

Sport Science

Designing and Delivering Pressure Training: A Longitudinal Case Study in Volleyball

Abstract

In this presentation, Kath shares reflections from the design and implementation of a longitudinal pressure training (PT) program conducted with a cohort of semi-elite volleyball players. Developed in collaboration with coaches, skill acquisition specialists, and sport psychologists, the program aimed to replicate the emotional and task demands of competition across a full season of training.

This presentation offers a step-by-step guide to longitudinal pressure training, beginning with preseason baseline assessments used to identify individual and team-specific performance stressors. It then outlines how pressure was progressively integrated into training environments, with care given to balancing challenge and support to maintain athlete engagement and psychological safety.

Drawing on practical experiences and observational data, Kath discusses key considerations for embedding PT within existing training regimes, including scheduling, coach buy-in, and athlete receptivity. Importantly, she

reflects on several challenges that practitioners should be wary of during implementation — such as overloading athletes, inconsistent messaging, and logistical constraints — and offers strategies for navigating these challenges in future applications.

This presentation is intended to support interdisciplinary practitioners seeking to design emotionally representative learning environments that prepare athletes for the realities of competition. It contributes to ongoing efforts to refine training methodologies in the lead-up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games.

Kathleen Lambert

Biography

Kathleen Lambert is a scholarship recipient supported by the Queensland Academy of Sport (QAS), where she conducts research aimed at advancing understanding of emotion-laden learning environments in elite sport. Her work focuses on collaborating with practitioners — including coaches, skill acquisition specialists, and sport psychologists — to design and implement practice tasks that simulate the emotional and performance demands of competition (i.e., 'pressure training'). This research contributes to athlete preparation for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games.

