maley joins as a Senior Research Associate having completed his PhD within the department in 2015. In the interim, Matt worked as a Lecturer in Exercise and Health at the University of Wolverhampton then moved to Australia to work as a post-doc. Previously, Matt has worked with the United States Department of Defence, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and is now working with the Ministry of Defence to facilitate understanding of non-freezing cold injury. Matt's research broadly focuses on human physiology and particularly on how environmental factors impact the health and performance of healthy individuals and vulnerable groups.



## RECENT PUBLICATION ON PENALTIES QUICKLY GENERATES INTEREST

Dr. Navarro scored a goal with her newest publication in penalty kicks. The article Implicit Learning Increases Shot Accuracy of Football Players When Making Strategic Decisions During Penalty Kicking, published in the Human Movement Science Journal in July, tested different training strategies to improve the performance of penalty takers that decide to wait for a goalkeepers' action before kicking. The study, featured in The Times, The Daily Mail, Talk Sport radio, BBC Radio Solent and a number of other UK media, revealed an implicit learning strategy as best practice. One way to practice implicitly is to start aiming at a large target in the goal and gradually reduce it over time. This approach results in a decreased amount of errors. By reducing errors, penalty takers develop a more automatised kick and are able to fully focus on the goalkeeper.



## UOP HOSTS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PHYSICAL EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

From the 17th-19th of July, the UoP hosted the 3rd International Conference on Physical Employment Standards which attracted 120 delegates (academics, students and industry representatives) from 14 different countries. Organised collaboratively by our very own Dr. Gemma Milligan (Senior Lecturer) and colleagues from the University of Chichester (Dr. Sam Blacker, Dr. Andy Siddall), Institute of Naval Medicine (Dr. Pieter Brown) and Army Recruitment and Training Division (Dr. Rachel Izard), the three-day conference presented current research and information for developing and implementing Physical Employment Standards- particularly relevant to sectors employing personnel in physically demanding occupations. The conference was highly relevant to researchers, practitioners and policy-makers within all military, emergency service and industry sectors.

## CONTACT US

### To send in your news

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