STUDY OF THE APPLICATIONS OF PUNISHMENT AS AN EDUCATIONAL METHOD

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SUMMARY

Introduction: Intense training activity and competing in contests are the basic blocks that build the competitor's character. We should always use some elements of systemic and targeted educational work in order to give the process a more comprehensive and active shape during all stages of sports training. Punishment is one of the most controversial methods, especially concerning its application in the process of educational training and contest participation.

Methodology: The aim of this study was to survey students' attitude towards punishment as an educational method applied by their coaches in cases of systematic violations of discipline and norms. We used the inquiry method and conducted an alternative analysis of the data. Students of both sexes at "Coaches" Faculty at the National Sports Academy of Bulgaria were Subjects of the study.

Results: We found that punishments are commonly applied in many sports. In our opinion, the misuse of this method could lead athletes to a psychic block.

Discussion: Using punishment as an educational method affects positively athletes' behavior and motivation. As a result the performance could be improved both during training and during competition.

Conclusions: A successful coach should be a master at combining systematically different complex educational methods. Adopting such an approach is the most important determinant of the rate of progress of the training process.

Key words: method of education, punishment, students, sport

Introduction

Achieving a great performance is only a small part of the training process in sport. Growing up an athlete with a strong character and willpower along with high morality is the most important achievement of the multiyear coach-athlete interaction. Sport bears the mission to cultivate such character so as to prepare the athletes to become most valuable members of the society. Training hard and participating in contests hardens the athlete's willpower. A well-balanced and comprehensive educational process must include an element of systematic and purposeful educational work done by the coach.

Ergo, the efficiency of the educational process is a function of the proficiency of the coach in implementing the objective potential of different sports disciplines, which the athlete has been practicing during the whole process of maturation from beginner to elite.

In our opinion there are several interdependent objectives, which affect the multifaceted educational process of professional athletes:

- Cultivating high morality;
- Cultivating the character – growing up willpower qualities such as persistence, bravery, proactivity, etc.;

- Developing and imprinting steady and conscious motives for overcoming great physical and emotional hardships – the most important personal trait for all athletes.

The educational work of young athletes is very important and of exceptional complexity as well. To succeed in this process the coach has to have the skill to coordinate his efforts with the influences of the environments of the family, the team and the school. Of great importance is the form of the educational training – it has to be interesting, proactive and creative, but at the same time, not formal. Coaches' failure to amalgamate the educational and the training processes brings alone a lot of difficulties in their work. It is absolutely necessary a more complex approach towards the training-educational process to be adopted in order for the formality and one-sidedness to be avoided. In order to transmit the notion that the success in sport depends on many personal traits and a lot of hard work, the coach needs to base his theses on objective research, on success and failure in sports performance and vivid examples.

The methods and means the coach uses in the educational process have to be based on personal ex-

ample, persuasion, increasing the difficulty of the tasks, encouragement, and punishment.

Punishment is one of the most controversial educational methods and its applications in the training and competition processes raise debates among sport scientists. Its application requires an attentive and deliberative attitude. Above all, it has to be just and timely. Its magnitude has to match that of athlete's misdemeanor and the more experienced the competitor, the more severe the punishment should be for one and the same misdemeanor.

Aim and objectives

the aim of the present is studying the application of punishment as an educational method in different sports disciplines.

1. The objectives of the study are as follows:
2. Developing an interview card, consisting of 11 questions, nine of them of closed type and 2 of them of open type.
3. Analyzing the results.
4. Gauging the opinion of athletes in different sports disciplines about the application of punishment as an educational method.

Methods

We used the method of inquiry and also, alternative analysis as a statistical method for estimating the final results. We recruited 52 athletes, female and male, aged 22 years on average for subjects of the study.

Results

According to scientific data, the most effective types of punishment among athletes are eviction from training session, banning from training and suspending the competitor from participating in contests. The ever-diminishing number of weightlifters in Bulgaria in recent years made punishment an unpopular and unfeasible method of education in Olympic weightlifting. That is the reason for different educational methods to be used in sport training process nowadays.

After analyzing data we reached the following results:

According to the answers on the question "Which types of punishment have been applied upon you personally during your sport career?" the most popular types of punishment were notice and repetition-punishment (fig. 1).

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Fig. 1 Types of punishment in sport

37% of the subjects suffered most often from "notice" as a punishment. 36% ranked "repetition – punishment" as the most often used punishments. The other 3 types of punishment – "reproach and rebuke", "preclusion" and "punishment with a change in the attitude" – are last in frequency. In corroboration with the abovementioned situation of decreasing number of trainees in many sports in recent years, which made coaches unwilling to apply punishments in general, nobody answered "suspension of participating in contests" has been exercised upon him or her.

Answering the question "Which were the reasons for you to be punished?" the interviewed competitors in individual sports stated that appearing late to workout was the most common reason for instilling punishments in the training process (fig. 2). Next after that reason, "Violation of the rules" and "not complying with the instructions" were ranked (with equal weight of 18%). On the other side of the spectrum, with 4% of the answers, as the least widely spread reason for implying a punishment was ranked "other reasons – distractions, conversations during working out etc."

Fig. 2 Reasons for imposing punishments

According to the answers of all the respondents, the most widely used form of punishment was making the athlete run around the training facilities for a number of rounds. Depending on the specific sport the types of punishments varied:

- Track and field – dashes, jumps;
- Swimming –training with appliances on the ground, swimming additional distances;

- Rowing – additional training and cleaning the facility;
- Tennis – “dips”, eviction from the training session;
- Figure skating – exercising till failure;
- Judo – additional repetitions in technics exercises;
- Football – “push ups”, sprints.

Fig. 3 represents the distribution of the answers on the question regarding the application of the punishment as an educational method. 55% of the respondents have been punished “from time to time”, 27% of them – “often” and 18% of them – “seldom”.

Fig. 3 Punishments in sports training process

54% of the subjects consider the punishments imposed upon them to be “to a great extent just”, 32% of them – “to a very great extent just” and 14% of them – “to some extent just” (fig. 4).

Fig. 4 Attitude of trainees towards punishments

59% of the competitors answered that punishments helped them improve their behavior to “a great extent”, 27% of them – “to a very great extent” and 14% of them – “to some extent”.

Fig. 5 Effect of imposed punishments on motivation

79% of the respondents thought that punishments

improved their motivation for achieving better results in training process and in competitions “to some extent”, 19% of them – “to a very great extent” and 2% of them – “to a great extent” (fig. 5).

As a whole, the imposed punishments did not lead to negative behavioral effects during the training process and the competitions (fig. 6).

Fig. 6 Negative behavioral effects of punishments

After being punished, 50% of the respondents felt “unwilling to train”. Due to fatigue and overtraining, they have been unable to perform power movements and exercises with a big range of motion and intensity. Verhoshanskii reports that heavy physical efforts, which exhaust the central nervous system, impair the coordination abilities (Верхошанский, Ю., 1970). Another 25% of the respondents consider “stress reactions” and “anxiety and aggression” the basic negative effects of applying punishments during the training process and competitions.

Fig. 7 Negative effects from punishments

Discussion

We found that it is not advisable for the coaches to overuse the most common punishment in sports practice, punishment-repetition, because it could lead to physical exhaustion and psychological blockage. Generally, there are some positive effects of imposing punishments for improving the behavior and motivation for achieving a better performance. Choosing the right punishment methods and applying them timely are two factors of great importance for achieving positive results in the educational process of the athletes.

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