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Individual Goal-driven Training in Finnish Esports Organizations



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Abstract

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The thesis was commissioned by the Finnish Esports Federation (SEUL ry), which operates as a central organization for competitive esports in Finland. The commissioning party wanted to gain information about the current situation of the coaches and their expertise regarding individual training practices. Furthermore, SEUL ry and the author of this work wanted to create discussion about goal-driven training and its possibilities in esports teams.

The purpose of this thesis was to discover whether goal-driven training could be beneficial and applicable to esports organizations for use in their training programs. The thesis aims to simulate discussion inside the organizations about goal-driven practices. It is hoped that this will encourage the teams to possibly rethink their approach to training individual players. The research was conducted as a qualitative study. Theme interviews were used as the research method. In total four (4) interviewees participated in the study. The interviewees consisted of coaches or employees with close ties to coaching in their respective organizations.

Based on this research, it can be concluded that esports organizations recognize the importance of goals and the effects they have on individual players. Goal-driven training is effective and utilizable for esports teams if implemented correctly. In other words, such goals need to be sufficiently challenging. Furthermore, the goals need to be monitored regularly and altered if need be. Goal setting is seen as a tool for esports coaches to utilize in their training planning.

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Appendix

1 Introduction

Esports is relatively young field. Electronic sports have been played since the computers started developing. The invention of internet skyrocketed the industry as it allowed players not only to compete locally but also from their homes. More recently the industry has grown even more due to lower prices for components and better internet connections worldwide. Since mobile phones are able to run demanding games nowadays, the casual gamer market has increased tremendously and continues to do so. These factors grow the economy around gaming in general and thus also raises the interest of large-scale sponsors and organizations to esports. (Wijman 2020; Rönkä 2018.)

The commissioning party for this thesis was The Finnish Esports Federation (SEUL ry) (Later SEUL or commissioning party). The more specific topic for this thesis emerged from them and their interests and needs. They were interested in mapping the state of coaches' expertise and knowledge about the craft of coaching individual athletes and the usage of goal-driven training. Their hypothesis was that majority of esports team coaches in Finland are old players themselves and have little to no experience nor expertise in coaching. The commissioning party's interest was to educate coaches to better understand the importance of an individual athlete.

Topic for this thesis initially sprouted from my interest in esports as a field. I thought that finding thesis subject on a field that is interesting is important. The topic changed slightly from my original idea, but nevertheless it still interested me. In addition, I have high hopes on working in or even creating my own company eventually in esports field. This works as a motivational tool for me to study the subject and create working-life contacts in esports organizations.

The commissioning party is an umbrella organization for all competitive electronic gaming in Finland. Their mission is to promote and improve the electronic sports scene in Finland. They cooperate together with many national organizations on promoting positive image of gaming in general. They represent Finland in the International Esports Federation (IESF). (SEUL 2021.)

SEUL organizes events and creates discussion in the esports field. They have created guides for beginner players, coaches, and event creators (SEUL 2020). This thesis research would be good addition to their collection of studies, guides, and handbooks. They also maintain discussion forums like the one in discord for enthusiasts to talk about topics such as this one. With the aid of

their channels, the subject of individual goal-driven training could gain visibility and provoke discussion about different training models.

Thus, my task was to find out if coaches and staff members of an esports team focus on the individual players goals in their training plan. If they do, is it conscious effort on behalf of the staff? And if they don't, could it benefit their team in general to start focusing more on the individual players goals?

2 Esports

Electronic sports or esports, is an umbrella term for competitive videogaming. Players compete against each other online and locally. The genres of the games vary from sport games, first person shooters (FPS), racing simulation games, multiplayer online battle arena games (MOBAs), real time strategy games (RTS) and many more. The games can be played on consoles such as Playstation and Xbox or on computers. (SEUL 2021; PwC 2016.)

Just like regular sports, some games are played with a team with usually three to six players. These games include popular games such as CS GO, League of Legends, Overwatch, and Rocket League for example. Many popular games are played individually as well. Hearthstone, Starcraft, and Formula 1 to name a few. (Rönkä 2018.)

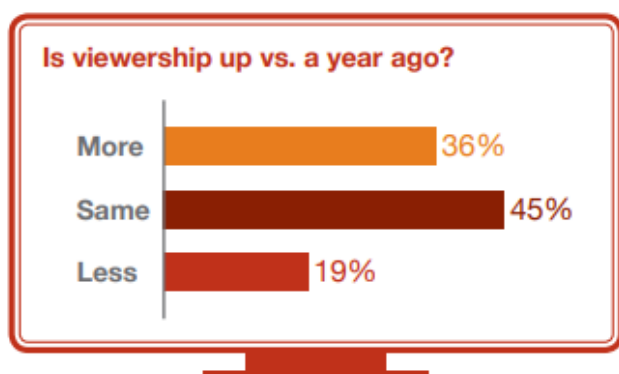
Games such as Fortnite are targeted for young audiences and its common nowadays to see players aged between 10 – 16 years old playing competitively with their friends. This audience is very large and that is one reason how gaming industry has been able to grow every year. The first Fortnite tournament was won by a 16-year-old player with the grand price of 3 million dollars. Revenue and attention work as a massive motivational tool for teens and young players to try to compete on the highest level. (BBC 2019; Insider Intelligence 2022.)

Competitive esports is older than what people usually assume. Computer gaming in general has been a thing since the 1950's. Around that time people started keeping track of their high scores on local arcades. This was arguably the earliest version of esports. Later in the 1990's when the internet was starting to take baby steps, people started uploading their high scores online and even started to have LAN (Local Area Network) tournaments. This time period could be marked as the beginning of esports as we know of today. (Haataja & Leinonen 2021; Rönkä 2018.)

The esports industry has been growing from small local tournaments to a massive billion-dollar business that reaches the whole world. The tournament prizes and sizes have constantly been growing. Games like Fortnite and Dota 2 have been creating massive tournaments with prize moneys hovering in 40 million dollars (Esportsearnings 2022.) This has effectively increased the media attention of esports. Which in return brings more people to watch the competitions and more revenue to the organizers and the cycle continues with no end in sight. This coupled with the fact that many celebrities are interested in games and esports and have collaborated with gaming companies to promote their own work. Celebrities such as Ariana Grande, Kate Upton,

and Twenty One Pilots to name a few, have collaborated with companies to advertise their own work through games, promote a game, or straight up have a concert in a videogame. Some professional athletes even own a stake in esports teams or have heavily invested in them, Drake and Michael Jordan most notably. (themarketingsociety 2021; CNBC 2018.)

Over 700 people were surveyed in 2016 regarding the esports knowledge, viewership and attendance (PwC 2016). This survey shows that the esports viewership was on the rise (Figure 1). All this comes down to the growing business that the esports is. Newzoo predicts that the annual global games market will be growing past 200 billion dollars in the upcoming years (Newzoo 2022.) This can be seen from the figure from their research that indicates growth despite the small halt in the market growth this year (Figure 2).



Base: Total eSports viewers (n=373); Q16. How does the amount of eSports you currently watch compare to how much you watched a year ago?

Figure 1. Esports viewership compared to previous year (PwC 2016)

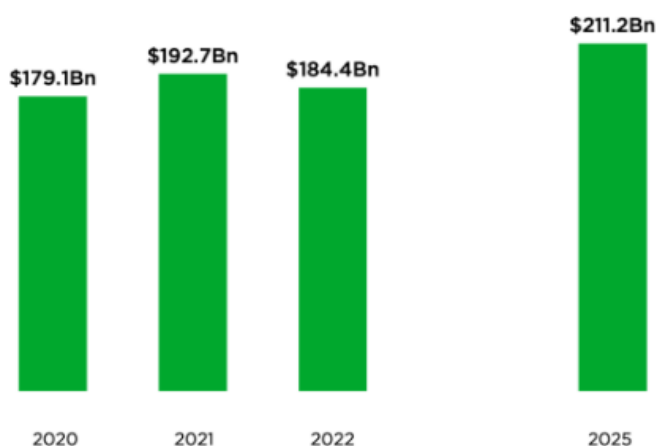


Figure 2. Global Games Market Forecast (Newzoo 2022)

Some have argued that esports are not sports at all (Parry 2018). Even though esports develops the individual mentally and psychologically, and in the highest levels even physically when teams introduce nutritionists and physical coaches to the organization (Haataja & Leinonen 2021). Parry argues that sports, and more specifically Olympic sports, need to fill six criteria in order to be applicable as an Olympic sport. He lists the criteria as follows:

*To begin with, they are all **human** activities. Animals might play, but they don't have sport. Secondly, they are **physical** activities—by which I mean that the physical element is crucial to direct engagement in the activity, and to its outcome, and thirdly it is physical **skill** that is at issue. Fourthly, all sports are **contests** (competitions) and, fifthly, they are governed by rules. Finally, sports are **institutionalised**, with national and international federations administering their affairs.*

- Jim Parry, 2018

He goes on to say that when we put these criteria together, we get the simplified definition for sports: institutionalised rule-governed contests of human physical skill. His argument is that esports do not fill all these criteria, ergo esports is not a sport. (Parry 2018.)

3 Goal-driven training

Goal-driven training can be defined as training that aims to achieve a specific predetermined goal. The predetermined part is important as the quality of the goals might vitally affect the motivation (Haataja & Leinonen 2021, p. 15 – 21). Many conventional athletes use this method in their training approach and in this thesis, we wanted to create discussion on using the same approach in esports as well.

Goal-driven training has been found to be beneficial in more classical sports. In its core, good training derives from an idea on what the athlete or player needs to develop and how to efficiently use the training time. If an esports player just boots up a game without any training objective in mind, that can be just called “playing around”. Same with football for example. If a player shows up to the field and starts kicking the ball randomly for fun, it has no effective impact on the development of the player. To get the most out of every training session, one must have a clear plan in mind on what to train and what areas to develop in each training session. (Haataja & Leinonen 2021, p. 15 – 25.)

Leake and Ram discuss in their 1993 symposium about goal-driven learning systems. They concluded that to be effective, goal-driven training must be introspective. Meaning that the training must derive from the basis of a knowledge that some things are not done optimally and could be trained and improved upon. This knowledge can come either from the player themselves noticing lack of skills for example, but also from coaches and peers through feedback.

3.1 Usefulness of goals

Haataja and Leinonen (2021) discuss about six golden rules to make training as productive as possible. The very first rule they talk about is “well defined goals”. They go on to say that even before training, the player needs to have decided on what specific attributes are they training today. For each individual practice session, the player should have a purposefully set goal or objective to chase after (p. 15 – 17).

In later rules they point out that the development of the individual is most profound in the edge of their abilities and knowhow. If the challenge provided through training is too easy, there will not be any development happening. In the other hand if the challenge is way too demanding for

the skills of the individual, motivation might suffer. This is why it is important to find the middle ground on the edge of the abilities of the individual to achieve the most effective training. When the challenge is barely above the individual's skill level, the player is more focused and during this type of training it is possible to achieve the "flow-state". (Haataja & Leinonen 2021.)

Leake and Ram (1993) discuss that introspective reasoning can be beneficial for human learning. Meaning that when an individual retrospectively detects areas where learning is needed and then acts upon them, the learning is highly effective. For a player or an athlete, self-study is good way to notice and learn own mistakes and work on them.

3.2 Feedback

Rule number three in Haataja and Leinonen (2021) book is "feedback advances development". They say that usually in esports you get some data from the games indicating on what was successful and what was lacking. They call this objective feedback. For some aspects of the game, it is not possible to get objective data from. In these cases, the second-best thing is feedback from coaches, peers, and own thoughts. This is called subjective feedback. It is vitally important to give feedback from player to player and from coaches to teams after the games on what was successful and what should be a point of development in future. Sometimes the players become "blind" to their own mistakes or bad habits in the game, so it is usually the teammates or coach's duty to give constructive feedback. (Haataja and Leinonen 2021.)

In esports, it can be difficult to clearly see the development of an individual. This was discussed with most of the interviewees as well. From the games themselves the teams get the raw (objective) data immediately. Data such as kills and deaths of a player in a match (KD), headshot percent (HS%), average damage per round (ADR) and utility damage (UD) just to name a few (csgostats.gg 2022). These are raw numbers after a CSGO match that the teams use to evaluate the performance of a player. It is a form of instant feedback and easily usable and understandable by everyone, staff and players alike. This data serves as point of reference for the teams to look back the past games and compare the results back then and now.

Some organizations have implemented another form of tracking player development regularly. They make the players take an "aim skill test" of sorts. The test can be a simplified map focused on aiming and movement mechanics with a timer tracking from start of the map to the finish line. Or the test can be a stationary aiming test for example. The purpose of these tests is to check the

mechanical level of an individual player at that time and then come back to the exact same test six months later to see if they have developed on that specific mechanic. (Joutsenvuori 2022.)

4 Aim and objective

Purpose of this thesis was to find out if Finnish esports organizations use goal-driven training in their training programs. The aim for this thesis was to gain information about the practice models of esports teams, in addition to creating discussion around the topic of goal-driven training in esports. If the coaching staff members would be more aware of the possible positive and negative effects on learning that goal-driven training provides, they could evolve as coaches and create more advanced training programs.

The commissioner wishes to benefit from this thesis regarding the education of esports coaches. SEUL is interested in providing plenty of resources and materials for their member organizations and coaches to further educate them. This thesis would provide a relevant topic of interest for Finnish esports organizations to discuss about.

Personal aim for the author was to gain insights on how Finnish esports organizations function and learn about conducting research. Additionally, the interest was to create contacts in the esports field and interview interesting people during the creation of the thesis.

Research questions:

1. Is goal-driven training beneficial to athletes and thus applicable for esports players?
2. Do Finnish esports organizations utilize this training approach already, and if they do, how have they implemented it in their individual players practice programs?
3. How could the teams identify individual players learning style/ability better so that the individual training would be effective?

5 Conducting the research

Qualitative study is the methodology used in this study. There are two kinds of approaches usually used in analyzing qualitative content. Inductive and deductive methods. Inductive way is used when there is no prior knowledge of the studied phenomenon or if the information is fragmented. (Elo & Kyngäs 2008.)

This research was conducted using interviews and relevant studies as a base material. I collected studies and books that have been made regarding goal-driven training and reflected upon those. Together with that I analyzed the interview answers and categorized them in subcategories and headings. I used both materials to find similarities or differences between the answers and the base material. Furthermore, I added my own thoughts and opinions as a researcher in the discussion phase.

In this thesis I focused on team games and the individual players inside those teams. Since CS GO has currently arguably the largest esports scene in Finland, most of the organizations that I contacted had a CS GO team as a major part of their organization and the interviews revolved around those teams.

5.1 Progression

The thesis process started in the autumn of 2021 when the topic was agreed together with the commissioner. Delays within the interviews and other difficulties meant that the finished thesis got created in about twelve months as shown in the figure 3. Most of the thesis process took place in the summer and autumn of 2022.

If the interviews were received sooner, the thesis process would have taken less time. It was difficult to get attendees to answer to emails inquiring about an interview. More efficient way would have been to call their work number, or if possible, go meet them in person. I sent cover letter emails to ten (10) people in total. From which, I managed to get four (4) interviews over the course of four months.

Next step was to transcribe the interviews. After transcription, I sorted the answers into subcategories. Going through the answers, I found consistency between the interview answers and the

literature regarding the subject. This was nice to see at that point, and I will discuss about the findings later in the thesis.

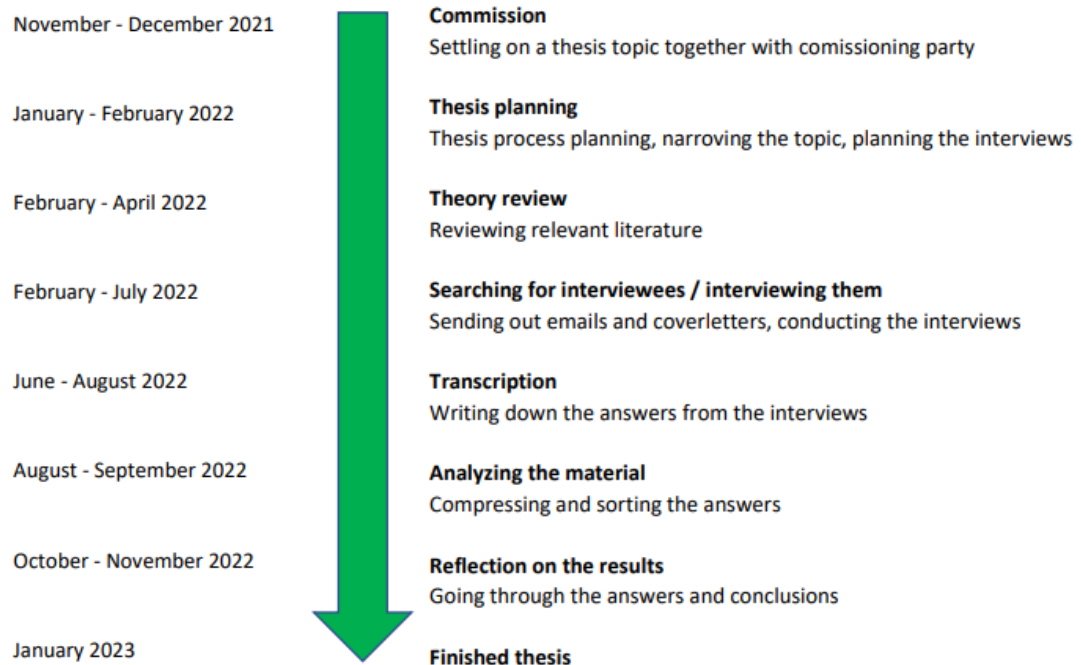


Figure 3. Progression of the thesis

5.2 Collecting data with interviews

Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2002) identify three ways of interviews. Interview with a form, a theme interview, and an in-depth interview. These interview types vary slightly from one another. Theme interview (sometimes called half-structured interview) was the selected interview method used in this thesis. It provides a way to try to understand a topic that is not yet well known. (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2002, p. 74-78.)

Interview questions (appendix 2) were planned from the basis of commissioning party's interests together with mine. With the interview questions the aim was to get answers to the research questions found in chapter 4. The purpose of the interview is to get complex answers on a specific topic from the interviewee. Therefore, it is important for the interviewer to stay objective and not steer the answers to any direction (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002).

I interviewed four (4) participants. The interviews were done through Microsoft Teams platform, and they were recorded for later transcription. The interviewees were chosen on the basis that they work, have worked with or that they do work in close relations to coaching Finnish esports teams. This is important because the interviewees cannot be random people, but rather deliberately chosen so that they would give the most insightful answers. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002, p. 87-88.)

5.3 Analyzing the research

Qualitative research analysis derives from the researcher's ability to find common elements from the interview answers and categorize them. The categorizations should be made clearly, and it should accurately describe the original statements (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002). Categorizing the answers into smaller bite-sized pieces, the reader can effortlessly follow the conclusions of the researcher. In this research, I followed the inductive analysis process by Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2002).

The first part of the research analysis was to collect research material and study relevant studies and literature about the subject. Simultaneously, when I started getting the interviews done, I started transcribing the interviews into text. This made it much easier for me to find similarities and categorize answers later. The interviews lasted around 40 minutes to an hour. The transcriptions ended up taking about two pages for each interview so eight pages in total.

Second phase was to deduct most of the irrelevant information from the answers. Point was to try to find the important bits and leave out nonessential parts from the interviews.

In the third and fourth phases I dove deeper into the answers to categorize them. The point in these phases was to subcategorize the answers on the interviewees all the way to a word or two. In these final phases I also color coded the answers so that the topics were easily distinguishable from one another. After this I had found similarities in the answers and had categorized them accordingly so I could move on to interpreting the results.

6 Results

Research results were based on four (4) interviews together with the relevant literature. The interviewees were working in and had a background in one or more Finnish esports organizations. Results are introduced in the order of the research questions. The original answers can be found in a separate document in the appendix (appendix 3). The interviews were held in Finnish because all the interviewees were Finnish, and it was more natural for both parties to speak the native language. When demonstrating a point by using a quote from the interviews, I use the original comment in Finnish next to a translation of that comment to be transparent with the answers.

6.1 Is goal-driven training beneficial and thus worth to utilize for esports players?

First research question has two parts. The first part can be answered through research literature. Ram and Leake (1993) discuss in their symposium that “learning goals have a strong effect on the learning performance of human learners” (p. 70). Their research-based statement together with the six golden rules by Haataja and Leinonen reinforce the belief that goal-driven training is smart and efficient way to practice skills if utilized correctly (Haataja & Leinonen 2021, p. 15 - 17).

By setting specific, well thought out goals, the player can achieve the most efficient training. The practice sessions are thought through in advance and are based on weaknesses or development points brought up by the player themselves, a coach, or an in-game leader (IGL) / peer. With efficient training, the player is not using time on playing around or practicing irrelevant or less important parts of the game. Haataja and Leinonen (2021) compare it to training ice hockey players. It is completely different scenario if the players go on the ice to play around for fun or if they are coached and trained systematically on their weaknesses (p. 15).

Analyzing the interview answers, similarities with the literature review were found. All the interviewees confirmed that they felt that goal-driven training is beneficial for teams. The extent to which they use this practice approach varies between organizations. Three main discussion points arose from the interviews regarding this topic (Figure 4.)



Figure 4. Compressed answers for the first research question

Discussion leaned towards these three categories in most cases. Interviewees thought that the goal-driven training would be beneficial, but it would be smart to separate individual players goals from the teams' goals. Moreover, the individual players goals might vary even inside the team. Player ages might range from 15 years to 28 years and those people live in a completely different stages of their lives which affect the goals and desires. The first, younger one, might have goals such as being the best player in the nation or win a major trophy and gain a large fanbase. But the latter older player might have family and bills to pay so they care more about the tournament winnings, salary, and price money.

Another topic of discussion was the unrealistic goals. As many players are quite young, majority between ages 18 to 25 years (esportsearnings 2022), they have no previous team background nor goal setting history. This is especially prominent in the younger players. Hence it is important for the coaching staff to direct the players in to realizing what are realistic goals for them and help to decide on the goals.

Lastly, it was seen important that the team enables the players to achieve their goals and dreams. The team offers a path for the players which they can use to develop their skills and themselves. The interviewees figured that the young players need this type of guidance and place to grow in their lives and team games were seen extremely important tool in that regard. The players can learn to work in a group, communicate their thoughts and feelings, and reflect on possible mistakes in a friendly environment.

"Pelaajat tulevat eri lähtökohdista ja erilaisilla tavoitteilla. Jotkut vaan tulevat vähän niin kuin pelailemaan, kun taas toiset haluavat olla se maailman paras. Samassa joukkueessa pelaavien eri elämäntilanteet ja tavoitteet saattavat olla ihan erit esimerkiksi 15-vuotiaalla pelaajalla ja 28-vuotiaalla pelaajalla. Joukkueen sisälläkin on aika tärkeää käydä keskusteluita yhteisistä tavoitteista."

"The players are coming from diverse backgrounds and with different goals. Some will come just to play around while others want to be the worlds best. Players in same team might have completely different history and goals, for example 15-year-old player and 28-year-old player. It is pretty important to have conversations inside the teams about common goals."

6.2 Do Finnish esports organizations utilize this training approach already, and if they do, how have they implemented it in their practice programs?

From the interviews it could be concluded that most organizations use goal-driven approach in their training programs. To which degree the approach is used varies between organizations. In some organizations the players are young, and they need more guidance and help to set up their own goals. The older the player grows, the more reliably they can set their own goals and the less it burdens the coaches. Compressed answers are seen in figure 5.

Inexperience shines through with most of the young guns who are starting their esports career in a top team. They usually have no background in classical team sports or working in a group. Therefore, the approach for the coaches needs to be different when comparing to older, more experienced players. Inexperienced players set goals for themselves almost intuitively, but most of the time the goals are either unobtainable or they have no idea how achieve their goal. The coaching staff is in position to help them find the necessary training and mindset to achieve their respective goals.



Figure 5. Compressed answers for the second research question

Personal development discussions were a talking point in every interview. In most teams either the coach or in some larger organizations a sport psychologist goes through 1 on 1 discussions with the players. These discussions revolve around the individual progress of the player and game itself, but usually also more personal life related stuff. In small to medium sized organizations usually the coach is the one to have the discussions and they usually can not be personal enough because of lack of time. This is noticed as a developmental point for some organizations who lack employees or funding to outsource the work.

Finally, in most of the organizations the individual training is a responsibility of the player themselves. All the scheduled training, analyzing, and discussing is done together with the team and staff. After the scheduled time the players can go practice aspects of the game that they see fit. Here lies a lot of variability depending on the players. Some players grind many hours of gametime and practice on their own time, others focus on overall wellbeing like sleep, exercise, and healthy

food, while others spend time with their family / friends and do not care too much about individual training. Therefore, it depends immensely on the player themselves if they want to practice their weaknesses during their own time or not. The coaches or the IGL of a team can aid players to focus their individual training on certain parts of the game, but it is their own responsibility to do the training as it is unsupervised.

"Riippuen päivästä ja joukkueesta joskus voi olla tuo neljä tuntia joukkueen yhtenäistä aikaa ja muutama tunti varataan omaa harjoitteluun. Joskus valmentajat saattavat seurata pelaajien omia harjoituksia mutta yleensä ne on täysin vapaamuotoisia. Monesti pelaajat itsekin tietävät kehityskohdansa ja treenaavat niitä omalla ajallaan."

"Tendency pitkän aikaa on ollut se, että pelaajalla itsellään on aika paljon vastuuta. Ollaan onneksi menossa ehkä siihen suuntaan, että valmentajat / analyttikot käyvät läpi pelin jälkeen esimerkiksi heitettyjä savuja ja ohjaavat pelaajia tietynlaiseen omaan harjoitteluun. Mutta jos pelaaja haluaa kehittyä urallaan niin se on ihan selvä, että omat heikkoudet on tunnistettava itse ja niitä on reenattava omalla ajalla. Joukkueessa on tärkeää se, että kaikki treenaavat omalla ajallaan pelillisiä juttuja mutta ovat joukkueellisesti kuitenkin samalla sivulla taktikoista jne."

"Depending on the day and team, sometimes about four hours is reserved for the teams shared training and couple of hours is reserved for individual training. Sometimes the coaches follow the individual practices as well but usually they are completely independent. Generally, the players know their own weaknesses and are training those in their free time." "For a long time, the tendency has been that the players have a lot of responsibility. The direction we are heading is that coaches / analysts go through for example thrown smokes and guide players for specific practice on their own time based on analysis. But if a player wants to progress on their career, it is clear that they must notice their own weaknesses and practice those on their own time. It is important in a team that everyone train technical things on their own time, but are clear on the teams' tactics etc."

6.3 How could the teams identify individual players learning style better so that the individual training would be effective?

The most benefit to training effectiveness was seen coming from developmental discussions with the players (seen in Figure 6). The goals need to be clear and obtainable. They need to be well thought out and challenging enough so that they are satisfying when obtained. Difficulty is to persistently monitor the progress towards the goals. In CSGO scene, some goals can be easy to follow based on raw data and rankings that are available for everyone to see. But development on more individual goals can be hard to track. Goals regarding players fine motor skills or game sense or general wellbeing outside of the game can be types of goals which are difficult to track.

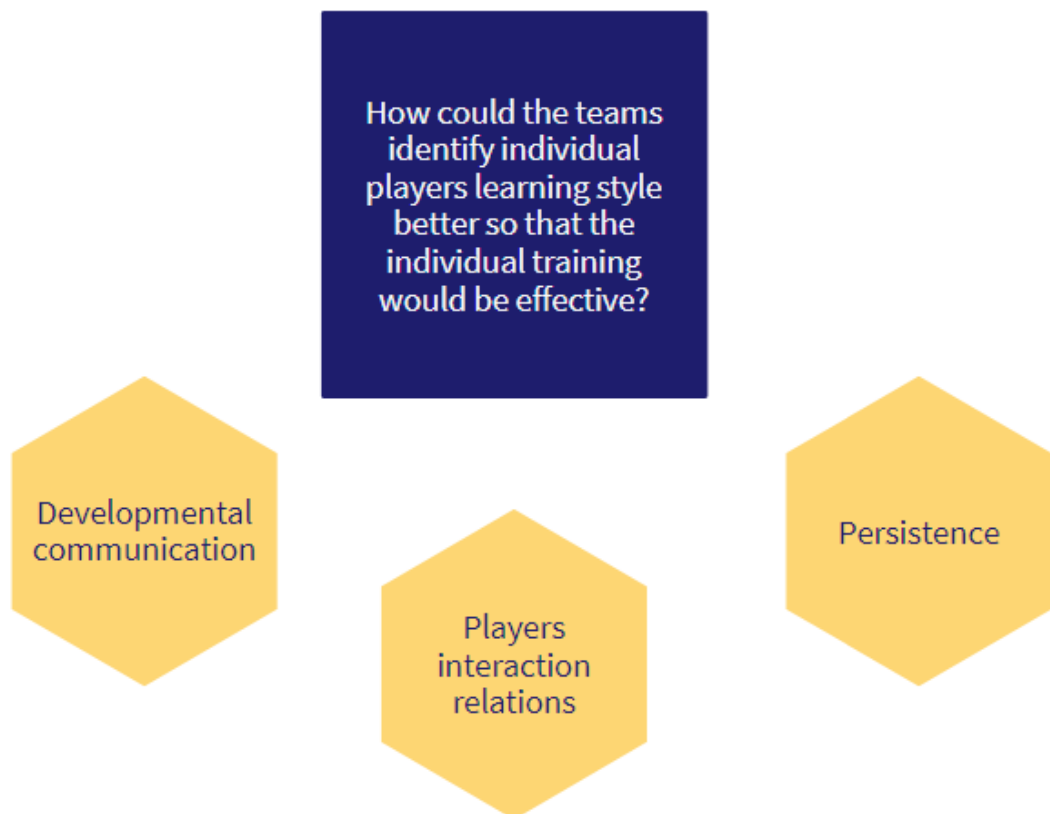


Figure 6. Compressed answers for the third research question

Developmental discussions play key role in the individual players progression and development. Most teams have regular discussions with the whole team and coaches. In these discussions they can voice their concerns or revise tactics etc. The players are advised to give their feedback to each other outside of the heated game situations to avoid hurting feelings or other unwanted

outcomes. Giving and receiving constructive feedback is a major part in growing as an individual player. With the feedback of peers, the individual can focus on traits that they might not notice in their own gameplay by themselves.

Persistence was also thought to be one focus point. When the goal is set, following the progress towards it in the long run might be neglected. This can be worked on with the coaches or professionals in those developmental discussions mentioned earlier. If the discussions are regular, for example weekly or monthly, the progress can be discussed, and the goal altered if needed.

"Mun mielestä toi on yllättävän hyvällä mallilla ja valmennuksen tulee olla tohon liittyen pelaajien kanssa jatkuvasti keskustelussa että mitkä on niitä hyviä tavoitteita. Ehkä siinä tulee semmonen pitkäjänteisyys että jaksetaanko sitä kehitystä seurata ja miten sitä taltioidaan. Ehkä siinäkin on semmonen eräänlainen kehityskohta."

"It is in good shape in my opinion and coaches need to be in constant dialogue with the players regarding what are those good goals. Maybe kind of a persistency comes to play there. That is the progression monitored and how is it recorded. Perhaps that is sort of a development point."

"Jatkuvaa kanssakäymistä pelaajien ja valmennuksen välillä on, mutta edelleen sen tärkeyttä ei voi korostaa liikaa."

"We do have continuous discussions with the players and the coaches, but again, its importance cannot be overemphasized."

7 Discussion

Purpose of this thesis was to find out if Finnish esports organizations use goal-driven training in their training programs. The aim was to gain information about the practice models of esports teams, in addition to creating discussion around the topic of goal-driven training in esports.

In discussion, I will go through my own experiences and thoughts during the thesis process. I will also ponder the answers of the interviewees in more detail. I will evaluate how the process of the thesis went from start to finish and, in the end, evaluate my own development during the process as a researcher and a student. In addition, the ethics and reliability of this type of research together with suggestions for any future research on similar topic will be covered.

7.1 Results review

Deliberate goal setting and goal-driven training has not been the norm in esports. Unlike in more traditional sports, esports has not had the time to evolve so much so that the training protocols have solidified. Professional esports is still in its early developmental stages and coaches and teams alike are looking for the best and most optimal ways to train their players to get the best results. Money is a huge incentive and in past decade or so, it has found its way into the esports, and people are now starting to seriously orient themselves into training more obediently.

For this reason, the commissioning party SEUL is also looking for different kinds of researches and studies made on the optimal way of training and other relevant topics on esports. Their desire is to develop Finland's esports scene and bring it to international level more dominantly than what it already is.

Haataja and Leinonen (2021) discussed about the state of Finnish esports coaches. Their take was that many, if not most of the Finnish coaches are old players themselves and not professional coaches. They have great knowledge about the game and the tactics and mechanics in it, but they are not equipped properly to coach an entire team of players professionally (p. 14). This same comment could be heard from most of the interviewees as well. Some of the interviewees had coaching background in traditional sports like football for example. Some recognized that they had no formal training at all but were retired players themselves and that is how they landed the coaching job.

From what could be concluded based on the discussions and the literature review, it could be said that this is slowly changing in Finland. Coaches are applying to coaching courses and developing themselves constantly. The conservative way of thinking is changing from “I have years of experience so I know everything there is to know” towards “I have years of experience but there is much more to learn that I don’t yet know and would improve me as a coach”. This is a fresh and welcomed way of thinking to the esports scene.

It became apparent from my own interviews as well that the feedback is in important role in a team. It was not clear however, if the feedback is better to come from the coach or from the peers, usually the in-game leader (IGL) in CSGO team. In the interviews it was discussed that sometimes the IGL takes the role of a coach in a match setting and is in a role to not only notice bad habits and mistakes of other players, but also give constructive feedback for them on how to develop.

Based on the interviews, some teams utilize regular tests for their players regarding the gameplay mechanics and skill. These tests were mostly used in young teams, and it gives great perception on the players development. They give feedback on the development of certain game specific skills that the players can practice on their own. Development on a mechanic or a skill relevant to the gameplay is good mental boost for young players. It is needed to say that this is not perfect for tracking the development, as the results may vary even daily depending on multiple variables. The player might not be feeling well on the test day for example, or they might have had an insufficient amount of sleep and are tired so their reflexes and aiming abilities might suffer. The players cannot be expected to work and practice with full energy every day and based on my interviews together with research, it seems like Finnish organizations are well aware of this. They even work to capitalize on the less productive days by training something simpler or more mundane and try to have the “flow mode” when the important game days arrive.

The higher you go on the ladder, the more you find goal-driven training in teams. Larger organizations have developmental discussions with their individual players and want the individual to thrive in order for the team to thrive. Smaller organizations and younger teams have usually set rough goals but often the goals can be too broad, easy or in contrast, unobtainable. Poorly constructed goals can seriously affect the mood and motivation of the players. The older the players get, the more self-conscious they are about their individual goals, and the better they can set the goals for themselves. Young players have usually never set goals for themselves, apart from wanting to be the best in the world. The coaches job in a situation like this is to clearly set the player on a correct path towards the goal. Want to be the best CSGO player in the world? Start by

sleeping 8 hours a night, or exercising 1 hour every day, or eating healthy. The coach must have a realistic attitude towards the goals and break them into smaller, implementable goals which do not even need to be goals regarding the gameplay itself.

One part is to create well thought out goals. The other part is to observe the progress towards them. Some teams seem to lack on this department. They have good goals set for the team regarding tournaments, cups, seasons, or specific matches but they forget the goals midway the season, or just disregard them under the rug if they fail to reach the goals. Depending on the type of the goal, it would be good to revisit it periodically and if need be, alter it a little along the way.

Noteworthy part of the research was that the players benefit immensely from self-studying their own games and analysing them. From a competitive CSGO player's perspective, it could be wise to observe own gameplay through a VOD (Video on demand) after a match or tournament to see misplays or in contrast, brilliant ones. Then according to those observations, alter the training plan to work on the findings.

7.2 Thesis process evaluation

Thesis process started in late 2021 when I contacted the commissioning party. Initially I had a different vision of the thesis topic, but the commissioning party was already getting a thesis done for them on that subject, so they asked me if I could study this one instead. It sounded very interesting to me, so I agreed.

After we settled on the topic with the commissioning party, I needed contacts to do the interviews for. Those contacts I got eventually from the commissioning party. While I was waiting for the possible contacts to answer my inquiries, I started studying the topic and the relevant literature. My interview questions were based on the research questions that formed based on the interests of the commissioning party and I, together with the relevant research literature I found based on the subject before the interviews.

The research material that I found was half Finnish and half English material. Continually throughout the thesis process I looked for relevant research material and books. Some material that I used as a reference dates back to more than 20 years, but I still think the materials are somewhat relevant to this day. Notwithstanding, the vast majority of the material were newer than 2018.

The interviews delayed the thesis process by few months as it was so difficult to arrange the interviews. Largest hurdle was to get contacts from the possible interviewees. I sent the inquiry about partaking in an interview initially for eight (8) people and then expanded it for two (2) more. I interviewed four (4) people from which half answered my emails. The other two I contacted through Discord and had previous connection to, respectively.

When I finally did get the contacts, none of the interviewees denied the interview and all of them were very kind, understanding, and were interested to have deep discussions about the topic of esports coaching in Finland. For the initial inactivity from the side of the interviewees, most of them explained it by either declaring how busy their schedule had been at the time of the inquiry or that they had not noticed the emails I put forward.

The interviews were scheduled to last half an hour. Most of them did end up lasting between 40 to 50 minutes. When the scheduled time was coming to an end, I made sure that the interviewee had more time to spare and was not in a hurry. In most cases, the interviewee and I continued talking about the subject after the interview was already done and the recording stopped. This showed me clearly that the interviewees were wholeheartedly interested in the same subject as I was and had interest in improving Finnish esports scene.

After the interviews, I transcribed them into a plain text. The transcribing process ended up taking about eight pages of text and was very arduous process. But for the thesis process it was essential. As the interviews were made in a form of discussion, some of the answers were unclear and did not directly answer to the question discussed. This made the categorizing more difficult and made the process take more time than I initially thought it would.

Next step was to write the theory part based on the research material and books I found related to the subject. I found similarities from both the interviews and the research material. I was delighted to see that, and it gave me the moral boost needed to finish up the thesis process.

Final part of the thesis process was to write the results of the interviews and the literature findings. Adding my own thoughts, opinions and recap as an author was also part of the process. As per Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2002) guidelines.

Personally, I learned a lot from creating a study. I now have broad understanding of the current climate in Finnish esports organizations regarding their training approach. And that was exactly what I was interested in. I also met many interesting new people to me and had amazing discussions with them about this subject and much more. I do hope that the commissioning party can

use this research as base grounds for their teaching materials in their website and elsewhere like they hoped for. Apart from small hiccups along the way that I would be able to dodge with the knowledge I have now, I do call this thesis a success.

7.3 Ethics and reliability

In a qualitative research environment, the researcher has an institutional position. First of all, this means that the researcher has to act accordingly throughout the research process. Secondly, the research method might be more fluctuant than in quantitative research so that makes it harder for the researcher to evaluate the possible ethical flaws. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002: 122 - 124.)

According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2002), a good qualitative research is internally consistent, together with ethical sustainability. In a setting where participants are interviewed, it is important to note the safety of the interview materials and the interviewees (Kuula 2006; Arene 2020, 14). The researcher must keep such factors in mind throughout the study. In this thesis the interview recordings and documents were saved only on my own computer and as agreed with the interviewees, the recordings are deleted after the thesis is done and published.

Ethical considerations start when choosing the thesis topic (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2002: 126). Together with reliability questions such as, are the interviewees the best suited to answer this topic? Are the questions relevant to the topic of discussion? And is the researcher incorrectly interpreting the answers? Questions like these were kept in mind throughout the process of creating the thesis.

I followed the good scientific practices when creating my thesis. Good scientific practices are violated if other researchers are ridiculed, the study lacks sources, incorrect use of methods or reporting to the point of misleading the reader, failure to disclose all the findings, or stealing material and presenting it as ones own. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002: 129 - 130.) This is why I included both versions of the interview answers throughout the thesis, the original Finnish ones and the translated English ones.

When choosing the specific thesis topic, I came across a choice to decide to either focus on goal driven training, or goal driven learning. I felt that the former was more accurate for my subject and the commissioners' interests, so I chose that. In my opinion this increased the validity of the

thesis. Validity being the term used to evaluate if the study focuses on the promised topic (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002: 133 - 134).

When sending the cover letter to the interviewees, I disclosed the reliability factors in the message. Factors such as informing that the interviews will be recorded and for what reason, that the recordings will be exterminated after the thesis is done, and that no names of individuals or organizations will be published against their will in the thesis. All the participants had a choice to come to be interviewed and they had the option to stay anonymous (Teirilä & Jyväsjärvi, 2001: 16).

In the interviews I once more informed the participants that the interviews will be recorded and asked if they or the organization they are representing want to stay anonymous. Not a single participant demanded staying anonymous or informed me that recording the interview would be an obstacle. I also focused on not trying to drive the discussion in any direction to be as objective interviewer as I could. I had no prejudices when asking the questions from the participants and I let them answer as deeply or as superficially as they wanted. I tried keeping the discussion light-hearted enough, so that the participants would feel fine answering as truthfully as they could. All these measurements were made so that the interview situation would be as reliable, ethically sound, and as objective as I could make it. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002; Teirilä & Jyväsjärvi, 2001.)

During the research phase I tried looking at source material not older than twenty years. Most of the sources regarding esports are reasonably new to begin with, but that was not the case when searching material on the topic of goal driven training or the research methods. I did the research myself together with the whole thesis. I believe that this can add to the reliability of the thesis as there are no clashes or miscommunications with peers in the research phase. I researched other theses regarding similar topic and commissioner (Rantamäki & Vesala 2022), and similar research and interview method (Sey 2019). I compared the sources and methods that they had used to mine to see if I had missed out something important.

7.4 Personal development

This thesis was made from the basis of research material and interviews in together with my own thoughts and observations. The topic of esports was interesting to me to research and dive into. I have also hoped of working in the field in future. That is why the thesis topic is great for me personally. I have learned about the esports field and about the organizations in it during the

thesis creation process. I have also met great people working in the field already and had amazing discussions with them.

I will reflect my development on the competences from the university's website. The competences are a description of skills that the students are expected to learn during their studies. The competences are divided into generic ones and more specific ones regarding the study program. The generic competences listed are learning-, ethical-, working community-, innovation-, and internationalization competences. The field specific competences are competence in physical activity, - health promoting physical activity and coaching, -pedagogy and didactics, -areas of physical exercise involving leadership and enterprise, and -activity tourism. (Kajaani university of applied sciences 2022.)

As my thesis focused on the topic of coaching and learning, my competences around those categories were in leading role during the thesis process. I studied the subject of esports coaching and learned immensely about it during the interviews. In addition, I learned about the state of esports field in Finland. Based on that fact, most development for me happened around the competences of learning, together with working community competences as I met new people in the field interesting to me. Not forgetting my development as a researcher in creating innovative research topic and the ethical obligations that come together with creating interviews. I feel like I learned most about creating a study during this thesis. There was much to learn for me during the whole process. Conducting the interviews, gathering the literature about the subject, and analyzing the interview answers.

In the field specific competences, I feel that my thesis best supported the competences in health promoting physical activity and coaching. My thesis topic naturally guided the interviewees to think about the individual players inside a team setting and the players physical and mental wellbeing. It was reassuring to notice that the state of top organizations is already in good condition regarding the focus on player physical and mental wellbeing.

International competences have already developed immensely during the whole degree. But to write a research-based study in a foreign language has furthered my academic language skills even more. I do feel like my professional vocabulary is in a sufficient level that I would feel comfortable to work outside of Finland as a sports instructor or in a position in esports scene.

7.5 Further research

This thesis topic is possible to be used in future studies. As the amount of participants was low, I would suggest that a follow-up study is made with more participants, organizations, and even extend this research to outside Finland. Similar research is possible to do with interviews aimed for the players themselves.

Future research could be done even with quantitative approach, such as questionnaire. My thesis focused on individual players in a team setting, but it would be rather interesting to learn how the answers would have changed if the focus were on solo esports players rather than players in a team. Furthermore, this thesis participants were mostly working around CSGO teams as that is the largest esports scene in Finland at the moment. In future research, different games and genres could be also studied to see if the results are similar.

7.6 Conclusion

Based on the results I can state that goal-driven training is effective for the individual esports players if done correctly. The goals need to be good, and they need to be consistently revisited and revised in case they are not met. The goals can be seen as a tool for the coach to aim towards. The goals together with the training should be based on the difficulties faced in game. Good goals boost motivation and accelerate the development of the individual, even more greatly in younger players.

The thesis answered the research questions regarding the utilization of goal-driven training in esports. The implementation of this training approach was found beneficial and a good tool for the coaches to base their training around.

The second question asked if the teams already used this training approach and how. It can be concluded that most, if not all teams use some sort of variation of goal-driven training. They have set goals for the team itself and the players have their own goals, usually set by the players themselves and not the coach or the IGL. With smaller lower ranking teams or youth teams, the goal setting can seem a bit alien.

Third research question was about identifying the individual players learning styles better. Based on the results, most of the teams have developmental discussions with the individual players. In

which they talk about game related things among others. I see these developmental discussions very important for the coaches to get to know their players and to be able to guide them most effectively.

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Cover letter to the coaches

Terve,

Olen kolmannen vuoden Liikunnanohjaaja opiskelija Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulusta. Kirjoitan tällä hetkellä opinnäytetyötäni. Aiheenani on tutkia Suomalaisten e-urheilu organisaatioiden tavoiteperäistä harjoittelua yksilöllisellä urheilijalla.

Tavoiteperäinen harjoittelu on todettu useissa urheilulajeissa hyödylliseksi menetelmäksi yksilön oppimisen kannalta. Tavoiteperäisen oppimisen hyödyt eivät rajoitu kuitenkaan vain urheilulajeihin vaan sitä voi hyödyntää myös jokapäiväisessä oppimisessa. Tavoitteena onkin yhdessä toimeksiantajani Suomen elektronisen urheilun liiton kanssa tutkia ja herättää keskustelua aiheen tiimoilta.

Tiedustelin halukkuuttanne vastata lyhyeen haastatteluun aiheesta.

Haastatteluun osallistuminen ei vaadi haastattelun aiheeseen perehtymistä. Tutkimuksen avulla toivotaan herättävän keskustelua joukkueiden sisällä harjoittelumenetelmistä.

Kohderyhmä: Suurimmat e-urheilu organisaatiot/joukkueet Suomessa.

Haastateltava: Lähtökohtaisesti joukkueen valmentaja.

Haastattelu tapa: Microsoft Teams -haastattelu (tai puhelinhaastattelu) erikseen sovittuna ajan-kohtana (kesto n. 20-30min).

Luottamuksellisuus: Haastattelut nauhoitetaan, jotta aineisto voidaan analysoida jälkepäin. Opinnäytetyöhön tiedusteltu aineisto on luottamuksellista ja sitä käytetään ainoastaan opinnäytetyön tekoon. Aineisto tuhotaan työn valmistuttua. Haastateltavan henkilön/joukkueen tiedot eivät käy ilmi opinnäytetyössä ilman lupaa.

Pyytäisin teitä vahvistamaan osallistumisenne haastatteluun xx.xx.2022 mennessä.

Minut tavoittaa tästä sähköpostista ja vastaan myös mielelläni mahdollisiin jatkokysymyksiin.

Terveisin,

Santeri Syynimaa
Sport and Leisure Management, ASL19S
Kajaanin ammattikorkeakoulu

Hello,

I am third year Sport and Leisure Management student from Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. At the moment I am working on my thesis. The topic of my thesis is to research the goal-driven training in individual players in Finnish esports organizations.

Goal-driven training has seen success in traditional sports regarding the development of an individual athlete. The benefits of this training approach are not restricted only to traditional sports, but it can be benefitted in daily learning. The aim together with my commissioning party The Finnish Esports Federation (SEUL) is to research the phenomenon in esports field and create discussion around the topic.

I am inquiring your interest to participate in a short interview regarding the topic. Participating in the interview does not require prior knowledge about the topic. With this thesis we are hoping to create discussion inside the organization about their respective training methods.

Target group: Largest esports organizations/teams in Finland.

Interviewee: Primarily a coach of a team.

Interviews: Microsoft Teams -interview (or phone interview) on a separately agreed time (duration about 20-30 minutes).

Reliability: The interviews will be recorded for the purpose of analyzing them later. The materials are confidential and are only used to create this thesis. The interview materials will be destroyed after the thesis is complete. The interviewee nor the represented organization will not be published against the participants consent.

I ask you to confirm your participation to the interview on the xx.xx.2022 at the latest.

I can be reached from this email address and I will gladly answer any possible follow-up questions.

Best regards,

Santeri Syyrimaa
Sport and Leisure Management, ASL19S
Kajaani university of applied sciences

Interview questions**Part 1. Basic information**

Team/organization and main game? How many players are in the team? Job title in said organization? How many years of coaching? Have you gotten any training in regards of coaching? Can the author show your/your organizations information in the thesis (or do they want to stay anonymous)?

Part 2. Goal-driven learning

1. Do you teach your players to practice with set goals in mind?
2. Do you think goal-driven learning would be beneficial for individual players?

Part 3. Practices

3. How many practice sessions in a week? Are any of those individual exercises?
4. Are the players encouraged to practice certain aspects on their own time?

Part 4. Setting goals

5. Do the player and the coach have one on one discussions about goals and progress of the players skills?
6. Does the coach decide goals for the players or the team itself? (Annual-, tournament-, single game-, and/or monthly goals)
7. Does the staff go through the goals with the players?
8. Are the players encouraged to set their own goals?
9. Are the goals realistic and thought trough?
10. Is the progress towards the goal monitored?
11. If progress doesn't happen or you fail to reach the goal, do you try to modify the goal?

Original interview answers assembled

1. Is the goal-driven training beneficial and thus worth to utilize for esports players?

Original comment	Simplified comment	Subclass	Upper class
"Ehdottomasti. Joukkueella yleensä saa olla eri tavoitteet kun yksittäisellä pelaajalla..." "... Olisi tyhmää tietyllä tavalla luopua omista tavoitteista vain koska ne eivät ole yhtenevät joukkueen tavoitteiden kanssa." "Se ei välttämättä kuvasta millään lailla onko yksilö mennyt eteenpäin jossain asiassa vai onko joku joukkueen toimintaan liittyvä asia kuten kommunikaatio mennyt taaksepäin."	Joukkueen tavoitteet voivat olla täysin erit kuin yksilöllisen pelaajan tavoitteet.	Yksilöillä henkilökohtaiset tavoitteet.	Henkilökohtaiset tavoitteet.
"Joo on tavoitteita, mutta meillä mitä noita joukkueita on ollut niin itse tavoitteen asettaminen ei ole ehkä ollut niin normaalia urheilijalle. Että saattaa olla tosi karkeita tavoitteita. Tavoitteita ei ole pilkottu kovin syväälle vaan ne on monesti sellaista, että yritetään hioa joku taktikka vaadittavalle tasolle." "Nuorilla pelaajilla on monesti vaikeasti tavoiteltavia ja epärealistisia tavoitteita asetettuna itselleen. Valmennustiimin tehtävä on selkeyttää nuorelle pelaajalle "polku" jota pitkin kulkemalla tavoite on mahdollista saavuttaa."	Pelaajilla saattaa olla epärealistisia tavoitteita. Tavoitteet saattavat olla myös pinnallisia. Valmennustiimin tehtävä on auttaa pelaajia löytämään hyvät ja selkeät tavoitteet.	Tavoitteiden pinnallisuus, epärealistisuus sekä niiden selkeyttäminen.	Tavoitteiden laatu.
"Tottakai me koetaan että se on hyödyllistä. Itse kun tulen vielä perinteisen urheilun puolelta, jossa on koko ajan asetettu yksilöille tavoitteita tavoitteiden perään niin ehdottomasti koen sen tärkeänä asiana. Varsinkin nuorille akatemia urheilijoille on tärkeää antaa eväitä omien tavoitteidensa saavuttamiseen. Mä koen että nuori kaipaa semmosta virikettä lyhyelle ja pitkälle aikavälille." "...Valmennustiimin tehtävä on selkeyttää nuorelle pelaajalle "polku" jota pitkin kulkemalla tavoite on mahdollista saavuttaa." "On taatusti paljon hyötyä. Se että urheilija tietää miksi tehdään ja miten sitä omaa kehitystä mitataan tavoitteiden näkökulmasta."	Tavoiteperäinen harjoittelu koetaan hyödylliseksi. Nuoret kaipaavat tavoitteita, joita koettaa saavuttaa.	Tavoitteiden saavuttamisen mahdollistaminen.	Mahdollistaminen.

2. Do Finnish esports organizations utilize this training approach already, and if they do, how have they implemented it in their practice programs?

Original comment	Simplified comment	Subclass	Upper class
<p>"Joo on tavoitteita, mutta meillä mitä noita joukkueita on ollut niin itse tavoitteen asettaminen ei ole ehkä ollut niin normaalia e-urheilijalle. Että saattaa olla tosi karkeita tavoitteita." "Se on vieläkin tosi tuore juttu toi tavoitteiden asettaminen. Ei ole välttämättä tiedossa mikä kaikki omaan kehittymiseen vaikuttaa. Se että sä päätät että sä nukut paremmin saattaa olla yksi tavoite. Me ollaan kokoajan menossa siihen suuntaan, että valmentaja ohjaa pelaajia miettimään just tollasia asioita. Ja just sitä omaa prosessiaan."</p>	<p>Tavoitteiden asettaminen ei ole e-urheilijalle luontevaa. Ei välttämättä tiedosteta tai tiedetä miten kokonaisvaltainen hyvinvointi vaikuttaa suorituskykyyn.</p>	<p>Ymmärtämättömyys ja harhaluulot.</p>	<p>Kokemattomuus.</p>
<p>"Meillä oli viimeisinä vuosina kaksi asiantuntijaa, jotka kävi pelaajien kanssa läheisemmin niitä henkilökohtaisia asioita läpi. Siinä pystyi reflektoimaan omaa toimintaa esimerkiksi arjen, unen ja treenaamisen näkökulmasta." "Mun mielestä toi on yllättävän hyvällä mallilla ja valmennuksen tulee olla tohon liittyen pelaajien kanssa jatkuvasti keskustelussa että mitkä on niitä hyviä tavoitteita." "Sekin on vähän yksilökohtaisia, joidenkin kanssa tarvitsee käydä pienempiä keskusteluita kesken kauden."</p>	<p>Valmennusryhmän käy vuoropuhelua pelaajien kanssa. Välillä keskustellaan henkilökohtaisista asioista pelin ulkopuoleltakin.</p>	<p>Persoonalliset keskustelut, joissa käydään tavoitteita läpi.</p>	<p>Henkilökohtaiset tavoitekeskustelut.</p>
<p>"Riippuen päivästä ja joukkueesta joskus voi olla tuo neljä tuntia joukkueen yhtenäistä aikaa ja muutama tunti varataan omaa harjoitteluun. Joskus valmentajat saattavat seurata pelaajien omia harjoituksia mutta yleensä ne on täysin vapaamuotoisia. Monesti pelaajat itsekin tietävät kehityskohtansa ja treenaavat niitä omalla ajallaan." "Tendency pitkän aikaa on ollut se, että pelaajalla itsellään on aika paljon vastuuta. Ollaan onneksi menossa ehkä siihen suuntaan että valmentajat / analyttikot käyvät läpi pelin jälkeen esimerkiksi heitettyjä savuja ja ohjaavat pelaajia tietynlaiseen omaan harjoitteluun. Mutta jos pelaaja haluaa kehittyä urallaan niin se on ihan selvä että omat heikkoudet on tunnistettava itse ja niitä on reenattava omalla ajalla. Joukkueessa on tärkeää se, että kaikki treenaavat omalla ajallaan pelillisiä juttuja mutta ovat joukkueellisesti kuitenkin samalla sivulla taktiikoista jne."</p>	<p>Pelaajilla on henkilökohtaisesti paljon vastuuta mitä tulee harjoitteluun. Joukkueen kanssa käydään yhdessä läpi taktiikoita ja muita kuvioita, kun taas pelaajilta odotetaan itsenäistä harjoittelua heidän omilla tunnistamillaan kehityskohdilla.</p>	<p>Pelaajien oma vastuu tunnistaa kehityskohdat ja harjoitella niitä omalla ajalla.</p>	<p>Pelaajan vastuu.</p>

3. How could the teams identify individual players learning style better so that the individual training would be effective?

Original comment	Simplified comment	Subclass	Upper class
<p>"Hyvä esimerkki on että nyt bootcampillä tossa pari viikkoa sitten, jokainen pelaaja listasi jokaisesta pelaajasta hyviä asioita pelillisesti ja pelin ulkopuolelta, ja myös kehitettäviä kohtia. Siitä saatiin hyvä keskustelu käyntiin. Se auttaa sitä pelaajaakin kun muut saattavat osoittaa jonkun kehityksen kohteen mitä ei itse ole tajunnut. Ja siihen päälle vielä jos pelaaja osaa neuvoa muille miten lähteä kehittämään jotain asiaa tai miksi sitä kannattaa kehittää, niin tällanen keskustelu harjoitus auttaa todella paljon pelaajia. Ja kun se palaute annetaan sellasessa muodossa missä kaikki pelaajat ovat keskenään paikan päällä versus se että oltaisiin pelin tiimellyksessä hirveässä tunnetilassa annettu palaute niin siinä on toinenkin paljon vastaanottavaisempi. Palautteen antamisen ajankohta on hirveen tärkeä."</p>	<p>Pelaajat listaavat sekä hyviä, että kehitettäviä asioita toisistaan ja näistä keskustellaan avoimesti ryhmässä. Palaute annetaan kontrolloidussa ympäristössä eikä pelin kesken tunteiden käydessä kuumana.</p>	<p>Kontrolloitu ympäristö palautteen annolle ja avoin keskustelu.</p>	<p>Kehittävä kommunikaatio.</p>
<p>"Jatkuvaa kanssakäymistä pelaajien ja valmennuksen välillä on, mutta edelleen sen tärkeyttä ei voi korostaa liikaa." "...siellä isoilla organisaatioilla on kyllä ulkoistettua ammattitaitoa. Nyt on päästy siihen pisteeseen, että pelaajat itse ymmärtävät tarvitsevansa ja hyötyvänsä tällaisesta avusta." "IGL monesti viettää enemmän pelaajien kanssa aikaa ja tunnistaa heidän vahvuudet ja heikkoudet jolloin hän osaa paremmin ohjeistaa joukkueellaisia tietynlaiseen harjoitteluun paremmin. Hyvä IGL osaa referoida ja käydä asioita läpi yksilöpelaajien kanssa heidän osaamisestaan ja ohjata heitä."</p>	<p>Pelaajien kanssa käydään kehityskeskusteluja. Isoilla organisaatioilla palkattuja urheilupsykologeja tähän hommaan. IGL saattaa käydä valmentajan sijasta pelaajien kanssa kehityskeskusteluja riippuen joukkueesta.</p>	<p>Pelaajien ja valmennuksen / urheilupsykologin / IGL välinen kanssakäynti.</p>	<p>Pelaajan vuorovaikutussuhteet.</p>
<p>"Mun mielestä toi on yllättävän hyvällä mallilla ja valmennuksen tulee olla tohon liittyen pelaajien kanssa jatkuvasti keskustelussa että mitkä on niitä hyviä tavoitteita. Ehkä siinä tulee semmonen pitkäjänteisyys että jaksetaanko sitä kehitystä seurata ja miten sitä taltioidaan. Ehkä siinäkin on semmonen eräänlainen kehityskohta."</p>	<p>Kehityksen seuranta vaatii jatkuvaa vuoropuhelua valmennuksen kanssa.</p>	<p>Kehityksen seuranta pidemmällä aikavälillä.</p>	<p>Pitkäjänteisyys.</p>

Translated interview answers compressed

1. Is the goal-driven training beneficial and thus worth to utilize for esports players?

Original comment	Simplified comment	Subclass	Upper class
"Absolutely. A team can have different goals than an individual player..." "... It would be dumb to abandon ones own goals just because they are clashing with the teams' goals." "It might not show in any way if an individual has progressed in some regard or if a part of the teams progress, like the communication, has gone backwards."	A team might have completely different goals than the individual player.	Individual player has their own goals.	Personal goals.
"Yes we have goals, but what I've seen from the teams I've been in, setting goals has not propably been very normal for esports player. They might have rough ideas of goals. The goals are quite superficial and they mostly are in the nature of trying to perfect a specific tactic." "Young players can have unobtainable and unrealistic goals set to themselves. The coaching staff is in charge of clarifying a "path" towards the goals for the player, so that they can navigate towards and achieve them."	The players might have unrealistic or superficial goals. The coaching staff has to enable the players to find clarity in their goals.	Superficial or unrealistic goals and the clarity of them.	Quality of the goals.
"Ofcourse we feel that it is useful. I myself have a background in classic sports where the athlete is loaded with goals upon goals, so I think that they are extremely important. Especially for a young academy players it is important to have possibilities to achieve their goals. I feel like young players need that type of stimulus for short and long term." "... The coaching staff is in charge of clarifying a "path" towards the goals for the player, so that they can navigate towards and achieve them." "Certainly they are helpful. That the player knows why and how their development is monitored from the perspective of goals."	Goal-driven training is recognised to be beneficial. Young players need goals that they can aim towards.	Enabling the players to achieve their goals.	Enabling.

2. Do Finnish esports organizations utilize this training approach already, and if they do, how have they implemented it in their practice programs?

Original comment	Simplified comment	Subclass	Upper class
<p>"We do have goals, but setting up goals hasn't been very natural for esports players on the teams we have had. Their goals might be very rough around the edges." "It is still brand new thing, this goal setting. It might not be well know what affects the personal development. A player could decide to try to get better sleep and that might be one goal. We are constantly going in the direction of the coach guiding the players to think stuff like that. And their own process."</p>	<p>Setting up goals is not natural for the players. They might lack understanding or simply do not know how comprehensive wellbeing affects the performance.</p>	<p>Delusion and the lack of understanding .</p>	<p>Inexperience.</p>
<p>"Last couple of years we have had two specialists who discussed about personal things with the players more closely. They could reflect their own actions for example from the perspective of everyday life, sleeping and training." "I think that is on a suprisingly good level and the coaching staff need to be on a constant dialog with the players regarding those good goals." "Individuals differ. With some players we need to have smaller discussions in the middle of the season."</p>	<p>Coaching staff needs to be in a constant dialog with the players. Sometimes the discussions are about personal stuff outside the game.</p>	<p>Personal discussions with the players about set goals and other things.</p>	<p>Discussions about personal development.</p>
<p>"Depending on the day and team, sometimes about four hours is reserved for the teams shared training and couple of hours is reserved for individual training. Sometimes the coaches follow the individual practices as well but usually they are completely independent. Generally the players know their own weaknesses and are training those in their freetime." "For a long time the tendency has been that the players have a lot of responsibility. The direction we are heading is that coaches / analysts go through for example thrown smokes and guide players for specific practice on their own time based on alaysis. But if a player wants to progress on their carreer, it is clear that they must notice their own weaknesses and practice those on their own time. It is important in a team that everyone train techincal things on their own time, but are clear on the teams tactics etc."</p>	<p>The players have significant amount of responsibility regarding the individual training. The ways to execute plays and tactics are revised together with the team. The players are expected to train their individual skills on the areas they recognise they need to develop themselves.</p>	<p>The players own responsibility to recognise their development al areas and practice those on their own time.</p>	<p>Responsibility of the players.</p>

3. How could the teams identify individual players learning style better so that the individual training would be effective?

Original comment	Simplified comment	Subclass	Upper class
<p>"A good example is that now in the bootcamp couple weeks ago every player listed positive things in and outside of the game about other teammates together with things to develop on. We got a great conversation out of that. It helps the players when others point out things that they might not have realized themselves. And on top of that if the players can tell the others how to start improving themselves and why it will help them, this type of conversation practise helps the players immensely. When the feedback is given in a situation where the players are not in intensive gaming situation but rather in controlled environment, the other party is much more receptive. Timing the feedback is very important."</p>	<p>The players list positive things about their peers together with points to develop upon and then talk about them openly in a group. Feedback is given in a controlled environment rather than during an intense game.</p>	<p>Controlled environment for the feedback together with a open discussion.</p>	<p>Developmental communication.</p>
<p>"Continuous interaction between coaches and players do happen, but once again, its importance cannot be stressed enough." "... the largest organizations do have outsourced experts. Now we are in a situation where the players understand themselves that they need and benefit from using help such as this." "IGL usually spends more time with the players and will recognise their imperfections so they are in better position to guide the teammates towards more efficient practise. A good IGL can do just this with their individual teammates."</p>	<p>Developmental discussions are being held. Larger organizations have outsourced expertise such as sport psychologists. IGL might have discussions with the players instead of the coach depending on the team.</p>	<p>Continuous communication between the player / coach / sport psychologists / IGL.</p>	<p>The players interaction relationships.</p>
<p>"It is in good shape in my opinion and coaches need to be in constant dialogue with the players regarding what are those good goals. Maybe kind of a persistency comes to play there. That is the progression monitored and how is it recorded. Perhaps that is sort of a development point."</p>	<p>Tracking the development requires constant dialogue with coaches.</p>	<p>Tracking the development on a long interval.</p>	<p>Persistence.</p>