

Chasing Olympic Dreams and Promoting Healthy Living in a Digital World

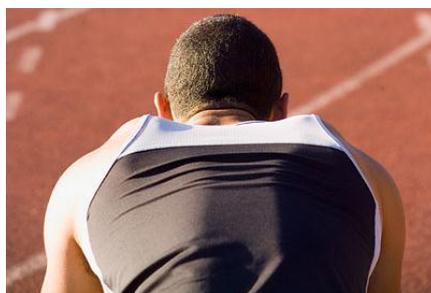
Keynote speaker: Professor Peter Terry, University of Southern Queensland

Discussants: Professor Tony Morris, Victoria University

Professor Gregory Kolt, University of Western Sydney

Dr. Gene Moyle, National Chair, APS College of Sport & Exercise Psychologists

In his presentation, Professor Terry will provide a brief history of the discipline of sport and exercise psychology (SEP) and outline the varied roles and types of clients with whom an SEP professional might engage. He will then give his views on the current state of the profession, highlight examples of contemporary SEP projects based on digital technology, and crystal ball gaze some potential developments in SEP by 2025. Two future scenarios are described below. Finally, he will look at the potential for open education resources to expand the impact of SEP globally, particularly to address public health issues in the developing world.



It is June 4th, 2024. Twenty-two year old sprinter Otis King strolls languidly into the bright Norwegian sunshine. He scans the famous Bislett Stadium, where in three days' time he will take on the world's best 100m runners. But today the Jamaican-born Australian has bigger things on his mind. Today, in one of his twice-weekly simulation sessions, he prepares for the forthcoming Olympic Games in Dubai, now just three months

away. His coach will be leading the session from his base in Tallahassee, Florida, but simultaneously appearing as a hologram in Oslo; his sport science team will be literally monitoring his every move from the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra; and his sport psychologist, currently in Beijing, will be checking his EEG responses, profiling his mood and advising on imagery and self-talk strategies. Otis puts on his virtual reality sunglasses, attaches the neural electrodes, activates his biomechanical footpods and suddenly he is experiencing the electric atmosphere of an Olympic final in front of 80,000 spectators in the Sheikh Zayed stadium. Is this science fiction or already a viable scenario?



It is June 4th, 2024. A reminder flashes and 45 year old Lisa Morrell prepares to join her work colleagues for their regular 11.30 a.m. exercise break. Since the Australian Federal Government offered generous tax breaks in 2021 to organisations joining the AusHealth initiative, this has become a daily feature of workplaces around the country. Burdened by the spiralling costs of healthcare and finally convinced that physical activity prevents illness, Australia joined the global movement and got serious about promoting active lifestyles. Today, Lisa and millions like her around Australia enjoy a 40-minute brisk walk before lunch, with every step taken, every calorie burnt and all her vital signs recorded automatically, allowing Lisa to share her data with her GP, her personal online trainer, her friends or family; in fact almost anyone she chooses. Lisa is now part of a global community of exercisers, linked locally and nationally, who take collective responsibility for motivating one another to make the world a healthier place. Lisa returns to work 4000 steps and 160 calories later. She quickly profiles her mood and rates her happiness, noting that the AHI (Australian Health Index) is up 38 points today, at 6,804.2 points, an all-time high. A little way behind Sweden and Japan perhaps, but so much better than back in 2018 when Australia, to its eternal shame, topped the World Obesity Table for the one and only time. Is this the future for promoting physical activity in Australia?