



# Queensland Academy of Sport



## Opportunities and Engagement: Coach learning at the QAS



THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND



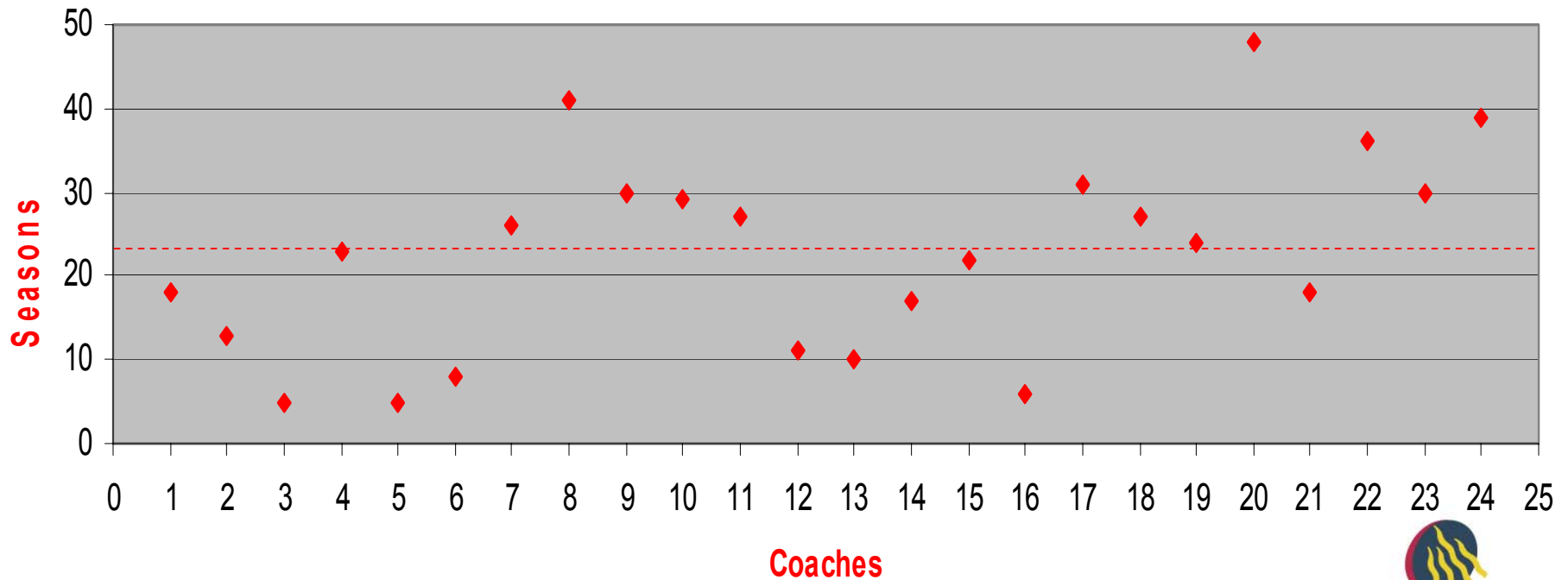
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# Athletic histories



Seasons playing the sport they are currently coaching

- Average of 22.7yrs (5 – 48yrs)





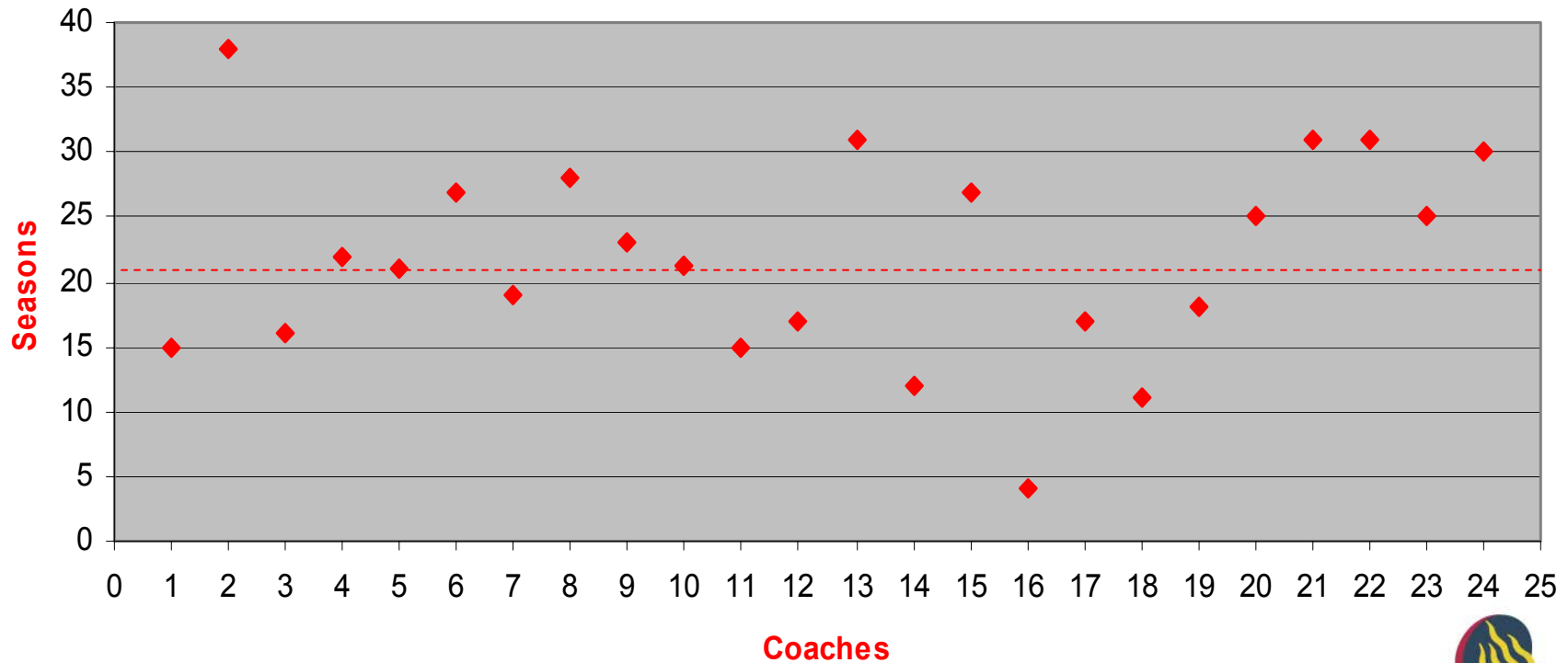
- Recreational level 0 – 29yrs
- Developmental level 0 – 27yrs
- Elite level 0 – 22yrs





### Seasons coaching their present sport

- Average of 21.8yrs (total) 4 – 38yrs



# Coaching breakdown



- Recreational level (0-23yrs)
- Developmental level (0-23yrs)
- Elite level (1-33yrs)





# Traditional view of learning

- Acquisition metaphor of learning
  - Knowledge viewed as ‘material goods’
  - Learner is passive and becomes the ‘owner’ of these goods
- Not entirely appropriate view learning this way
  - Experiences extremely varied





# Participation metaphor

- Individual is interested in participation
  - Learning activities occur within specific contexts which are central to the learning that takes place





# Relational Interdependence

- QAS coach learning and organisational influence on that learning
- Coming to know = interdependence between workplace affordances and workers' agency
- Individual interests and priorities direct participation





## Previous experience as an athlete

“I’ve probably developed my own techniques to start off with based on what I knew as an athlete”

“My failings were a reason why I am able to be a good coach”





## Previous experience as a coach

“You learn to be a coach by coaching”

“you learnt a lot of things by tripping over them, you know, making a mistake and then finding out the right way to do things after you’ve made a mistake”

“that’s how you get better, by being thrown in the deep end and struggling a bit”





- Other sources included:
  - Broader life-experience
  - Self-direction reading
  - Tertiary study
  - The State and National sporting organisation
  - Watching sporting events
  - Visiting other sporting organisations
  - Other non-QAS coaches
  - Other trained professionals





- Sources of learning
- Policy
- Physical environment

QAS coaches  
Para professionals  
Resource centre  
Generic offerings





## Books, internet, and other reading materials

“I love sitting on the net and dredging through all the articles by sport scientists”

“I enjoy reading and just sort of following research articles on the physiology or the technical side or whatever it may be”

“I like books because I like having the information to myself and can refer to them readily”

“You always learn and reinvent some of the stuff you do when you do do the reading”





## Other coaches

“You always learn something new because not everyone does things the same”

“The (other QAS) coaches are a great resource”

“probably more on personal relations and that sort of stuff (is what I learn from other QAS coaches)”

“most of the coaches in my sport really can't tell you much”





- Personal agency impacted by range of factors:
  - Coaching contract

“(not knowing whether you will have a job at the end of the contract) is a terrible, de-motivating thing for most coaches”
  - Level of success

“They are achieving success and can be the worst coach in the world and have great athletes”





- Personal agency impacted by range of factors:
  - Perceived personal threat

“I can’t do the budget, why am I going to go around and talk to someone in finance to tell them that I am an absolute dill?”
  - Personal dispositions (as shaped by life histories)

“People kind of somehow make it happen because they want to make it happen”





- Previous experiences as athlete and coach important but volume and type was idiosyncratic
- Personal histories influence personal agency which directs engagement with what is offered
- Primary sources engaged in included
  - On-the-job-learning
  - Books and other reading materials
  - Other coaches





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