

LEADING ARTICLE

Premises of a Successful Selection in Sports

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One of the main possibilities for the optimization of high performance sports activity is the improvement of the selection process. Current deficiencies, which have persisted for a long time in sport selection at national and implicitly local level, make us bring to attention the three requirements of a successful selection:

- a) The possibility of a differentiated treatment of students during physical education classes, according to their individual peculiarities and biomotor potential;
- b) The possibility of applying scientific selection methods;
- c) The possibility of supporting the selection performed by providing optimal environmental conditions, ensuring in this way the success of the selected individuals.

Because none of the above mentioned requirements is completely met at present, we consider that medium and long term optimization strategies aimed at the modernization of the selection system might allow for the direct involvement in this process of decentralized specialized territorial services, as well as of the beneficiary units, interested in the modernization of this activity.

An analysis of the content of the first requirement shows that this overlaps with the requirement referring to the preliminary provision of the teaching space, in order to ensure conditions for a differentiated treatment of students during physical education classes. We mention the fact that students with exceptional biomotor abilities and consequently capable of higher performance need a different treatment during physical education classes compared to students with average or lower than average biomotor abilities. Only in this way, exceptional skills can manifest. In addition, the curriculum for students grouped based on the principle of differentiation should stimulate creativity, which is why it should take into account the specific development of creativity. In this respect, some studies of our research team are aimed at the development of a program for the monitoring of teaching spaces for physical education and sport in schools, as well as of a program for the monitoring of physical education and sports activities in order to form a portfolio of activities necessary for the final evaluation (Bocu et al. 2006 a; Bocu et al. 2006 b; Cucu and Bocu, 2007; Bocu et al., 2008). So, in order to meet the first requirement of selection, the preliminary provision of teaching spaces at national or European standards is necessary to create the conditions for a differentiated treatment of students during physical education classes.

Without denying some good or very good sports results obtained based on empirical selection that is predominantly used in our high performance units, we cannot overlook the fact that this method is not sufficient to create a coherent system for the identification and development of exceptional sports skills. So, in order to meet the second requirement of a successful selection, we choose to modernize this vital high performance sports activity by the introduction of scientific criteria for its application. This would require a stronger commitment of the higher education teaching staff to ensure the selection process, by scientific assistance to high performance units or even the development of research topics in the field. Also, for the same purpose, a local center for sports might be created, which might be financed from multiple sources (projects, budget, subsidies), based on applicative and pluridisciplinary research, including higher education teaching staff and the directly concerned specialists.

Like all gifted students in other fields, students with exceptional sports skills should benefit from optimal environmental conditions in order to perform at their highest level in the teaching process following selection. These optimal environmental conditions should be created in all units specialized in the obtaining of high sport performance from both the education network (sports classes, school sports clubs) and the youth and sports network. Due to their high intelligence, gifted students adapt very easily to the existing or created environmental conditions. If these conditions are precarious instead of being optimal, adaptation to these will no longer result in high performance. So, the third requirement of a successful selection also depends on the creation of an optimal environment for physical education and sports activities.

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