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THE EVOLVING DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING AND COACHING GAMES AND SPORTS IN NEW ZEALAND

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ABSTRACT

These articles trace the evolving developments, in teaching and coaching games and sports in New Zealand, through five key lenses. They are then followed by an over-arching summary that also hints at some of the socio-political forces of the later period of this work. Article one discusses the transition post-1945, from a traditional, essentially command-based format of instruction to a more holistic, game and player-centred philosophy. In article two, post 1987, the components that stand out as primary influences in this period are, the national PE curriculum statements and associated documents for the teaching of PE and sport in schools and the community. Article three presents the work of luminaries who were either publishing or influencing changes in how games and sports were being taught and coached. The extent to which these changes were reflected in academic writing and publications; in particular, the New Zealand Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (NZJHPER) are next examined in article four. The fifth article, examines the practice of tertiary institutions, teacher training Colleges, who were in this period responsible for the pre-service education of those who would teach PE and coaching sports in the community.

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1. PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS 1945-1986

ABSTRACT

This article examines several distinct but contributing components to the development of game teaching practice in New Zealand, 1945-1986. It details the beginnings of the evolution in teaching practice from a traditional, essentially command-based format to a more holistic, game and player-centred philosophy. Also noted in this article are the many 'how to' publications of this period that were eagerly embraced by PE teachers before, in 1987, the first fully integrated physical education syllabus was published.

Introduction

While today we tend to celebrate as a watershed moment the publishing of the Bunker and Thorpe (1982) article that introduced teachers and coaches to the model of TGfU, it would be wrong to suggest that at the time of that publication the world of teaching and coaching sports and games suddenly changed. The international dissemination of information per se and not just academic articles, took longer. There was no Internet, libraries typically used manual card systems and the first commercial, albeit heavy and expensive mobile phones, did not make an appearance until a year later in 1983. In addition, the nature of the work of Bunker and Thorpe was essentially practitioners providing experiential learning contexts for pre-service PE teachers in teacher training colleges. By way of emphasizing the practitioner perspective of the first published article on TGfU (Bunker & Thorpe, 1982) one notes that the article was not supported by a single reference and it was published in the professional journal, the *Bulletin of Physical Education*, known as the official publication of the British Association of Advisers and Lecturers in Physical Education. The 1982 work of Bunker and Thorpe was clearly published by practitioners for practitioners.

How the spread of the TGfU model and related concepts came about in the first instance is perhaps best described by reference to Lave and Wenger's (1991) term, 'a community of practice' (CoP). Those who made up that community, the first receivers of this wisdom, were staff and students who were at this time attending Loughborough University (formerly

Loughborough College and then University of Technology). In turn, the model was spread by the graduates and their colleagues who witnessed their practices as teachers. Later still, TGfU was spread through attendance at in-service courses conducted by Bunker and Thorpe. Today this dissemination of the TGfU concepts as a social theory of learning might be more aptly described as dissemination through a 'Landscape of Practice' (LoP) (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015) because the communities were not discrete but multi and complex. The actual widespread interest and uptake of the model does not occur until much later.

Butler and Ovens (2015) register the concept of the power of the conference as being the momentum maker for the spread of the influence of the model in academic circles. They note publication outputs on TGfU increased exponentially post the first international conferences on TGfU in 1999 and 2003 and continued to do so with subsequent conferences. However, this 'power of the conference effect' did not emerge until almost two decades after the original publication. Rod Thorpe, who until the most recent International TGfU Conference in Cologne (2016), attended the previous five, frequently noted in key note addresses or in casual conversation, so it became quite well known to regular attendees of those conferences, that neither he nor David Bunker ever anticipated the level of international interest in the TGfU model that eventually emerged from their seminal work. The evolving nature of how the teaching of games and sports in New Zealand developed follows a not too dissimilar pattern to that just outlined.

Early developments

In relation to the teaching of games in New Zealand schools, one of the earliest formal directives, the 1912 Amendment to the Education Act, was referred to by Brian Sutton-Smith (2008) as the taming of the playground. Sutton-Smith used this metaphor for describing specific provisions within the Act for the teaching and participation in games as the work of teachers and not merely the natural play instincts of children. Ryan (2004) also noted that the 1912 Amendment to the Education Act formally substituted a physical training system for both sexes instead of school cadets; "Under a syllabus issued by R. Garlick, the Director of PE, physical training was to be allocated a definite place in the timetable of every school, and teachers were to be properly trained in its execution" (Ryan, 2004, p. 121). This development within

New Zealand schools was not only seen as a contribution to the physical and/or medical health of young people but also a perspective of the importance of play, games and sports in the long-term health of society. In order to achieve that health benefit, a different view of children in society was required and a difference in what they needed to learn within formal schooling.

Given the socio-political context at the time of publication of the PE syllabi in New Zealand immediately post-1945, the secondary school PE syllabus, the *Post Primary Syllabus of Instruction for Physical Education* (Department of Education, 1945) and the primary school syllabus, *Primary School Syllabus* (Department of Education, 1953), it is perhaps to be expected that there would be a degree of command structure in the delivery of lessons and a focus on a correct way of doing things. Note too, that while the 1912 Amendment to the Education Act differentiated between PE and cadets, the practice of cadets did not disappear until perhaps the social unrest of the 1960s finally committed it to history. Certainly cadets, complete with school rifle range and armoury, was experienced by the lead author at Gisborne Boy's High School in the mid-1960s. The drill and order, indeed the inculcation of the relationship of power within schools, that is the authority of the teacher and the subservience of the pupil, albeit unconsciously exercised¹, were no doubt reinforced by cadets, and perhaps also influenced the thinking around structure and practice of teaching in movement and games. During this period, 1960-1980s, while there was not a new syllabus per se there were several publications that were designed to facilitate the teaching of PE in schools and the teaching and coaching of sports, including a publication, complete with stick drawn diagrams for girls PE (New Zealand Schools Publication Branch, 1970).

Supplementary publications

The driver behind the supplementary publications in the period of the late 1950s to 1980's was the Department of Education Physical Education Division under the enthusiastic and energetic direction of Margaret Campbell. She oversaw several publications that included aspects of teaching games and sports. Foremost amongst those were the teaching and coaching manuals for over thirty sports and recreational activities entitled, '*A guide book for teachers, coaches and players*.' The pedagogical format of these publications, first published in 1954 and practiced by most teachers and coaches of PE and sport in this period, utilised, with one or two exceptions, a command-based drilling approach to technique development.

In 1964 *The Standard 2 to Form 2 Handbook* for teaching PE (Department of Education, 1964) was published for teachers and while it had a formal sport section that was quite

prescriptive it also contained some 50 pages of minor games. Minor games "came to New Zealand via English PE" (Stothard & Culpan, 2012, p. 128) and were often based on major games or sports. For example, the minor game *Non-stop cricket* used cricket equipment, though typically a tennis ball was used but it was, as is cricket, a striking and fielding game. There were also New Zealand invented minor games in this publication that clearly demonstrated concepts associated with decision-making and all of the aspects now attributed to game making, for example non-linear pedagogy or constraining games. For example, *Tapu Ae* (The Standard 2 to Form 2 Handbook, p. 238) or *Skittle Ball* (p. 236) both required passing techniques associated with netball, but also tactical understanding of zone defence and man-to-man defensive systems.

Fitness for living

A major publication that had some impact on the evolution of teaching games in New Zealand schools was the *Physical Education in Secondary Schools: Fitness for Living* (Department of Education, 1980) series. Again it must be stated that this was not a national syllabus in PE but it was a major publication that reflected, according to the then Director General of Education, W.L Renwick, a "culmination of work in physical education that extends back over thirty-five years" (Planning for Physical Education in Secondary Schools: *Fitness for Living*, p. iii). Of the nine publications in that series the one that most reflected teaching of games was the publication entitled, *Ball Activities*. The preface to this publication noted that its necessity was based on an almost universal popularity associated with ball games and even suggested that: "New Zealanders have a natural interest in and fascination with mastery over the ball that has developed to a stage where ball games occupy a large proportion of our leisure activities either as active participants or as individual spectators" (*Fitness for Living*, *Ball Activities*, p. 2).

In terms of the evolution of teaching games in New Zealand, the *Fitness for Living* series pedagogically provided a significant shift in perception regarding teaching and coaching. The title, 'Ball Activities' was immediately suggestive of a new approach to game instruction and indeed the thematic approach in that publication was a new direction. Thinking of games and sports based on a generic concept, in this instance the major implement to be used, a ball, was a major shift in *conceptual* thinking in how to teach games in New Zealand schools. This generic and thematic concept does not surface again in the teaching games literature until in a development of TGFU where games were generically described based on tactical intent or the most fundamental component of the game; e.g., invasion or net/wall game (Thorpe, Bunker & Almond, 1986). While the *Fitness for Living* series in general, and in particular the publication on 'Ball activities', in many ways still deferred to a traditional approach to game instruction through, for example its ready reference

¹At a more conscious level, corporal punishment or its threat was liberally exercised.

to the generic publications series *A Guide Book for Teachers, Coaches and Players*² for pedagogical advice, it also proved to be something of a benchmark of a changing focus from traditional to more child-centred holistic models of game instruction that would dominate, several decades later, the PE syllabi of 1999 and 2007.

Though the *Fitness for Living* (Department of Education, 1980) publication did not delve deeply into the pedagogical changes that started to occur in New Zealand on a wider base in the late 1990s, there were small acknowledgements to the use of goal setting, game modification and problem solving (pp. 12-13). Also, as a first in such publications, two methods of instruction were being advocated - for example cooperative learning and guided discovery (p. 9). In relation to the guided discovery method there was for the first time in a Department of Education publication on teaching games in PE, questions of a tactical nature. For example, in ball striking activities, and using volleyball as an example, a question posed was: "Where is the most advantageous position for the ball to be prior to the third hit? How can we get the ball there?" (p. 9). That this approach was innovative is witnessed in that as an enquiry method it pre-dates David Hadfield's (1994) *'Query Theory'* approach to coaching and similar strategies advocated by another influential New Zealand academic and writer on teaching games and coaching sports, Lynn Kidman and her text (Kidman, 2005), on athlete centred coaching.

Also suggested in the *Fitness for Living* series was the use of students 'inventing games', and doing so on the basis of asking students questions such as: "What is the game problem? How do we need to play relative to the problem? What rules have you made and why?" (p. 10). Putting this 1980s approach in perspective, Joy Butler recently published a text, *Playing Fair: Using student-invented games to prevent bullying, teach democracy, and promote social justice* (Butler, 2016). Interestingly, while some of the concepts associated with democracy were not made as obvious in the *Fitness for Living* publications, the series suggests that teachers use: "A planned and incidental examination of factors affecting interpersonal relationships and codes of behaviour." It continues, "Teachers should discuss values arising from games and their relationship to everyday life" (*Fitness for Living*, Ball Activities, p. 21). It is perhaps not too long a bow to suggest that what is currently being published as innovative, has its roots in similar ideas and concepts being promoted in New Zealand 36 years prior to Butler's 2016 publication. In addition, as Culpan (personal communication, 19 January, 2016) noted, the *Fitness for Living* series also introduced concepts associated with decision-making, game modification and small group games and ideas (*Fitness for Living*, Ball Activities, p. 11). The assessment structures were also evolving with suggestions on evaluating team performance, though a model to work from was not provided and the focus of evaluation was more on the affective domain

rather than technique and tactics that later emerged with the *Game Performance Assessment Instrument* (GPAI) by Oslin, Mitchell and Griffin (1998).

That these developments were indeed only the early steps towards GCL is reinforced within the document when specific sports are discussed. For example, when discussing the teaching of netball, the traditional approach is still largely present with the extensive use of a distinctly behaviourist drills format with no hint of small-sided games to develop passing and catching. For example, the suggestion for developing passing in netball is to: "throw the ball against a wall" (p. 17). Also, the lesson structure was still in the main a traditional game teaching methodology with the suggested structure being: warm-ups, teach new skill, practise the skill, apply in a minor game and evaluate. However, within those categories there were suggestions that warm-up might be a minor game or the application be a student invented game that allowed one to judge the extent to which the students were understanding the nature of the game (p. 6). It was though in the main a traditional game construction as defined by Kirk and MacPhail (2002) and Metzler (2005).

Teaching sport

The lesson structure or sport practice at this time also always started with a warm-up followed by a demonstration of skills, skill practice and then if time permitted, a game at the end of the lesson (Slade, 1999a & b). In terms of technique there was a set method and this ideal was what everyone receiving instruction was required to attain. No better illustration of the hold that traditional teaching approaches held over teaching practice is perhaps in regard to the use of the double-handed backhand in tennis. The use of this shot came to prominence in the 1970s and early 1980s through its use by 11 times Tennis Grand Slam champion, Bjorn Borg. However, despite his success with it and a rapidly expanding up-take by other tennis players, such was the focus on a standard accepted technique that it did not immediately result in 'permission' to instruct young players with this technique. Indeed, after an analysis of the shot by Engels (1978), published in the *New Zealand Journal of Health Physical Education and Recreation* (NZJHPER), the concluding comment questions whether this technique should be taught to young tennis players. This document also appeared to emphasize the difference between PE and sport, an argument not much aired pre-1980 when many teachers, PE teachers in particular, were actively involved in coaching school sports teams in addition to their designated teaching responsibilities².

²The difference between sport and PE was also promoted following the boycott of the 1976 Olympic Games by many African nations after the tour of South Africa by New Zealand's national team, the All-Blacks, and further major political domestic disruption when the South African team, the Springboks, toured New Zealand in 1981.

However, as the *Fitness for Living* series illustrates, there were those who thought differently about teaching and coaching games and although there was no formal mention of the term TGfU at that time, there were sufficient references in the supplementary documents on teaching games from the Department of Education that read like TGfU so that when it did actually arrive or become known in New Zealand many practitioners were primed to be receptive vessels to its approach. How that became known had much to do with staff in colleges of teacher education, post-1987.

Colleges of Education Pre-1987: PE Educators

There were, as McGregor et al. (1978) noted, official programme guidelines for teacher education colleges. The programmes established by the Department of Education covered pedagogy as it related to the PE curriculum and the need to fulfil the criteria for being awarded a Diploma of Teaching from a teachers' college. However, within those quite broad guidelines, teachers' colleges largely operated independently of each other and symmetry between colleges was perhaps reflective of similar philosophies and experiences of the staff running the programmes on each campus rather than a specific intent to provide parallel programmes. For example, Guy McGregor at Auckland Teachers' College, Jack Kurney, previously at Ardmore and then at Hamilton Teachers' College and, to a lesser extent, Brian Maunsell at Palmerston North Teachers' College, were all of a similar era and their programme structures reflected that background. This perception is reinforced through the publication by McGregor et al. (1978) that provided summary comments from each of the Heads of PE Departments in all of the teachers' colleges³. All the colleges provided a generic curriculum paper and all offered courses in aquatics and general movement activities. For those students in the courses majoring in PE there were offerings in anatomy, physiology, philosophy, psychology, outdoor education, first-aid and individual programmes in recreation and dance. In terms of game education, Dunedin Teachers' College was the only one to specifically mention, in their summary, minor game instruction with an emphasis on basic skills, what we might now refer to as fundamental movement skills (FMS), instead of traditional sport specific skills (McGregor et al., 1978, p. 30). The Dunedin summary also discussed a child-centred approach to instruction in games with encouragement for teacher trainees to understand that there were different forms of instruction available to them and not merely the traditional command method. In terms of movement education teachers colleges during this period were embracing cooperative and discovery learning but game education at teacher's colleges was, as noted by Jones (1978), was still largely based on direct instruction of a traditional kind.

Summary

Internationally the period 1945-1986 witnessed the first publication of a Game-Centred -Learning (GCL) model of game teaching, namely the Bunker and Thorpe article (1982) on TGfU. However, it was not the only work on such an approach to game learning. Also at this time at Loughborough University, Alan Wade, famous for his 1967 FA Coaching Manual, as well as Elizabeth Mauldon and Betty Redfern (1969; 1981), were exploring small-sided game contexts and discovery learning. In New Zealand, Department of Education curriculum supplement learning models were still largely command and drill based. However, 1987 saw the first of three National Physical Education curriculums (1987, 1999 and 2007) and other supplementary resources that provided a significant change in direction for teaching PE in NZ schools especially in GCL approaches.

³Teachers' Colleges in NZ at this time were: Auckland, North Shore, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

2. PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND GAME CENTRED LEARNING: POST 1987

ABSTRACT

The components that stand out as primary influences that drove change in teaching and coaching games in the post 1987 period, were the National PE curriculum statements and associated documents for the teaching of PE and sport in schools and the community. This period covers national curriculum development that moved from behaviourist learning theory to the socio-ecological work championed by writers such as Ian Culpan. Interestingly, this period was also influenced by mastery learning both in practical work and in the trial of a new Sixth Form (Year 12) Certificate programme that was part of the replacement of the former national examination programme, University Entrance.

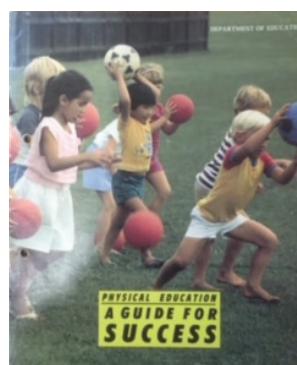
Introduction



The division of the evolving development of game and sport education in New Zealand into periods of post-1945 and pre and post-1987 is an arbitrary one. The year 1987 was chosen because it saw the first publication of a PE syllabus document sufficiently removed from the period and influence of the Second World War to reflect trends that might

demonstrate a developing holistic view of teaching PE. In many ways this was achieved in the 1987 syllabus through a comprehensive programme from pre-school to the final secondary school year. The themes of the syllabus of child-centred learning through understanding the individual's physical growth and development, motor skill development and personal and social development went a considerable distance to achieving that end. This syllabus also included direction for students with special abilities and those with

disabilities. In addition, it introduced concepts associated with sport and in doing so acknowledged the link between the subjects. However, a supplementary document, *Physical Education: A Guide for Success* (Department of Education, 1987) took these headings and suggested, some might say prescribed, levels of attainment based on stages in schooling. This 1987 syllabus came on top of changes in New Zealand senior school assessment. The National University Entrance Exam (UE) was replaced in 1985 with Sixth Form Certificate (Year 12 NCEA Level 2 equivalent), as the sole Sixth Form (Year 12) National qualification. The Department of Education used this change to also experiment with criterion reference assessment across three curriculum areas, French, Geography and Physical Education. The Physical Education response was driven by Grant Jones who succeeded Margaret Campbell as the Department of Education's Head of Curriculum in Physical Education. Jones coordinated teachers in this trial of criterion referenced, essentially mastery learning, assessment. An outcome of this work in the senior school, whether intended or not, encouraged the use of goal setting and mastery learning outcomes in the practical components of teaching physical education⁴.



It must be noted though that neither the 1987 PE syllabus nor the previous document *Fitness for Living* (1980) prescribed a particular teaching model or methodology. If thematic or discovery learning approaches were applied to games instruction in school PE programmes it was more

a reflection of the individual school programmes rather than a national directive from the Department of Education.

⁴The first New Zealand authored comprehensive senior school physical education text (Slade, 1993;1999), deliberately incorporated a Socratic questioning structure as a model for developing student understanding of the core components at this level. In doing so it reflected the TGfU model (Bunker & Thorpe, 1982), that also at the heart of it teaching structure advocated developing student understanding through questioning strategies.

The lead author's reflection of the 1987 syllabus was that it was accepted positively with many practitioners. However, without any directives towards teaching methodologies in the area of games and sports it also perhaps encouraged the status quo, which was at the time still quite traditional in application.

Another document specifically focused on sport at this time, *Sport for New Zealand Children and Young People* (Department of Education, 1987b), laid out further guidelines for teaching and coaching sport. It emphasized fun and modified games and equipment but did so within a policy format without offering any other pedagogical direction.

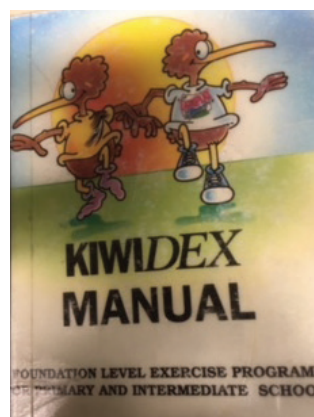
National Physical Education syllabi, 1999 and 2007

A subsequent national syllabus was published in 1999 that had a much stronger health component in its format and also included the topic of Home Economics. The epistemological starting point of it was within a socio-ecological context and required a holistic and integrated approach to pedagogy. One of the writers of this syllabus, Ian Culpan (2000), noted that this document was a shift from technocratic imperative to a position that "overtly favoured a more socio-critical pedagogy to the whole movement culture" (Culpan, p. 19). It was not enough to teach a game but students were also expected to be exposed to the related concepts associated with social and ecological issues. This curriculum document also included seven key learning areas associated with education, one of which was sport, though again the document did not prescribe a pedagogical preference for game and sport teaching. However, Salter (1999), in providing one of the first references to TGfU in the NZJHPER made an early case based on the structure of the syllabus for the use of both Sport Education and TGfU models as being appropriate for interpreting the new syllabus for teaching games and sports. In terms of game teaching, Salter stated that the child-centred learning philosophy of this syllabus lent itself to the TGfU approach. In the article he also speculated a position others would also voice in the future (Lauder, 2001; Kirk, 2016); namely, that perhaps the non-specialist primary school teacher of PE would not have sufficient in-depth knowledge of games and sports to implement the TGfU approach.

The most recent New Zealand Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum document, *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007), has followed a trend based on the 1999 publication that stresses a socio-ecological perspective and within a holistic based pedagogy stresses critical thinking. It suggests topics focused on play, inventing games and integrating concepts associated with positive attitudes, the impact on self and others of games and sports, the place of science and technology, challenges and social and cultural factors associated with movement concepts and motor skills.

Within the development of curriculum documents related to PE over this period there was clearly a shifting of the platform from a prescribed command based methodology towards a child-centred critical thinking pedagogical approach. Early documents provided advice on lesson structure that included basic components such as warm ups and minor games, but the later documents increasingly became documents of policy. In this sense, the PE curriculum documents had established guidelines and parameters for teaching games and sports but without prescribing in more detail both the content and delivery of game and sport programmes, and this has resulted in schools' interpretation of the documents as being reflective of the individual preference and professional judgement of teachers and coaches.

Because of these developments just how these documents might be interpreted has become very much a case of the influence of those who educate the educators – those in teacher training colleges. However, in these institutions there too has been something of a revolution. Several of these institutions have been closed down and those that still exist have increasingly become amalgamated within the structure of universities and, as such, the content, delivery and the people delivering pedagogy related to sports and games has changed considerably. Part of that change is reflected in publications in the NZJHPER that was renamed the New Zealand Journal of Physical Education (NZJPE).



Kiwidex and Kiwisport

Two other developments in New Zealand in this period that had widespread effect on practice in coaching and teaching PE were Kiwidex and KiwiSport. The Kiwidex manual of games and movement activities was developed by the Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness, and Leisure

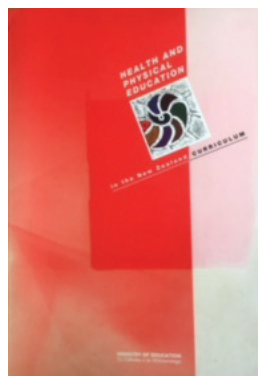
(later SPARC) in 1992, with further editions from Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) in 1997, 2005 and 2007. The original conceptual work was undertaken at Sport Waikato by Stephanie McLennan after preliminary work by Karen Palmer. The Kiwidex manual was a popular teaching adjunct to a promotion by the Ministry of Education to achieve daily PE in primary schools. It contained a section under games that was mainly populated by examples of chase and tag activities. However, despite the fact that an edition was published in 2007, 25 years after the first TGfU publication, within the 38 pages of 'games' there was not one reference to any structure that might suggest an understanding of game categories; for example, invasion or net games. There was no mention of or direction given to questioning strategies, reviewing tactics

or evaluation of performance. The educational philosophy on which it was predicated was strongly oriented towards behaviourism.

One games teaching development that suggested a more innovative and learner centred approach was the development of Kiwi Sport (Hillary Commission, 1988). Its formation signalled a more active role for the government in sport, something foreshadowed in the 1985 report on recreation and government in New Zealand which called for the formation of a dedicated government agency overseeing the development of sport (Ministry of Recreation and Sport, 1985). The Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness, and Leisure, established in 1987, was the government developed agency that in 2002 became SPARC and subsequently Sport New Zealand, and they developed a programme which was sport specific but was very much a modified child-centred introduction to games teaching. The programme emphasized scale modification in sizes of playing areas, equipment, team numbers, rules and playing periods. It advocated process over product and in doing so suggested rotating players into various positions and that team selection should perhaps reflect skill or technique development rather than size and age other than where safety might be an issue. The publications received much support, especially in primary schools and trainee teachers in colleges of education were often encouraged to acquire Kiwi Sport Certification. The weakness of the programme from a GCL perspective was that the methodologies advocated by the Kiwi Sport programme were still very traditional with an emphasis on drills and skills and only a game once proficiency in technique was demonstrated. The lead author in discussing the programme with Rod Thorpe (personal communication, July 14, 2012) echoed the observations just made re the potential of the Kiwi Sport programme but he also noted the instructional methodologies as lacking in an enquiry method and an almost complete lack of opportunity for novice players to discover anything about the tactics of the game or decision-making. Kiwi Sport is still operated by Regional Sports Trusts in New Zealand and is seen as an important measure for giving sporting opportunities to all New Zealand school aged children.

Curriculum development and the dissemination of TGfU

There were three New Zealand PE curriculum documents published from the 1980s to 2015. In addition, there were several supplementary documents from the Ministry of Education (formerly the Department of Education) as well as publications from what was the Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness, and Leisure. All of them contributed to an enhanced understanding of what PE was or could be from



the quite prescribed curriculum document of 1987 to the more philosophically policy driven formats of 1999 and 2007. Despite the TGfU model being in existence for 25 years there was no mention of it in any Department or Ministry of Education published documents pertaining to teaching PE. It may have been if the later documents had been similar

in structure to the 1987 curriculum format but the latter two documents were distinctly different. It might be considered a short coming of the latter two national curriculum documents that they did not provide direction for practitioners in terms of suggesting models for games instruction that reflected the philosophical shift towards constructivist learning theories of teaching. However, in terms of dissemination of GCL strategies and TGfU in particular there is some irony on which to speculate as to the positive effect the latter two documents may have had on the dissemination of GCL models. On the one hand, without the direct references to this model of game instruction it could be argued that the documents did not promote the dissemination of this model of teaching while on the other, in placing an emphasis on critical thinking and without dictating to teachers a model of instruction, those who went looking for curriculum models to achieve those outcomes probably found TGfU. In this way it could be speculated that the later curriculum documents did contribute to the dissemination of GCL models in NZ schools.

Summary

The beginnings of pedagogical change in teaching PE occurred in the period post 1987. In game teaching, the changes were from a traditional command format to a more holistic, game and player centred philosophy. Contributing to this change are national curriculum documents, (1987, 1999 & 2007) as well as other supplementary documents published by the Department, subsequently, Ministry of Education and government sponsored National Sport Organizations. Perhaps the most notable and enduring is the document Kiwi Sport. While no formal mention is made of the term GCL or TGfU in these documents, the critical enquiry method advocated in the later health and physical education (HPE) curriculum documents (1999, 2007), contributed to PE teachers searching for ways to interpret the curriculum and in doing so many were to 'discover TGfU and GCL'.

3. UNHERALDED AGENTS OF CHANGE IN TEACHING GAMES: PHYSICAL EDUCATION LUMINARIES

ABSTRACT

While the initial momentum for change in how games were taught in PE in New Zealand came from the UK, there were in New Zealand physical educators and sport coaches who were calling for change in how games for young people were taught and coached. In this article those people by dint of their advocacy both in the time and nature of the changes advocated are described as physical education luminaries. In particular, the published work of Barrie Truman, who in the 1970's was both the New Zealand Football Coach and a lecturer at Wellington College of Education, demands recognition. Truman's advocacy for change was almost identical in philosophy to the generally accepted seminal work on TGfU by Bunker and Thorpe (1982) in the UK, but occurred almost a decade earlier.

Introduction

In New Zealand during the 1980s, various National Sporting Organisations (NSO's) employed National Coaching Development staff, but the NSOs did not always prescribe comprehensive development programmes across various age groups. There was no set way or programme advocated by the NSOs and so change was very much reliant on the impact that might be generated through a visit from the national coach either to a sport organization or to a school. Such coaches were employed as role models and how they instructed was considered the standard practice to be followed. As a teacher of PE in secondary schools, the lead author experienced such visits by the National Hockey Coach, an Australian, Des Wise, and in cricket, an Englishman and former MCC representative, Martin Horton. Both provided experiences that were what one would classify as a traditional approach to coaching with a major emphasis on drills and skills. In hockey, New Zealand's most celebrated men's coach of the 1960's and 1970's, 'CV' Walter, was also an extreme advocate for traditional skill drilling practice structures. However, there were coaches operating on the fringe of academia and within the communities of sport who were suggesting another

approach. Three prominent coaching luminaries of this period undertaking this role were All Black coach JJ Stewart, New Zealand hockey trainer of the Olympic Gold Medal team Brian Maunsell, and New Zealand Football coach, Barrie Truman⁵.

JJ Stewart



The coach of the New Zealand rugby team, 'The All-Blacks,' is a position considered by many to be more exalted than that of Prime Minister or Governor General of New Zealand. Hence, pronouncements by the All-Black's coach are national news and are scrutinized and very often acted upon. It is therefore

perhaps a little surprising that what the All-Black coach of 1973-76, 'JJ' Stewart, suggested regarding a modified games approach to rugby, was not acted upon with more vigour. Writing in the NZJHPER and apart from a barb at football/soccer as being appropriate for "younger and less robust boys," (Stewart, 1974, p. 11), Stewart had this to say about the game of rugby for young people. He noted that rugby for young players appeared to lack fun and the 15 aside per team meant that too few players got to handle or touch the ball. He also observed that the 15 aside game in a constricted playing space meant the game was too crowded. His alternative was that youth rugby should be played without rugby boots and there should be no more than 9 or 10 players per team. In terms of coaching he thought too much emphasis was placed on technique and not just playing the game. He also observed that coaches placed too much emphasis on winning and this expectation was exacerbated by unhelpful comments from overzealous parents on the side lines. Officials did not escape his ruminations either, suggesting that youth rugby was refereed too zealously.

⁵Maunsell and Truman were also lecturers in PE at Colleges of Education and Truman especially was a visionary in the development of GCL at the Wellington College of Education.

One could argue that in terms of a strict interpretation of the Bunker and Thorpe (1982) model this was not TGfU, but, conversely, one can see that the philosophy behind these suggestions was indeed about facilitating opportunities for players to understand the game, leading to more opportunities for individuals to make decisions about what to do and when to do it, the tactics to employ, how to understand the game shape while also developing techniques within the context of the game, and having fun. If your approach is philosophical then these comments by the most prominent sport coach in the country at that time were a significant step in the evolution of coaching models in New Zealand.

Brian Maunsell



Brian Maunsell, primarily a sport scientist, achieved considerable success and associated prominence as the trainer of the 1976 Olympic Gold Medal winning New Zealand Men's Hockey team. Almost a decade on from that triumph Maunsell, then coach of the New Zealand Men's Hockey

team, contributed two publications and one specific practical undertaking that chartered a new direction in youth coaching in hockey. In the first example he introduced a change in direction in the Department of Education guide books for teachers, students and coaches when he supplied the text for a revised hockey publication (Department of Education, 1982). In it he called for the use of game-like scenarios for coaching hockey whenever possible. However, a more significant influence occurred based on a published article entitled, *'Sport for Children'* (Maunsell, 1985). In it Maunsell promoted the use of small-sided games, modified equipment, scaled playing space and game duration.

Maunsell had two influences in establishing this direction, namely Barrie Truman from the New Zealand Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness and Leisure and, secondly, the Australian Hockey Association, whose introduction to hockey for young novices was a modified scaled version of the game called *"Minkey" (MINi hocKEY)*. In the Australian programme the field size was scaled and player numbers were reduced, seven and not eleven, but no mention was made in their programme of specifically modified hockey equipment. Additionally, rule changes appeared to be more out of concern for safety rather than any tactical focus. At a practical level, Maunsell successfully advocated for these concepts to be applied to the junior programme of the Manawatu Hockey Association and managed to get a change in format of junior games that are still in use today.

Barrie Truman



In New Zealand the most significant early influence in changing how people taught games that most resembled TGfU came from Barrie Truman. Truman came to New Zealand as a Loughborough University graduate and having previously been employed as an English Football

Association Staff Coach and lecturer in PE at the Leicester College of Education, UK. He took up a position with the New Zealand Football Association to both coach the National team but also to conduct coach education courses in schools, colleges of education and football clubs. His principal influence at Loughborough was Allen Wade who was already espousing in this period many of the ideas that would transform football coaching through his text on coaching football *The F.A. guide to training and coaching* (Wade, 1967). As Truman noted (B. Truman, personal communication, January 13, 2016) those who experienced classes as a student with Allen Wade and then read his text, completely changed their ideas on coaching and certainly the text changed the manner in which practice was thought of in football. In particular Wade's advocacy of the use of small-sided games, the use of grids in team practice and the need for games in practice that reflected actual game situations - what we now refer to as coupling between perception and action in games described by Pinder, Davids, Button, Renshaw and Araujo (2011) as a representative learning design (RLD) - were at the time, quite revolutionary.

The previously mentioned Department of Education coaching series of booklets that ran to approximately 30 different sport publications, *'A guide book for teachers, coaches and players'* were as noted almost universally based on a command style of instruction and a skills and drills methodology. Only occasionally in these booklets was there any deviation in the emphasis on technique before playing the game or the use of small-sided or modified games being advocated within the teaching structure. Indeed, in one booklet the author at no stage even suggested that learners actually play a game. The one exception to this rule was the booklet for Association Football (Department of Education, 1975), written by Barrie Truman.

The following comments taken from Truman's authored Department of Education booklet suggest that he was truly ahead of his time in his work in game education. In this booklet he advocated for the use of small-sided games and he also pre-dated Bunker and Thorpe with his use of the term problem-solving (Department of Education, 1975). Writing

for the Department of Education (1975), Truman's work transcended almost all of the components and concepts of what is now referred to as TGfU or Game-sense, non-linear pedagogy and dynamical systems theory (Davids, Button & Bennett, 2008; Renshaw Oldham, Davids, & Golds, 2007) and RLD (Pinder et al., 2011).

Some of Truman's comments on teaching method for soccer in the Department of Education 1975 publication were:

- *For every ounce of talk there needs to be a ton of activity.*
 - *Children's introduction to the game must be enjoyable.*
 - *Practices must have essential features of the full game.*
 - *There is no set technique: technique always adapts to the context.*
 - *Skill is the successful application of technique to the game situation.*
 - *Drills are for experts, learners learn through playing.*
- (Department of Education, 1975, pp. 54-56)

Truman's focus was on the coach creating and adapting learning situations, and the players' then problem-solving in the practices and games:

Association football is a game, which is player oriented rather than coach dominated. The problem solving coaching method is especially suited to soccer as so much initiative is demanded from the player during the game... The coach should look upon himself [sic] as the creator of learning situations with the players, where possible, learning for themselves. In light of the players' success or failure the coach adapts the practice... Whatever way the coach adapts the practice the players will have been both mentally and physically involved in meeting the problem set.

(Department of Education, 1975, p. 56)

Rossi and Carroll (2013) advocate for this very adaption, suggesting that skill mastery might require a reduction in the degrees of freedom, adopting albeit briefly, a linear type focus on motor development. In reviewing Truman's work in this series it stands in such stark contrast to anything else that was written in these booklets that it is hard not to acclaim him as perhaps one of the pioneers, along with in England, Mauldon and Redfern (1969) but certainly in New Zealand, of a game-centred approach to teaching games. Certainly his philosophy as outlined in the game series booklet appeared to be the first published work in New Zealand of a genre that was to become TGfU. His small-sided realistic or authentic game contexts, problem-solving and player centred learning structures are all part of the structure of what we currently read by those writing about RLD, dynamical systems theory, constraining games and play practice (e.g., Chow et al., 2007; Launder & Piltz, 2013; Pinder et al., 2011; Renshaw et al., 2010; Slade, 2014).

A final comment regarding Truman's position as an innovator in the evolution of games teaching and coaching in New

Zealand is provided by Ian Culpan of Canterbury University (personal communication, 16 January 2016). Professor Culpan noted that he, as a student in teacher education, experienced a visit to the then Christchurch College of Education in the 1970's by Barrie Truman where Truman provided a practical workshop on a model of instruction for teaching football (soccer). Culpan stated that, Truman's use of grids and small-sided games was up to that time the most revolutionary and best game teaching programme he had seen. He still maintains that the lesson by Truman is the best skill teaching he has seen.

Disseminating games practice approaches

Truman was obviously influential in his advocacy of this form of teaching in his role as a lecturer in PE at the Wellington College of Education and as part of a Rothman's coaching initiative that took prominent coaches and sports people around New Zealand; e.g., Peter Snell, three time Olympic Champion⁶. However, his impact was also seen with other prominent coaches, for example, Brian Maunsell who adopted Truman's use of grids for games instruction and also for that period in an unexpected quarter, namely Rugby Union. In 1978 the lead author attended a rugby coaching session taken by Bill Freeman, the then New Zealand Rugby Football Union (NZRFU), Director of Coaching. Freeman introduced that day a rugby interpretation of the use of grids. In doing so he made reference to both Truman's influence and Allen Wade's (1967) FA Coaching manual. The acknowledgement of Truman, a football coach, was, based on the lead author's experiences of that time of working alongside colleagues who coached rugby, almost unprecedented in that a rugby person would acknowledge a contribution from another sport. It says much about Truman's influence that he should have been acknowledged in this way. To some degree, the changing approach to coaching was also an acknowledgement of societal change. A 1978 paper on rugby coaching stated that the "domineering, dictatorial attitude" was outdated and called for an "imaginative approach" to coaching which satisfied "players' desire to analyse, explore, create" (Stuart, 1978, 88).

It would be wrong though to suggest that other than in small pockets of interest there was a universal adoption of these coaching methods and a move towards what came to be understood as TGfU. For example, in a rewrite of a Department of Education series *Hockey, A Guide Book for teachers, students and players*, (Department of Education, 1982), the first such publication for hockey being in 1973, there was a very strong hint towards a game approach. Brian Maunsell who supplied the text for this publication clearly suggested an alternative direction to merely using skills and drills in teaching hockey. "Make drills game-like wherever possible – make extensive use of modified games use a 'problem solving approach to teaching'" (pp. 11-12). Maunsell also documented the use of grids first developed

by Wade (1967). However, the practical activities and the sequence of learning provided by Maunsell were still largely a traditional practice structure. Similarly, in a publication by the New Zealand Rugby Union in 1982 on skills and tactics (Vodanovich, 1982), there were small gems within the various chapters that required decision-making. For example, a chapter by Hiwi Tauroa on 'Back Play' (pp. 119-124) implored players to think. But equally, one of the former greats of New Zealand rugby, Ron Jarden, was quoted in the book, as suggesting that it was not possible to improve the mental agility of players and that this was natural talent but the techniques can be developed. However, despite players and coaches of the game no doubt being aware of the open skill nature of rugby at no point in the publication, and that includes the work by Tauroa, was there any hint of starting an activity from an unstructured context. On the contrary, almost all the practices were completed in closed skill environments and for the backs in the team, often unopposed. Even as late as 1996, in research on goal shooting and coach practice in field hockey, Slade (1999a, 1999b) noted that practices were in the form of drills and almost always unopposed and as such were hardly representative of the game.

Summary

This article examined contributions from nationally recognized New Zealand coaches who advocated for non-traditional games teaching well ahead of any formally published GCL and TGfU documents emanating from the UK or Game Sense concepts from Australia arrived on New Zealand shores. Their ahead-of-their-time advocacy for GCL strategies rightly defines them as luminaries in the field, and the visionary work of Barry Truman is especially acknowledged.

4. PHYSICAL EDUCATION ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS: GAME CENTRED LEARNING AND TGFU

ABSTRACT

The publication of the professional and academic journal of physical educators in New Zealand, the *New Zealand Physical Educator* (1953 – to the present), almost traverses the period of this 1945-2015 investigation. Its longevity provides an opportunity to examine in chronological order and to subsequently provide both a historical account and barometer of the academic publishing interest, in the main by New Zealand authors, relating to teaching games.

Introduction



In reviewing the academic literature on TGFU as a barometer of the evolving nature of how games and sports were taught and coached in New Zealand at this time it is perhaps important to first be reminded of the work of Butler and Ovens (2015) and their paper that explores TGFU and its governance, from conception to special interest group. Butler

and Ovens make the distinction between chronology and narrative in their review of this development of TGFU because they note that the development is a story and as such needs to be told in this way. In New Zealand part of the narrative of the story of the evolving practice of games teaching and coaching is found within the journal of the professional association of Physical Education New Zealand, whose name evolved over time to become *The New Zealand Physical Educator*⁷. However, neither the narrative nor the chronology in New Zealand is initially extensive. This is not surprising given international trends in academic writing on PE generally and teaching games specifically at this time. Locke in 1977 noted that there was that this time no “sequential, replicative, consciously

grounded in theory and, above all cumulative, research on teaching in PE” (Locke, 1977, p. 2).

Research in the area was one off and according to Locke seldom found use beyond the qualification for a degree or space on a shelf. Locke, again, “In the case of physical educators there is no evidence at all to suggest either that researchers are responsive to the questions which teachers ask, or that practitioners pay any heed to the research on teaching that is available” (p. 3). Research on teaching in PE was to rapidly expand after this period but any focus in PE was typically of a science-related nature or, if within games, focused on the usefulness of methods such as whole versus part learning or massed against distributed learning.

Within the *New Zealand Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation* (NZJHPER) from 1965 to the publication of the 1987 Curriculum document, aside from scientific articles dealing with issues of physical endurance and other association matters there was little to suggest that Locke’s view of publications by physical educators in the United States of America was any different to what transpired in New Zealand. In a review of papers published in the NZJHPER from 1967 to 1978 by Jones and Masters (1979), there was a single brief article on athletics relating to the run up in performing a long jump, but there was a notable absence of any reference to teaching games until 1974. In 1974, and typical of the tenor of any article at that time with reference to sport, was an article by Fawcett who reviewed the validity of volleyball tests (Fawcett, 1974) or from Enoka who examined the effect of different lengths of run-up on the height to which a spiker in volleyball could reach (Enoka, 1971). From that date to 1981 there were only four articles that might be construed to address specifically aspects of game play in PE and sport. These included another article on teaching volleyball that evaluated part versus whole, part, whole learning approaches (McIntosh, 1976) and an article on coaching elite level tennis players (Morrison, Morgan, Heatron & Williams, 1978). Mehle and Davis (1978) broached the subject of game modification

⁷The New Zealand Physical Educator is the professional journal of physical educators in New Zealand. Previously it was known as the New Zealand Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (NZJHPER) and the Journal of Physical Education New Zealand (JPENZ).

for young people and also raised the question around fun in sport and for whose benefit is sport? Evans (1988) also suggested that the play of children in adult games should be observed, deficiencies noted and the game modified on the basis of those deficiencies with a view that children would find the game easier and more enjoyable to play. However, in academic literature of this period with a specifically New Zealand focus there was very little that was published that suggests game play in PE or coaching was of any concern to those in academia.

Many of the contributors to the Journal from within New Zealand were staff at Otago University in the School of Physical Education. In an analysis of authorship in the NZJHPER, Adams (1990) noted that of the 134 articles published in the decade of the 1980's, 50% were authored by Otago University lecturers from the School of Physical Education, 20% from overseas authors and 8.2% by New Zealand College of Education lecturers. This may in some way suggest why so many of the articles had a scientific focus. While the Otago School of Physical Education was responsible for the content component of many students who later became secondary school teachers of PE, the practical programme was largely based on gymnastics, dance and athletics. Very little time was spent on game education. However, nearing the end of this period there were one or two clues that suggested changes were afoot both in the general coaching public but also in the preparation of teachers of Physical Education at Otago.

The first clue to change documented in the NZJHPER was an article by Thomson (1979) that reviewed the programme on game instruction in the Faculty of Physical Education at Otago University and a subsequent article by Thompson (1981) that documented what she considered to be the practical essentials in New Zealand secondary school PE classes. At the Otago School of Physical Education, the previous emphasis on athletics, gymnastics and dance was now reported by Thomson (1979) to be quite heavily supplemented across a myriad of sports and games. This development reviewed in quite extensive detail by Thomson perhaps heralded an acceptance by the Otago Faculty that programmes in schools were much more comprehensive and holistic than their most recent diet and some change was required in order to keep their graduates current. In support of this position, Thompson's work strongly recommended: "Students at the School of Physical Education who intend to teach in New Zealand Secondary schools, should be opting for courses mainly in the area of team games" (Thompson, 1981, p. 58). The article gave no clue as to the nature of the methodologies employed in the teaching of undergraduates about these games and sports.

By further way of summary, Adams (1990) recorded that of the 134 articles that were published in the NZJHPER in the decade of the 1980s, 50.7% had a focus on recreation, 41% on PE and 7.5% on health (Adams, 1990, p. 21). Within the percentage of articles based on recreation, 38.2% were sport

related however within that percentage there was not a single article that had as a main focus, the teaching of games.

Increasing academic discourse

Butler and Ovens (2015) stressed the importance of conferences when it came to the promotion of academic discourse in the form of journal activity. The figures they quoted for the surge in publications on TGfU and Games Sense post-1999 are significant. While the numbers of such articles published in the NZJPE and the subsequently named *New Zealand Physical Educator*, (NZPE) definitely increased there was nothing like a similar percentage increase that was observed as taking place internationally. However, as a trend and developing interest and recognition, what is published was important in terms of the evolution of teaching games and coaching sport in New Zealand.

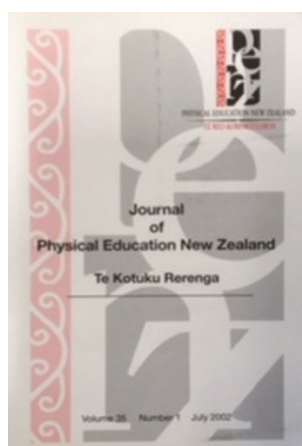
Apart from the NZJHPER, in this period there were very few publications of books on TGfU and GCL philosophies. The first such publication (Slade, 2003) that received wide spread circulation in New Zealand schools was not a text but a CD-ROM that interpreted the TGfU model for the teaching of hockey to novices. Also in this genre was a publication by Ovens and Smith for teachers, coaches and students that produced in video format an interpretation of the TGfU model with a major emphasis on GCL (Ovens & Smith, 2004). While the philosophy of the Ovens and Smith publication was based on the TGfU model it also reflected in its structure concepts developed by Kirk and McPhail (2002) associated with situated learning. Also at this time there was another publication by Slade (2005) *Teaching attack and defence in team games: A TGfU approach*, that was used widely in schools and in colleges of education both in New Zealand and Australia, that adopted a non-specific games approach to teaching games in schools. The model in the Slade text for achieving this was to deviate from a sport specific focus to develop games that were solely based on a tactical outcome, e.g., Zone Defence (Slade, 2005, p. 28).

In terms of awakening the giant that is sport coaching to embrace player centred coaching it was a publication by Lynn Kidman, *Athlete-centred coaching: Developing inspired and inspiring people* (2005) that was perhaps most responsible for this development. The success of the publication was perhaps partly due to the fact that Kidman included edited chapters from current coaches in New Zealand sport spanning the codes of rugby, cricket, hockey netball, volleyball, basketball and softball. The coaches were all prominent with considerable capital in their fields and as such demanded attention from those who also coached within their codes. In addition, there was a chapter from Rod Thorpe that helped put the TGfU model in a conceptual perspective alongside the pragmatic interpretations by the contributing coaches. While Kidman did not entitle this publication TGfU or Game-sense, but in naming it *Athlete-centred Coaching* she got to the heart of the matter of the move towards holistic nonlinear methods

of coaching that would also, at a later date, become a focus for coach development by the newly constituted Sport and Recreation (SPARC) from the previously named the Hillary Commission for Sport, Fitness and Leisure.

Within this area of influence and within the time frame of this research, the only other major text on TGfU or game sense by a New Zealand author was also by Slade (2010). This expanded on his 2005 publication but placed a major emphasis on a philosophy of play and then the process of transforming play through a gradual morphing into more structured games and finally sports. All of these publications became widely used within New Zealand and in some cases overseas and played a part in the developing momentum away from a purely command drill based teaching and coaching structure in New Zealand to disseminating GCL models of a more holistic game and athlete centred learning structure.

The Journal of Physical Education New Zealand



During the period post-1987 and before 1999, there were very few articles published in this journal that gave a hint towards a child-centred, holistic game based approach to instruction in games and sports. This is not to say that the methods were not being employed by coaches or teachers but they were not being published in any great number. The journal

under the editorship of Bevan Grant⁸ and Peter Lind developed a strong teacher education and sport education focus. Articles in the journal tended to focus on teacher education and effectiveness in instruction from a time on task perspective and within Grant's particular interest, sport education with concepts associated with situated learning. During this period though there were few publications that focused on models of instruction in games and sports.

Articles by Evans (1988) on strategies associated with team selection and, in 1989, by a major TGfU contributor Len Almond, who in 1979, had spent a year in New Zealand at Otago University, School of Physical Education, on an alternative model for teaching athletics, hint at a wider view of the role of PE in game education but neither article specifically mentioned TGfU or game sense. Articles by Ikulayo (1991) and Mazenco and Gross (1991) suggested a holistic interpretation of teaching games but instead focused traditional aspects of such teaching around technique. Indeed, the first mention in the journal of TGfU was by MacDonald and Leitch (1994), twelve years after the Bunker and Thorpe publication but the focus was on senior school PE in Queensland that certainly had a message for New Zealand schools but not in terms of teaching or coaching games and sports.

The first publication with a specific mention of TGfU in the NZJHPER within a New Zealand context was penned by Salter (1999). Salter's work discussed the merits of TGfU and the Sport Education model as models for teaching games relative to the newly published Health and Physical Education syllabus, (HPE, 1999). Salter concluded that games and sport in the New Zealand HPE curriculum should be relevant, meaningful and enjoyable for all students. Salter added that regardless of whether either or both of Sport Education and TGfU were used, the role of the teacher is clearly of major importance in achieving relevant and meaningful outcomes for the students.

That the new syllabus proved to be a conduit for considering alternative models of instruction in teaching games is illustrated by the significant advocacy for the use of TGfU and game sense published by Rossi (2000). Rossi argued that TGfU was an appropriate model for instruction in games within the new HPE curriculum because it could, through socially critical pedagogy, still produce skilled performers. Rossi also noted part of the issue of adopting a GCL approach by teachers was that teachers of PE often saw themselves as role models of movement. He stated that PE teachers often demonstrated the technique they wanted students to learn. Rossi argued that this approach was incompatible with models of instruction that developed skilled movers and game players based on a process of learners exploring and understanding movement within a non-linear process (Rossi, 2000, p. 51). Complementing the work of Rossi was an article by Ussher and Gibbes (2002), who expanded the concept of facilitating understanding and the process of learning skills not through direct command based instruction but rather through Vygotsky's (1978) concept of zone of proximal development and scaffolding as an adjunct to TGfU and student centred learning. These concepts associated with instruction in games in PE potentially represented major philosophical changes in both the delivery of lessons and associated understanding of the process.

Integrating learning in PE 2003-2005

In this period while there were only three articles published in the NZJHPER that had as a focus game teaching, they did all suggest a more holistic approach to both teaching in PE and specifically in game education. Light (2003) speculated on the need for joy in learning especially as it relates to marginalized groups in PE e.g., females, and how the employment of the TGfU model could facilitate this change. In collaboration with Georgakis, Light expanded on this concept (Light, & Georgakis, 2005) through a study of pre-service female teachers who reported that the TGfU approach completely changed their attitudes to PE from negative to positive.

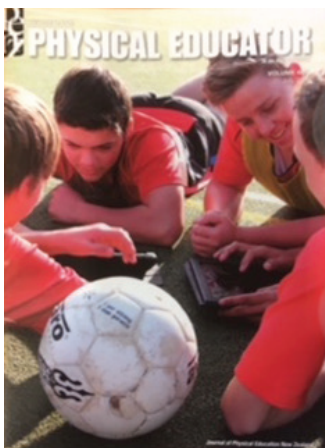
⁸The strong Sport Education focus in the New Zealand Journal of Physical Education at this time may be attributed to Grant's close collaboration with Professor Daryl Siedentop. Professor Siedentop, a strong advocate of the Sport Education model as a teaching strategy in Physical Education, spent a year in New Zealand in 1991 as a guest of the Hilary Commission to promote Sport Education. One result of that time was the publication, Sport Education in Physical Education: A teacher's guide (Grant, Sharp & Siedentop, 1992). No mention is made within this guide to the TGfU model of instruction.

Evans (2003) made comment on the need to keep play in learning games and also the need for relevant school space to achieve this outcome, and Martin and Gaskin (2004) provide a wide picture of the potential of TGfU within an integrated model of PE especially within experiential learning contexts.

Internationally at this time, many of the articles being written on TGfU were of a comparative nature in order to suggest the model's superiority over more traditional means of instruction (see Rink, 2001 for comment) and also to try and establish a theoretical framework for discussing TGfU. There appeared to be a perception that practitioners felt that TGfU worked but that they lacked empirical evidence to support their instinct.

Within the NZJHPER, Davids, Chow and Shuttleworth (2005) published an article that provided a theoretical framework around the structure of TGfU and game sense that they suggested went some way to overcoming a lack of a strong theoretical base for employing TGfU and games based learning models for instruction in games. They suggested that constraints based and dynamical system theories achieved that theoretical base for TGfU and Game sense.

Significant publications



Perhaps the most significant publication on TGfU and Game sense in the NZJPE occurred shortly after Alan Ovens became editor in 2006. Following on from the second international TGfU conference in 2003, Ovens invited Richard Light to edit a journal issue dedicated to TGfU and Game sense. Published in 2006, the publication

brought together many of the prominent writers on the topic at that time and included seven articles on varying topics associated with TGfU (Henninger, Pagnano, Patton, Griffin, & Dodds, 2006; Hubball & Butler, 2006; Launder & Piltz, 2006; Light, 2006a, 2006b; Maxwell, 2006; Ovens & Smith, 2006).

In 2007 the NZJHPER adopted a policy of including a games section within the journal and several such examples occur over the next few years. However, it was not until Gordon (2008 & 2009) published a two-part article on TGfU, fully 26 years after the original publication by Bunker and Thorpe (1982) that the first reproduction of the actual model of TGfU appeared in the journal. In the first part of the article Gordon tended to fly a little in the face of many other commentators on TGfU (Launder, 2001; 2003) when he states TGfU was not a difficult model to understand or implement and was a teaching approach for all teachers (Gordon, 2008, p. 19).

From 2011 to 2015 with the exception of a body of work by

Slade that contributed in applied game formats and related topics, 14 articles on a TGfU or a games sense theme, there were few articles based on teaching games. Webb and Pearson (2012) published a TGfU related article on thematic and integrated learning in PE (Webb & Pearson, 2012) and Harko Brown, author of *Ngā Taonga Tākaro*, a book on traditional Māori sports and their revival in New Zealand, also produced game related articles associated with Hauora and a Māori dimension to learning in PE (Brown, 2013).

What is revealing about this review of the articles in the professional journal of physical educators in New Zealand post-1987 was that there was a gradual increase in publications, culminating in a journal issue in 2006 solely dedicated to the genre, but thereafter little specific reference to TGfU or Game sense was observed, aside from the Slade body of work. Does this mean that the message was not being absorbed into the teaching practice of physical educators in New Zealand? On the contrary there is evidence that it was but it was subtle. For example, in 2011, PENZ subject advisor, Lesley Park, invited four experienced Heads of PE Departments in four different schools, Tauranga Boy's College, Tauranga; Ellesmere College, Leeston; Waimea College, Nelson, and Diocesan School for Girls, Auckland, to respond to questions about their junior PE programmes (Park, 2011). The heading that includes 'Food for thought,' gave no clue that TGfU or game sense models or philosophies would appear in the articles. However, without exception, in the four schools' junior programmes published from schools scattered around New Zealand, in each programme it was there either by name, TGfU or by generic title, e.g., Understanding of tactics and strategies of invasion games (Park, 2011, p. 23. p. 25).

Summary

The professional and academic journal of physical educators in New Zealand, the *New Zealand Physical Educator*, is a source in both a historical sense and also as a barometer of the academic publishing interest, in the main by New Zealand authors, relating to teaching games. It indicates that prior to 2000 few articles addressed pedagogical issues associated with teaching games in physical education or sporting contexts. There was a spike in publication interest following the second international TGfU conference in Melbourne, Australia, 2003. That interest culminated in a special edition on TGfU in 2006, edited by Richard Light. In publications of texts, Kidman (2001, 2005 & 2010) and Slade (2003, 2005 & 2010) were almost the singular contributors.

If the publication of articles suggested some of the narrative about the development of holistic evolving approaches to game teaching in New Zealand, where perhaps was the real momentum? To find that requires seeking out those agents with status in this field, those whose habitus gave them the opportunity to influence those starting out in their PE teaching careers. To do that requires once again to visit those educating the educators and the visit to New Zealand of one of the authors of the first ever article on TGfU, Rod Thorpe.

5. EDUCATING THE PHYSICAL EDUCATORS IN GAME PEDAGOGY: POST-1996

ABSTRACT

Until recently New Zealand had tertiary institutions, Teachers Colleges (latterly named Colleges of Education), dedicated to pre-service teacher education. In order to become a teacher of physical education in primary or secondary schools, a graduate or undergraduate had to attend one of these institutions. It follows that those people in these institutions educating the future educators had considerable influence and responsibility for the pedagogical models to which the pre-service teachers in PE were exposed. This article details a changing of the guard of the staff in these institutions who provided a new direction into how PE and specifically game teaching was instructed and how, in turn, their interpretation of this process had been influenced by a visit to New Zealand by one of the authors of the first ever article on TGfU, Rod Thorpe.

Rod Thorpe's visits to New Zealand, 1996/2000: A ripple effect



Rod Thorpe

The acceleration of the evolving nature of game teaching and coaching in New Zealand needed something more than one or two practitioners working with their students. It required something concrete and recognizable by practitioners. That

something was the visits to New Zealand in 1996 and 2000 by Rod Thorpe. If in hindsight we perceive the publication of the Bunker and Thorpe 1982 paper on TGfU as a watershed moment in the development of GCL in the UK and subsequently internationally, then Rod Thorpe's visits to New Zealand might also be seen in the same manner in

the evolving nature of game instruction in New Zealand. Thorpe came to New Zealand for a conference presentation and then visited several colleges of education to deliver addresses on TGfU and to conduct practical workshops. These presentations are well remembered by staff still employed in these institutions. For one person's visits to provide a moment that people can recall as stimulating a major rethink of their practice in game teaching suggests something about the message, the status within the field of the person delivering it and those who were the receptive audience.

In addressing the question regarding the receptive audience, appointments to colleges of education in this period were typically not related to journal outputs or publications but the applicants' record as a practitioner. Those appointed were universally recognized by their peers as being innovative in their teaching practice and as well respected practitioners. Rod Thorpe was also a practitioner and so his presentation was likely to resonate with this audience. What TGfU did to those who heard Thorpe's message on those visits was to provide them with a model, something concrete that described all or much of what was their practice. The model brought legitimacy to their work and this in part explains why it was so enthusiastically embraced in colleges of education and also justifies describing Thorpe's visits to New Zealand as a watershed moment in the development of TGfU in New Zealand.

While it might be difficult to pin-point the impact of Rod Thorpe, TGfU and GCL in the development of PE curriculum documents, the impact of presentations by Thorpe were most readily felt in those tertiary institutions that offered pre-service teacher qualifications in PE; notably, Canterbury, Auckland, Waikato, Wellington and Palmerston North. Rod Thorpe could have been one of those staff members as indeed he was in the UK. Hence those who attended his presentations immediately experienced empathy both with the message and the messenger. Another important factor that will be commented on a little further into this review is that there had been a 'changing of the guard' in Heads of Departments in teacher training colleges' PE departments and the associated staff. This was a major factor relative to

the content of programmes in this period that differed quite markedly from that referenced earlier by McGregor et al. (1978). In almost all of the insights provided on programmes in colleges of education and education departments now within universities, there is a theme of adoption of GCL strategies but not ideology.

Christchurch College of Education

In PE circles in New Zealand the person most associated with PE at the former Christchurch College of Education, now University of Canterbury, College of Physical Education, Sport and Olympism programmes is Professor Ian Culpan. His interpretation of the evolving nature of game education in New Zealand and specifically TGfU's integration into their programmes is not too dissimilar to stories from other colleges. It was not so much the direct adoption of a TGfU course but the provision of the philosophy and the method associated with the model that was important to Culpan and colleagues (I. Culpan, personal communication, 19 January 2016).

Culpan's receptiveness to the TGfU model was also primed through his thinking about education in general and PE in particular being heavily influenced by Jerome Bruner (1966). Bruner's position on teaching was that learning was an active process, a two-way exploration and not merely the imparting of knowledge from one source to another. Hence Culpan had already been an advocate of teaching and coaching methodologies that required learners to be exposed to contexts of learning that enabled them to experiment and construct their own understanding of content or concepts based on their current or previous knowledge. Culpan noted (I. Culpan, personal communication, 19 January, 2016) that the role of the instructor was to provide scaffolding to the direction or focus of the topic or activity to be learned. Instruction should start from the point of where the learner was, facilitate rather than provide direct instruction in order to allow the learner to discover that knowledge for themselves. Many physical educators may remember Culpan's 'Experiments in PE' (Culpan, 1982, 1985, 1987, 1988), which were almost entirely based on Bruner's philosophy of learning through inquiry. Part of Bruner's work on cognition in relation to context for children's learning suggested that the context and experiences should encourage the student to learn within structures that are easily grasped while also encouraging further exploration by the student. Philosophically there is very little distance between what Bruner was saying and what is implied within the TGfU model.

In reflecting on this period of the mid to late 1990s Culpan observed that the visit of Rod Thorpe in 2000 gave many people a new perspective on games teaching. However, he also noted that at the Christchurch College of Education progress towards the adoption of TGfU or GCL in this period was still quite slow, but colleagues and practitioners became more aware of it and more open to the model of instruction post the Thorpe visit.

Auckland College of Education

At the Auckland College of Education, the two most influential agents of change towards a TGfU model of instruction were Associate Professors Alan Ovens and Wayne Smith. While Ovens and Smith are now primarily involved in research in PE, at the time they were essentially practitioners and their approach to working with pre-service teachers in PE reflected that immediate background. Ovens (A. Ovens, personal communication, June 18, 2015) noted that his and Smith's work in the field of TGfU reflected their experience as teachers of PE that required them to adapt and modify game learning experiences to cater for the wide range of abilities and interest with classes of 30 students whose presence in PE was a school requirement rather than a voluntary decision. Ovens also recalls students in school PE lessons and their good natured questioning of the likely lesson in games of whether it was to be Ovens' basketball or Ovens' softball or Ovens' soccer – and when can we just play the real game?

Ovens also vividly remembers the visit by Rod Thorpe in 1996 to the Auckland College of Education, and his lecture and workshop that show-cased TGfU. He recalls, as others have also noted, that some of what Thorpe was advocating he had done previously and was what he and Smith were already advocating for students in their lectures. Ovens stated that neither he nor Smith ran a course called TGfU but both were using the concepts and related readings, he through his curriculum work and Dr Smith through a paper he taught on motor skill learning. The impact of Rod Thorpe and the TGfU model was the rendering of a more complete explanation of an approach to game teaching that they were now able to reference in more concrete terms than they had previously had at their disposal. The fact that there were publications in support of their perspective helped provide the legitimacy of what as practitioners they had previously referred to as good practice.

Thorpe's visits reinforced the notion that the evolving nature of game education was multifaceted and the TGfU model brought many of these concepts into a coherent whole. Ovens also noted the influence of several others' writing at this time that impacted on their teaching of games in the curriculum for students. Specifically, he noted situated learning and the work of Lave and Wenger (1991), Kirk and MacDonald (1998) and Kirk and Kinchin (2003). He thought the paper by Kirk and MacPhail (2002), especially in their revision of the TGfU model and the inclusion of the concept of situated learning fitted well with his and Smith's developing position on teaching games in secondary school PE lessons. In response to their deliberations they produced a video for teachers, coaches and students entitled *Game Centred Learning* (Ovens & Smith, 2004) that, while not explicitly using the name of TGfU, reflected the original Bunker and Thorpe (1982) model but also included other influences, such as concepts associated with situated learning of Kirk and MacPhail (2002). Ovens also pointed out that in

later teaching of game education at the Auckland College of Education considerable use was made of concepts developed by Alan Launder and his (2001) publication *Play Practice*.

Waikato University

The amalgamation of the Hamilton Teachers College with the University of Waikato in 1991 brought together several personalities that have had a considerable influence in teacher education and sport coaching in New Zealand. These are notably, Professor Bevan Grant, Associate Professor Clive Pope, and lecturers George Salter and Bill Ussher. Rather like Culpan's association with the philosophy of learning advocated by Bruner (1966), Professor Grant had researched and maintained a strong affiliation with the work of Siedentop (1987, 1994) and his model of teaching in PE, Sport Education (Grant, Sharp & Siedentop, 1992). Grant's influence helped promote a more holistic interpretation of the potential of PE, especially in relation to how one should approach the teaching of games and sports in PE. In particular, the later model of TGfU (Kirk & MacPhail, 2002) that included the concept of situated learning resonated with the promotion of sport education in the delivery of PE in its practical guise.

Further evidence of the integrated nature of how PE and sport coaching was interpreted by physical educators was reflected in the work of another member of Waikato University's Physical Education programme, George Salter. Salter, (G. Salter, personal communication, 3 February, 2016) a graduate of the Loughborough University in Physical Education noted that he had been a student of Rod Thorpe and David Bunker. Following Thorpe's first visit to New Zealand Salter had a sabbatical at Loughborough and on his return to New Zealand and Waikato University he included in his teaching of curriculum classes in PE, TGfU and GCL philosophies. It was also at this time that he published an article (Salter, 1999) advocating for the use of TGfU and Sport Education in PE lessons, as he felt that they interpreted well the intent of the recently published PE syllabus. Part of the breadth of Salter's position in relation to the potential of game teaching in PE is that he also included aspects of Hellison's (1995) responsibility model.

Salter also introduced through TGfU a bicultural approach to learning movement. He did this through combining the models of TGfU and Sport Education as a tool for the use of Te Reo Kori in the 1990s. Salter, as Light and Georgakis (2005) were to discover at a later date, also discovered that this approach, where he developed a concept for a model of teaching he named a personal identity model, was especially apt for women whose schooling experiences of games in PE classes had not always been positive (G. Salter, personal communication, 3 February, 2016).

Yet further evidence offered in the holistic interpretation and dissemination of game education in New Zealand and perhaps the spark provided by Thorpe's visits to marry these

concepts, is seen in some of the work of Associate Professor Pope. Pope has written widely on all aspects of PE and sport and has also challenged many conventional views on the nature of the PE learning experience. For example, one of his papers suggested that the dimension of affect had become a forgotten component in junior sport in New Zealand (Pope, 2006). Within this paper Pope advocated for the adoption of TGfU and Sport Education models as opportunities to ensure that the dimension of affect, for example, fun and enjoyment, and providing opportunities for play within game learning was important in developing young people's understanding of games and sports. Clive Pope (personal communication, 3 February, 2016) has also for many years taught a paper at Waikato University on children and young people in sport that included TGfU content. He suggested that the major catalyst for the integration of the TGfU model in curriculum PE and sport papers was the visits of Rod Thorpe in 1996. He also noted the contribution of Bill Ussher and George Salter who were involved in teaching within the paper on youth sport and other PE curriculum papers that included aspects of the GCL and TGfU.

Palmerston North College of Education (PNCE)

The impact of Rod Thorpe's visit on teaching and coaching of sport practice at the PNCE had a profound effect on the lead author in the sense of providing a model of learning that seemed to reflect his teaching practice. The effect saw major changes in the content of papers Dr Slade was responsible for, including the requirements for pre-service teachers to employ the model in their lessons when they were placed in schools⁹. It also reinforced the positive views of this approach to game instruction held by lecturer Anne Kingsley. Kingsley, a long-time advocate of discovery learning was another who had her practice reinforced by the visit to Palmerston North College of Education (PNCE) by Rod Thorpe, especially in regard to the eminent position she bestowed on play as a fundamental concept for the teaching of all movement to young people. Another to have his views reinforced by the visit of Rod Thorpe was Dr Barrie Gordon¹⁰ who as an early advocate of the TGfU model was influential in directing students' work towards this genre. Gordon was also influential in the development of the evolving nature of games teaching at the PNCE though his motivation of staff to examine their practice relative to what they believed and delivered in their lecture programmes as it applied to TGfU. Gordon also supervised one of the first postgraduate degrees in New Zealand with the use of TGfU as its focus (Watson, 2001).

⁹A measure of the influence of Thorpe on Slade's philosophy for game instruction is reflected in his output of texts, articles, conference presentations and workshops with various sports on GCL models.

¹⁰Dr. Gordon on taking a position at Victoria University Wellington carried on this influence in the use of the TGfU model of instruction in undergraduate but especially graduate Diploma of Teacher Trainees.

A trend that emerges from this study of the TGfU literature within New Zealand was that the people in universities, often formerly of colleges of education, who were engaged in teaching the PE curriculum or coaching sport were not ideologues. They appeared to be imbued with a view that in teaching or coaching you needed to look at both the context and content of what you were teaching.

You marry that with the individual needs of those receiving the instruction and, based on that assessment you draw from your vocabulary of models or methods of instruction/learning and apply it.

A constituency of agents for change

All of the people mentioned as being influential in adopting and disseminating concepts associated with change in how games were taught in PE and sport in New Zealand were also involved in PE curriculum change in New Zealand in the late 1980s and 1990s. They had been identified as people with the cultural capital and freshness of ideas to instigate and influence change in PE. They held strong views on methods of teaching PE but were open to critique those ideas and in robust discussion influenced and were influenced by others' views.

Another key component in their roles as developers and disseminators of changing methods in teaching games and sports was that as practitioners they had already moved towards a model of teaching that was very similar to TGfU. They were acutely aware of the need to cater for individual differences and used modified small-sided games in their lessons. In this sense, as noted by several of the respondents in conversation, exposure to the TGfU model and Rod Thorpe's visits provided a concrete model to theoretically justify much of what they had been doing previously as teachers in schools and now in their positions as teacher educators.

Also interesting is that as a group they were educators in and through PE and not strictly what Kirk (2016) would refer to as those teachers of PE who clung to a position that they were expert teachers of sport techniques within the science of biomechanics. In discussion with them there does not appear to be a strict dogma attached to the experiences they offered pre-service teachers or sport coaches.

The curriculum and coaching papers they offered have a focus on the learner and understanding their needs and their way of learning. TGfU and sport education as presented in the four institutions examined in this review all seem philosophically similar in that they were seeking to equip the teacher or coach to teach to individual needs and to use a game-centred approach that reflected good pedagogy around teaching and learning. The difference between Canterbury, Auckland, Waikato and the lead author's institution at the time, Palmerston North College of Education, was the incorporation of an individualised mastery

programme in conjunction with the TGfU approach and sport education concepts at Palmerston North.

Kirk and MacPhail (2002) made the comment that TGfU had the potential to make a significant positive difference to how PE was taught in schools. They also noted in relation to Kirk's view (1996) on a crisis in PE that PE needed to make these changes in order to stay relevant. The ability to stay relevant appears to have been captured by the constituency of those charged with delivering PE programmes to pre-service teachers in colleges of education. Learning experiences were changing in schools¹¹; for example, at this time the influence of Vygotsky's (1978) methods, especially as they related to scaffolding, situated learning and constructivism. These concepts and philosophies were very much part of curriculum courses in pre-service teacher education courses in colleges of education at this time as they moved from traditional formats that focused on content for knowing to content within a critical thinking landscape of learning.

The PE curriculum documents authored by Culpan in 1999 and 2007 reflected those changes too. The socio-ecological and critical thinking concepts embedded in the document required PE teachers to look for methods and models to interpret this direction chartered by changes in teaching in general and interpreted specifically in the PE curriculum by Culpan. Although TGfU had been available as a model since 1982 it was very much ahead of its time – as indeed were those individuals mentioned as a constituency of physeders who would react so positively to Thorpe's visits to New Zealand. But, by the turn of the century, influenced by other developments in teaching and education the time had come for PE to embrace another form of delivery for teaching games, sports and movement in PE. TGfU and subsequent other similar GCL models were discovered as a model in waiting to fulfil that need.

In the narrative of this story the names of Culpan, Gordon, Grant, Ovens, Pope, Salter, Slade, and Smith, quickly become familiar because they appear either as authors of articles or involved in curriculum development or positions of responsibility within colleges of education or universities that have been responsible for the pre-service education of teachers. Their influence includes influential positions in the professional organization of physical educators in New Zealand, Physical Education New Zealand (PENZ). They have all either been editors, guest editors or authors of articles in the professional journal of New Zealand Physical Educators. They have all influenced the evolution of the practice of how game education has evolved in New Zealand from at times an exclusively command based, movement content focus to an ecologically critical model that has changed the dimension of what it means and what is entailed in the teaching of games and sports in PE classes.

¹¹For an overview of this development in New Zealand see St. George, & Bourke, (2008).

Moreover, a number of them, including the lead author, are past and present members of the TGfU International Advisory Board, which has given their work a global resonance and the credibility that comes with recognition by an international organisation.

In order to accommodate that change when teaching games, they have turned to game and learner centred learning practices of which TGfU and Game-sense are prominent. Their work over this period has been so well received that they have accrued sufficient capital within this field to have their interpretations accepted and implemented in schools and other institutions throughout New Zealand. It is their work that brings the pieces of the individual components of this story together and provides the narrative that is the story of the evolution of teaching games and sports in New Zealand over this period.

Summary

This series of articles has traced the development of teaching and coaching games and sports in New Zealand post-1945. It noted changes from a traditional command format to a more holistic, game and player centred philosophy. A review explored curriculum and supplementary documents published by the Department, subsequently, Ministry of Education and government sponsored national sport organizations noting their contributions though stressing that neither game centred learning (GCL) nor the TGfU models were ever directly referenced by these bodies. However, the critical enquiry method advocated in the later health and physical education (HPE) curriculum documents (1999, 2007), contributed to PE teachers searching for ways to interpret the curriculum and 'discover TGfU'. Also examined were contributions from nationally recognized coaches who advocated for non-traditional games teaching. The professional/academic journal of NZ physical educators, the NZJHPE, has had just a single edition dedicated to GCL (2006) and although there have been frequent articles of an applied nature post-2010, the Journal has not provided an extensive disseminating voice for GCL. The impact of Rod Thorpe's visits to NZ provided considerable momentum to the dissemination of GCL and TGfU in CoE PE programmes. Generic changes in education encapsulating a move towards constructivist enquiry methods of teaching meant that GCL's time had come as the most appropriate medium for interpreting these changes in teaching PE.

THE EVOLVING DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING AND COACHING GAMES AND SPORTS IN NEW ZEALAND

Over-arching summary

This series of articles has argued that the development of game centred learning in New Zealand was both a 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' process, driven by practitioners and, albeit indirectly, by changes in government policy. The development of GCL in New Zealand predated the first published articulation of this concept by Bunker and Thorpe in 1982. It emerged, during the 1970s through practitioners such as Truman and Freeman who focused on developing game sense and tactical awareness as opposed to coaching by repetitive drilling. This changing approach recognised wider societal trends of the 1960s and 1970s where traditional sources of authority – the State, the Church and armed forces were increasingly being challenged. The practitioner-driven movement for change gained added impetus with the visits of Rod Thorpe, whose philosophy of TGfU resonated with a diverse constituency of staff from various Colleges of Education because it provided a theoretical underpinning to of their existing practice. Although not formally mandated in the educational curriculum and largely absent from the official journal of physical educators prior to 1999, by virtue of being taught in various forms to many students who went on to become PE teachers, a community of practice, initially informal and later formal emerged around GCL which stimulated its development. The philosophy behind GCL was aligned with the then emerging notion of athlete-centred coaching then championed in the work of Lynn Kidman and practiced by leading coaches such as Wayne Smith (Rugby) and Ruth Aitken (Netball) and this gave it added legitimacy in a high-performance context.

The development of GCL was also facilitated by broader forces in society. The trend towards student-centred learning and a desire to promote critical thinking in education embodied, albeit unintentionally, the core concepts of GCL. Accordingly, GCL approaches were compatible with the revised curriculum of 1999 and 2007 and it became widely practiced in schools. More broadly, the philosophy behind GCL – encouraging participants to become more confident about games by better understanding their underlying

principles – coincided with the New Zealand government becoming more actively involved in sport, initially through the Hillary Commission and later its successor body Sport New Zealand. Formerly viewed as a recreational activity best left to national organisations to oversee; sport became seen as a public good through which the government could achieve both social policy objectives such as reducing obesity and promote national identity through centralised funding for elite sport. The demonstrated utility of GCL in promoting both community and high-performance sport further enhanced its standing. These articles have demonstrated that, in accounting for historical change, it is essential to look beyond key texts and policies and examine what practitioners were actually doing. For practitioners there is another message: if you want to make change you don't need to wait until your desired change is formally mandated. If you believe there is a better way of doing things and can demonstrate that in your practice, those in your profession will likely come around to your way of thinking.

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