

Performance Analysis in Paralympic and Elite Disability Sport: Reflections on the past & opportunities for the future

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Whilst performance analysis has been widely utilised as a tool to aid coaches, players and support staff over the past twenty years in a variety of able-bodied sports, limited research, knowledge and understanding exists regarding how the discipline is utilised within disability sport and the role that a disability sports performance analyst fulfils. Reflecting on over 10 years' experience of working and researching with a range of disability sports and across several impairment groups and citing both our own and the research of others, we aim to present our thoughts on the current role and use of performance analysis and analyst in disability sport. In doing so, we present our perceptions regarding the current role the analyst fulfils in capturing, interpreting, and feeding back information to coaches, players and other staff and identify the key challenges facing the discipline within disability sport over the next ten years and the opportunities that these challenges create. In presenting these findings, we highlight areas of strength but also areas for development and progression to help grow and enhance understanding of performance analysis training, qualifications, provision and effectiveness. We highlight the need for increased and improved educational opportunities for coaches and players regarding performance analysis in disability sport contexts, incorporating the need for performance analysts to be educated regarding sport-specific classification systems and disability *per se*. Most importantly, however, we advocate the need for analysts to be more able to use this generic knowledge to be able to more naturally consider the individual athlete and their 'ability' rather than their 'disability' to tailor their provision. Being able to appreciate the individual athlete and be more aware of how their personal ability can be prioritised to enhance their performance is key. Greater understanding of the abilities of each athlete must also include greater exploration and understanding of how they as an individual best receive, interpret, absorb, and learn from sports performance analysis data and indeed the analyst. Our reflections provide a set of principles that can be applied by those working in disability sport to directly impact national and international governing bodies, coaches, sport science support staff and athletes, and the delivery of performance analysis across all disability sports. Through others engaging with these principles, we seek to promote more equitable provision, quality and standing of performance analysis in disability sport to reflect that provided in able-bodied sport.

SLIDE 2 – Paint the scene/challenges

SLIDE 3 – Role and future role of the analyst

SLIDE 4 – Increased and improved education

SLIDE 5 – Solutions - principles