

Mental Training & Coaching Centre originated in 1988 and is operated and directed by a senior sport psychologist in The Netherlands, Mr. Hardy Menkehorst. After a long period of close collaboration (since 1998), *Frank van den Berg* moved to Calgary in February of 2005, where he continues to offer professional services in applied developmental, organizational and sport psychology. *Mental Training & Coaching Centre (Calgary)* delivers applied sport psychological services to talented and elite athletes, and to their coaches, other staff, & parents.

Mental Training

Among the applied sport psychological services most requested by athletes, coaches and sport organizations, mental training certainly adds to athletes' developmental potential and contributes to their competitive performances. To be at their best, athletes have to develop and improve on a large variety of talents and skills. The top performances in modern, competitive sports are achieved by excellent physical, technical, tactical and mental skills/capabilities. Improvement and fine-tuning of these assets will provide the greatest chance to excel. Therefore, athletes prepare themselves by strenuous and dedicated training and exercise. Mental toughness, and being well prepared for the challenges in practice and competition, are part of the game. Mental skills in sports differ from person to person, but all athletes can learn and improve, through adequate mental training & coaching.



Mental training & coaching is aimed at supporting competitive athletes to perform at their most optimal level in athletic training, during the regular season and play-offs, as well as at team selections, try-outs and major championships like the Olympics, Worlds, Nationals, and Provincials.

In mental training several topics can become the focus of improving the mental game in sports:

- | | |
|---|--|
| - Selfconfidence, belief and commitment | - Competition planning and preparation |
| - Goal setting and motivation | - Performance debriefing (also for teams) |
| - Concentration and distraction control | - Communication and conflict resolution |
| - Dealing with stress, anxiety and pressure | - Group processes and teambuilding |
| - Energy and emotion regulation | - Coping with injury and overtraining |
| - Mental rehearsal, visualisation and imagery | - Performance lifestyle management |
| - Self-talk, affirmations and attitude | - Sport psychological profiling (assessment) |

An athlete practices mental training:

- to train and improve important mental skills, just like training important physical/technical skills.
- if he/she notices that the performance level is (much) higher in training as compared to competitions... if 'it never shows'.
- if he/she experiences problems before or during competitions, for example with sleeping or eating, feeling very drowsy or very tense, feeling nauseous, becoming extraordinary emotional (angry, anxious, moody), being exceptionally hyper, or quiet. Or if the fun isn't there anymore...
- if he/she is (temporarily and/or partly) out of order for sports through injury or overtraining, and he/she wants to make a comeback (and reach the desired level as quickly as possible).
- if he/she make a new step in the athletic career. Since every step offers new challenges and (possibly) some difficulties, during or after a transition to a new competitive level mental toughness is often one of the required demands to become/stay successful.

Mental training is for ambitious athletes and requires practice (exercising) and dedication (follow-through)!

Mental Training & Coaching Centre offers the following services:

For athletes:	For teams:	For coaches:	Other features:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Mental Skills Training & Coaching • Mental Skills Training for Groups • Various forms of Sport Psychological Assessment • Performance Lifestyle • Career Transitions & Retirement • COMEBACK (from injuries & overtraining) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teambuilding • Team Profile • Team Issues • Performance Debriefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied Sport Psychology for Coaches • Observation, feedback and communication • Group Dynamics & Teambuilding • Development of the Coaching Staff • Sport Psychological Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting Athletes • Mental Skills Inventory for Sports (MSIS) • Myers-Briggs-Type-Indicator® (MBTI®) • Mental Skills Training with Biofeedback • E-Consult (worldwide) • Presentations, Readings and Workshops • Sport Psychological Research

Professional Experience

Frank van den Berg graduated in 1995 from the University in Groningen (RUG), The Netherlands, with a Master's degree in developmental and sport psychology. Since 1998, Frank worked as a sport psychologist for several national and developmental teams in The Netherlands and Canada:

Provincial/National Level in Canada

- Elite Hockey Schools at Athol Murray College of Notre Dame
- Elite Basketball Schools at Athol Murray College of Notre Dame
- Alberta Fencing Team
- Alberta Bobsleigh Association
- William Aberhart High School
- Field Hockey Alberta

International Level in The Netherlands

- speed skating (national & development teams)
- figure skating (national & development teams)
- short track speed skating (nat. & develop. teams)
- bobsleigh (national team)
- parachute jumping FS-8 (national team)
- triathlon (national team)
- synchronised swimming (national team)
- volleyball (development team)
- powerlifting

National Level in The Netherlands

- track & field
- soccer
- basketball
- field hockey
- tennis
- squash
- rowing
- sailing
- gymnastics

Frank's own competitive sports background highlights track & field and bobsleigh. He competed at the Dutch junior national level in decathlon, high-jump, long jump and 110 mtr. hurdles, and was a brakeman on the Dutch National Bobsleigh Team from 1993-1998. After retirement of his competitive sports career, he coached/managed the Dutch women's bobsleigh teams in the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics.

Besides involvement in applied sport psychology, *Mental Training & Coaching Centre* also provides various forms of business consultancy, including psychological assessment for recruitment and development purposes, various corporate training programs (interpersonal communication, leadership, behaviour modification, cultural development in organizations, change management and teambuilding), and professional/personal coaching.

Collaboration

Based on a unique and effective collaboration model with 8 independent sport psychologists in The Netherlands, *Mental Training & Coaching Centre – Calgary* has recently started professional collaboration with Jaana Koponen. Both Jaana and Frank are Registered Psychologists with the College of Alberta Psychologists and are committed to support athletes, coaches and others for performance excellence and well-being in sports. The main purposes for this close collaboration are: 1) referrals for specific reasons, like gender fit, area of specialization, time constraints, 2) ongoing professional development, for example through exchange of practical techniques and methods, and 3) mutual support in consultation challenges by peer consultation and case studies. More information on proceedings will be communicated in future newsletters.