

PAUL COMFORT, PHD, CSCS,*D

Education

2015 – Doctor of Philosophy in Biomechanics and Strength and Conditioning – University of Salford
2003 – Master of Science in Exercise and Nutrition Science – University of Chester
1999 – Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Sport and Exercise Science – University of Gloucestershire

Biography

Paul Comfort is a Professor of Strength and Conditioning at the University of Salford, UK, and an adjunct Professor at Edith Cowan University, Western Australia. He is currently serving on the NSCA Board of Directors (July 2020 – July 2023). Comfort is a CSCS,*D with the NSCA; and a founding member and accredited member of the UKSCA. He is a Senior Associate Editor for the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* and a member of the editorial board for the *Strength and Conditioning Journal*. In addition to the more academic experience, Comfort also has extensive experience working with a variety of professional and semi-professional sports teams, primarily soccer, rugby union and rugby league. He has also co-authored more than 150 journal articles and is editor for the textbooks “Advanced Strength and Conditioning: An Evidence-Based Approach,” “Performance Assessment in Strength and Conditioning” and “Laboratory Manual for Strength and Conditioning.” Comfort is also currently editing the second edition of the NSCA’s “Developing Power” textbook.

NSCA Involvement

- Board of Directors, member (2020 – present)
- *The Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, Senior Associate Editor (2017 – present)
- *The Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, reviewer (2010 – present)
- NSCA ERP Sponsor/Director (2009 – present)
- NSCA Foundation, grant reviewer (2018 – present)
- National Conference, abstract reviewer (2017 – present)
- *Strength and Conditioning Journal*, reviewer (2009 – present)
- *Strength and Conditioning Journal*, associate editor (2021 – present)
- *Strength and Conditioning Journal* – Editorial Excellence Award (2019)

Vision Statement

The NSCA is the World’s leading organisation for Strength and Conditioning and Fitness Professionals, however, to maintain and enhance this status the NSCA faces some specific issues and challenges.

Critical / substantive issues facing the NSCA

There is ever increasing competition from strength and conditioning organisations around the World, with new organisations being established, and established organisations continually developing and evolving. For the NSCA to maintain its position as the World’s leading organisation for Strength and Conditioning and Fitness Professionals, it

is essential that all aspects of NSCA business evolve to meet the existing *global* requirements. Certification has been enhanced with the introduction of the degree accreditation scheme through the Council on Accreditation of Strength and Conditioning Education (CASCE) and the introduction of the CPSS certification. Both of these initiatives have already started to positively impact the development of strength and conditioning coaches and sports scientists in America, although this needs to be expanded internationally. However, to support these ongoing initiatives it is essential that additional and appropriate applied research is undertaken and made available in varied formats appropriate to the diverse membership, making the applied findings as accessible as possible.

Continued professional development of strength coaches and fitness professionals, across the duration their careers, irrespective of age and experience, is crucial for the ongoing development of the profession and certified professionals, especially as research and technology continues to develop. Experienced and novice coaches can learn from each other, forming symbiotic mentorships. Continued development is also essential to ensure that we can appropriately fill volunteer leadership roles, across the special interest groups, professional development groups, committees, and future board members of the NSCA.

Specific Goals for the NSCA

1. To investigate and implement alternative methods of promoting and publicizing applied research findings thereby enhancing accessibility for the members, while further promoting NSCA publications and the NSCA
2. To identify and implement additional opportunities for development of the members of the NSCA globally, across all backgrounds and levels of experience, to enhance their careers and the reputation of the NSCA

How to Achieve the Goals

Both goals will help to ‘support and disseminate research-based knowledge and its practical application...’. Additionally, the enhanced promotion of applied research findings will not only help to promote research and its practical application amongst the NSCA membership, but also to the wider profession, maintaining the NSCA’s position as the World’s leading authority on strength and conditioning.

The NSCA staff are already working on numerous areas aligned with education and dissemination of research. For example, NSCA TV, but additional bespoke materials should be developed to fill the gaps in these educational resources. Such gaps can be identified by auditing the existing content and via a survey of NSCA members to identify topics and areas which may enhance their knowledge and skills. The development of such bespoke learning resources should also include a peer review component to ensure that the information is of the highest quality to the practitioner. In addition, the NSCA foundation offers numerous scholarships and grants to support developing coaches and applied research, however, with additional funding via sponsorships and donations this could be further expanded.

New and enhanced development opportunities, including mentoring and accessible educational and developmental opportunities should help to develop NSCA members and the NSCA’s reputation. Mentoring is already in place as part of the Women’s Committee and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee however, this could easily be expanded into special interest groups, professional development groups and implemented among registered strength and conditioning coaches (RSCC). We can also learn from other organisations that have established mentorship opportunities.