

***"Every medal won puts another nail in the coffin of coach and athlete development."***

The statement I put up was not only about respect, appreciation and the value of the volunteer / personal coach nor their ability to continue to grow after a medal is won. The context is as outlined in all the previous articles I have written on the subject of Coach, Coaching and Athlete Development pathways (some listed below). Check them out to get a clearer context of the statement. Put simply (always dangerous), for the volunteer coaches there is a certification process and little else. Once certified they should be embraced into a progressive journey of development (including mentorship) and not ignored (this is where the lack of respect and appreciation is born).

For the Athletes, we face several critical problems associated with things like learning, reduced physical literacy (competence) and participation depletion that negatively impact their progression technically, tactically, physically and behaviourally. These problems can be reduced by major changes in the Coach and Coaching pathways. For every written Athlete Pathway (sick of them yet?) there must be an equivalent progressive Coaching pathway that is more than just the 'cash-cow' revenue stream that currently exists. High-Performance (HP) medals are dependent upon *'what has gone before'* which is where our greatest weaknesses are. The more medals won the more the bureaucracy sits back and ignores the rest of the journey. Every medal at the current Commonwealth Games buys more time for the bureaucracy to preen themselves about how good they are whilst in power and continue to do very little outside the narrow HP environment.

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