

**Maciej Tomczak**, *Psychospołeczne uwarunkowania rozwoju sportowego w okresie dorastania na przykładzie szermierki (Psychosocial determinants of sport development of adolescent fencers)*, Monografie nr 392 Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego im. Eugeniusza Piaseckiego w Poznaniu, Poznań 2010, pp. 124.

Maciej Tomczak's monograph is addressed to all readers interested in problems of modern sport, in particular, to fencers, fencing coaches as well as theorists and practitioners of sport psychology. The book is an outcome of the author's many years of experience as an athlete, fencing coach and sport psychology researcher, particularly concerned with emotional reactivity, agility, motivation and thinking ability of adolescent athletes. One of the greatest assets of this publication is its rich statistical and analytical material, evident of the author's profound mathematical skills and knowledge of developmental psychology and sport psychology. It can find a variety of applications among the fencing community in Poland and abroad, and attract interest of athletes, coaches and psychologists.

Maciej Tomczak holds a PhD in physical culture sciences and is a second-class fencing coach. He graduated from the University School of Physical Education in Poznań, and the Department of Psychology of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. As a member of the Konin Fencing Club in Konin he won twice the cadet world fencing championship in saber, silver and bronze medals at the senior European fencing championships, an individual bronze medal at the junior world championships and multiple individual and team Polish fencing championships in different age categories. He has been and still is a very successful coach of girl saber fencers in the Konin Fencing Club and his pupils have won medals at Polish fencing championships and represented Poland in the Fencing World Cup in the cadet and junior age categories. Maciej Tomczak is currently a psychological consultant in the Konin Youth Fencing Center of the Polish Fencing Association.

As an academic researcher and teacher in the Faculty of Physical Education of the University School of Physical Education in Poznań, Maciej Tomczak has been mainly working in the area of sport psychology. He has published extensively in a number of renowned indexed journals, e.g. "Journal of Human Kinetics", "Human Movement", "Sport Wyczynowy", "Studies in Physical Culture and Tourism", "Roczniki Naukowe AWF w Poznaniu",

co-edited two monographs on the subject of physical culture and authored many interesting papers.

The reviewed book consists of six chapters, constituting a logical whole. It opens with acknowledgments and an introduction devoted to the subject matter of psychological determinants of sport success. In the later part of the introduction Tomczak discusses relationships between sport and culture and between sport success and effectiveness of sport actions and psychological influence. The main objective of the work is a scientific analysis and explanation of sport development of young fencers, whereas its practical goal is presentation of study results of adolescent athletes to fencing coaches.

In the first chapter the author draws general characteristics of the sport of fencing, its origins, development and rules of combat. The second chapter is a synthetic presentation of psychosocial aspects of sport development of adolescent athletes. The author makes a few interesting practical remarks connected with sport activity and defines adolescence as a period between childhood and adulthood. He points to problems linked to the period of adolescence such as changes in one's physical, cognitive and social and emotional development; factors affecting this development, their situational character and different threats. The chapter also discusses relationships between athletic development and sport results, young athletes' motivation and opportunities and possible dangers of participation in record-seeking sport. Tomczak's discussion of selected psychological traits as factors affecting sport development and results of adolescent athletes is particularly interesting. The author demonstrates that emotional reactivity, agility, motivation and thinking ability not only influence success in sport but also in life of different groups of athletes, e.g. tennis players, runners, winter sports practitioners, bobsledders, footballers, hockey players and – most notably – fencers.

The third chapter introduces in a very clear and logical manner the assumed research model, methodology, hypotheses, variables and their

structure, research tools and subjects' profile. Chapters Four and Five are devoted to the analysis and discussion of the obtained research results. The author's conclusions in the final chapter prove his prowess as an experienced researcher and the originality of the presented research idea. The chapter summarizes the work and includes valuable information on practical application of research results in fencing training practice. The references section includes the most important works concerning the field of sport psychology.

Maciej Tomczak expresses his hope that his book will be of use to fencing researchers and coaches. He duly notices that it does not provide ready answers or quick solutions to the problems of adolescent athletes, nor devise recipes for a successful psychological selection of prospective athletes. It simply offers certain useful guidelines.

Maciej Tomczak wrote his work on the basis of his numerous observations and records of fencing training sessions and competitions at different levels. Tomczak's analyses, conclusions and reflections are the outcome of his coaching experience in the Konin fencing club and in junior and senior Poland's national saber fencing teams. All of them constitute a new look at sport selection and training methods in fencing. The monograph emphasizes the contributions of sport psychologists to the modern theory of sport training, methodology and motor control sciences, and Maciej Tomczak successfully applies these achievements in fencing research throughout all the chapters.

Psychology is a fascinating subject not only to the psychologist but to anyone willing to know the principles of human actions. Maciej Tomczak's stimulating analysis of interesting research results makes the readers of his book sincerely reflect on the psychical condition of young fencers. It should be an obligatory reading for all people involved in children's and youth sport training. It is both a diagnostic study and a practical guidebook. The author skillfully enters into a dialog with the readers, making them reflect upon particular issues and seek answers to many questions, the most important of which is how to select and coach successful fencers.

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