

3.1 The Concept of the Dual Career, its Objectives and Application in the Subject-Athlete

Introduction

When we talk about a dual career, we are referring to a subject-athlete who takes on 2 careers simultaneously. On the one hand we have his profession as an athlete, that is, the sport that he plays. And on the other hand, we have an academic or work-related career.

Analyzing this matter at length, we are presented with a reality in which a human being moves between two professions, or rather, has two occupations. Now the question that arises is, why? Why doesn't he dedicate himself to just one career or profession? Why waste energy on two professions? One quick answer is: at some point one of his careers, the sports one in this case, will end, and this will happen at an early age compared to when everyone else's professions end on average. For this reason, when a high performance athlete understands that his sports journey has come to its end, he suddenly finds himself without tools to cope with this new stage; this is why he pursues a parallel educational path. It is important to start creating this reconciliation as soon as possible, to prevent future risk situations, but in any case, the priority is to "start with plan B from the very first day you start preparing for plan A".

In contrast to the rest of the population, a subject-athlete must think about preparing himself, in most cases, academically, to cope with the end of his sports career. This doesn't happen to the rest of the population, who, while dedicating themselves to their professions, only have to think about training in terms of developing as professionals within their field. They don't allot time for parallel careers in order to face an upcoming withdrawal, thus in most cases this type of withdrawal is called retirement and coincides with retirement age. This does not mean that some people do not have parallel careers, admittedly there are instances. The point is understanding that an athlete intensively confronts the need to think about two careers in parallel from an early age as a result of knowing that his sports life will come to an imminent end.

When his sports career has ended, a phenomenon called transition arises, something that has been extensively studied in sports psychology throughout the world. One of these transition stages is withdrawal, but the fact that transitions happen at different times and in different areas for different people, must be considered, but with the added

challenge of sports transitions in the case of athletes (change in sports category, completing a bachelor's degree educational cycle).

Withdrawal from sports is the stage when the sports career ends and the work-academic stage begins. This creates a need for the subject-athlete to be prepared in order to tackle this new stage and this is where it pays off to have opted for dual training.

One of the terms that comes up when talking about transition is crisis, characterized by ineffectiveness when facing the demands that transition requires with the resources that the athlete has at his disposal. Athletes in "transition crisis" situations need help analyzing crisis situations and making strategic decisions that make the most of their resources to help them overcome obstacles. Thus, we see that it is important to give attention and support at the onset of a crisis, the objective being to anticipate it.

3.1.1 Sports Transition

In the previous module, in talking about the sports career, we studied a few points related to transition and the importance of prior education as a way to anticipate the end of a sports career. Next, before delving into dual careers, we will take a look at how transition as a phenomenon is studied in several regions of the world.

In some countries, they understand that there is a social sector that experiences a particular reality, as is the case of high performance athletes, and as such they prepare determined programs to address this matter.

Helping these athletes when it comes to coordinating sports training with their extracurricular activities becomes of vital importance, and not just this, but also the transition from one career to the next, focusing in particular on their withdrawal. First felt now 20 years ago, this need gave way for a surge in different assistance proposals for athletes during their career, established in different countries, through committees, federations, such as for example, the Olympic Athlete Centre (Canada), Career Assistance Program for Athletes (United States), Athlete Career and Education (Australia and the United Kingdom), Life Style Management Program (United Kingdom), and Retire Athlete (the Netherlands).

The programs that were started were characterized by their flexibility and adaptation. They were made up of different types of workshops, seminars, educational modules, individual tutoring, and multi-disciplinary services for support groups targeted at athletes. Additionally, matters related to personal tastes, lifestyle, education and professional training were addressed (Wylleman et al., 2004).

The ideas proposed by these help centers or programs for athletes are related to: individual intervention projects (counseling), assistance planning a dual career, establishing objectives consistent with reality and not out of reach of the subject's possibilities, vocational guidance if necessary, and vital interventions, oriented towards abilities that have the potential to be transferred and utilized in both careers, sports and post-sports (Clemmet, Hanrahan and Murray, 2009).

What is interesting about these centers is that they utilize a multi-dimensional approach when working with athletes. They understand the diversity and inclusiveness that sports has taken on. Sports Psychology (D'Andrea and Daniels, 2005) recognizes the diversity of subjects in terms of their identity: religious-spiritual, economic class identity, sexual identity, psychological maturity, ethnic-racial identity, chronological challenges, traumas and threats to well-being, family history, particular psychological characteristics, language, and place of residency. Integrating these particularities that define athletes in order to understand them and thus guide them throughout their careers is a challenge for multidisciplinary work groups.

There are four scientific traditions that address the topic of athlete transition. These are found in different regions and each one is different from the other as well as having things in common.

North America, Western Europe, Australia and Eastern Europe are the pacesetters in terms of sports transition matters, with various lines of investigation.

Table 1: Scientific transitions and authors who are referents in each region.

SCIENTIFIC TRADITIONS	AUTHORS	CHARACTERISTICS:
NORTH AMERICA	Brewer, Van Raalte and Petitpas, 2000; Bruner, Munroe-Chandler and Spink, 2008; Côté, Baker and Abernethy, 2007; Richardson, 2009; Wong, 2010	Principally focused on career stages, on coaches' roles, on teammates and parents, student-athlete transitions, athletic identity, retirement from sports, and the different trajectories of sports participation.
EUROPE	Alfermann, 2005; Lavallee, 2005; Patsourakou, 2010; Stambulova, 2010; Wippert and Wippert, 2010	They emphasize coordinating transitions within and outside of sports, sports transition from junior to senior, crisis transitions, retirement from sports, social support and professional assistance in career transitions.
AUSTRALIA	Bennie and O'Connor, 2004; Gorely, Lavallee, Bruce, Teale and Lavallee, 2001; Kavanagh, 2010	They are characterized by an integral vision of athletes, with applied approaches, and evaluation of professional assistance programs.
SOUTH AMERICA, ASIA AND AFRICA	Baria, Nabli and Oubahammou, 2005; Brandáo, Winterstein, Pinheiro, Agresta, Akel and Martini, 2001; Chow, 2002; Costa, Ferreira, Penna, Costa, Paiva and Samulski, 2011	They reflect sports matters regarding retirement and coaching careers.

Source: retrieved from: Maicon Carlin and Enrique Garcés de Los Fayos Ruiz (2012).

A study by Maicon Carlin and Enrique Garcés de Los Fayos Ruiz (2012) proposes that in North America, Western Europe and Australia, there are similar particularities, which are oriented by the fact that they are democratic civilizations with an individualist profile, generating a particular style of citizen. They have three lines of investigation and analysis:

- 1) Withdrawal from sports as a phenomenon to be interpreted, and sports identity.
- 2) Stages in talent - career development with a particular focus on the role of parents and coaches.
- 3) Transitions from one career to another by students-athletes.

The fact that athletes have sufficient authority to decide when to retire from sports, and how to handle that stage, is recognized in individualist cultures.

Continuing with the comparison of transcultural studies and following the proposal of Maicon Carlin and Enrique Garcés de Los Fayos Ruiz (2012), with regards to withdrawal from sports, it was observed that the number of athletes who plan their withdrawal is related to and depends on the region where he resides.

In countries with an individualist culture, it is common to find these types of athletes (those that plan their withdrawal). Athletes from Western Europe plan their withdrawal with greater anticipation than those from Eastern Europe, showing us that individualist-type cultures are profiled as and tend to be cultures of prior planning in regards to making decisions, thus we could easily say that they are cultures of anticipation (Triandis, 2004).

What we can interpret from this is that individuality leads one to navigate one's career alone and everything depends on oneself. So now, does this individuality correlate to individual sports? Do athletes that practice individual sports plan their withdrawal from sports at a higher rate with respect to team sport athletes? It would be interesting to conduct this kind of study. While cultures that profile personality traits in their inhabitants that focus on the individual, in addition to establishing that their athletes cope with withdrawal through prior planning, they have proposals on how to support athletes that undertake dual careers.

In countries like China, Russia and France, athletes that have already retired are characterized by the custom of returning to their sport, but in another role and not as an athlete (for example, starting a career as a coach). However, in some places this does not happen, like for example in Germany and Sweden. Here, the federations and systems that regulate sports do not offer these types of possibilities.

In China's case, the existence of an important link established between universities and sports federations can be appreciated (Huang et al., 2001), which is of great utility to the athlete when it comes to not interrupting his careers, and above all, when it comes to concrete possibilities of finding a job once his career has ended. The materialization of a dual career that goes hand-in-hand with the State and federations is appreciated.

The system in Russia is similar to that of China. On the contrary, in countries like Germany, France and Sweden, the one who will assume responsibility for his actions and face the future in regards to his education and job search, is the athlete himself.

As previously stated, and continuing with the study of what we call transition, this stage will or will not be considered traumatic if it was previously planned, making sense of the study of dual careers.

Psychologists that address high performance sports uphold that athletes have the possibility of utilizing multiple resources when it comes to navigating a dual career, which will serve as an adaptation strategy for this process. Based on studies related to transition models, we can draw a few conclusions. For example, the use of coping

strategies such as social support networks prove to be very interesting, or planning withdrawal from sports ahead of time as a coping strategy. These are the most addressed angles in recent publications (Lavallee, 2005; Gilmore, 2008).

We can see how the dual career is related to what Susana Pallarés, Fernando Azócar, Miquel Torregrosa, Clara Selva and Yago Ramis (2011) pose in their Sports Trajectory Models when talking about the Parallel Model. This position is a course of action for anticipating the future. These considerations manifest the importance of the combination of work, which involves psychological assistance and professional training, as a means of facilitating the career transition process.

3.1.2 The Dual Career

We will now elaborate on the topic that is our main focus in this unit and we will study the impact of the dual career on the athlete's life, attempting to further examine the advantages or complications that go along with it.

The aim is to review what we have studied in reference to this topic thus far and make contributions based on our professional experiences in the workplace when it comes to working with athletes with this profile.

As an objective, this work will provide tools to analyze the Dual Career so that later, as professionals, we have the resources we need to make the best decisions concerning our work with subjects-athletes who navigate two professions. It is of the utmost importance that you be able to propose, after studying these types of cases, projects to create or generate spaces where one can work with subjects-athletes with professional assistance needs.

Being active members of a club, academy, school or private practice means that it may be recommendable to add this kind of analysis. There are not many clubs that have counseling services in the areas of psychology and certainly not from a multidisciplinary perspective, thus presenting proposals of this sort could be of great help to the sports world in the institutions where this is a concern.

Collaboration from former athletes associated with high performance to provide counseling could be a useful resource for sharing knowledge, experiences, life stories, life philosophies and thus could become part of these kinds of proposals. Clubs generally have former athletes who continue to be involved in the club in some way.

As we already mentioned, former athletes make up part of the intellectual capital and become a valuable resource due to the specific knowledge they possess related to abilities, techniques, strategies, training and mental preparation, etc. It is important that federations and training centers use these resources. If these experiences are generated, then the athletes that have been provided this kind of professional support will have more tools to work with for future generations, leading these kinds of proposals from experienced, trained professionals to become a permanent part of club culture. Regarding this point, our experience leads us to understand that former athletes who collaborate with counseling are of great help to both the athlete as well as the institution.

But we have to specify that this counseling should not be performed without first receiving training in areas related to supporting athletes.

According to our way of understanding the withdrawal process, we work with our athletes on the basis of two objectives: on one hand, focusing on each athlete's transition (high school to university, etc.) without losing sight of the moment of withdrawal, seeking the balance between sports and education so that it is a continual process throughout the athlete's sports life. And, on the other hand, the second objective is to detect talent, not just sports talent, but also occupational talent since, who better than a person in the sports stage who has grown and contributed to the Club's values to develop his profession based on its philosophy; he understands the heart of the institution and will be more adaptive both to the player as well as the Club. But for this, one has to be prepared.

We will try to explain the previous paragraph through an example: we have a player who has been in lower categories at the club for 10 years, when he advances to higher categories he spends 7 years in other clubs at a very high level. During this time, the player finishes his first career, coinciding with his return to the original club where they offer him the chance to carry out his field experience in the sports management department. Conducting the 120 hours of field experience in a section of the Club, adapting his schedule as per his sports and exam calendar. He continues to play on the section's B team for another 5 years where he continues his education and another year of studies. The player has grown up inside the Club, has been trained with a work philosophy that all the sections uphold, has juggled his academic and sports life and in his field work has demonstrated his worth both on and off the field. He is now 32 years old and his withdrawal is set for this season. In addition to being prepared, he has demonstrated to us that he has many competencies to be part of a department in the Club.

Evidently, this is a story of success and unfortunately will not happen in every case since institutions cannot take on all of their players, but being knowledgeable, not just from the sports side of things, aids the athlete's occupational and social adaptation.

Authors like Guidotti et al. suggest that the dual career is a field of investigation in development and multidisciplinary by nature, due to the fact that the subject-athlete-student navigates two parallel paths of training and it involves different types of professionals who simultaneously educate the athlete. This is very nurturing for the subject since his experiences involve professional support to which not all people have access.

3.1.3 Dual Career Coping Alternatives

Developing dual careers is part of a work proposal that has prevention and anticipation objectives for the subjects who, as time goes by, do not become high performance athletes. This is how, in some cases, professional alternatives can be achieved once the sports stage has ended. In the case of athletes who do manage to successfully navigate a dual career, they will be able to make the transition with less conflicts and insert themselves into the job market with greater ease (Torregosa et al., 2015; Tshube and

Feltz, 2015). The dual career caters to two alternatives simultaneously. On one hand, the sport with its variables and, on the other hand, academic study or work (Stambulova and Wylleman, 2014).

The goal of athletes who navigate a dual career is to find the right balance, which is based on: "the perfect coordination and coexistence between sports and academic studies or work, and that this may facilitate good academic and athletic performance, living a private and satisfying life, maintaining good health conditions, life quality and well-being" (Stambulova, Engström, Frank, Linnér and Lindahl, 2015).

Below we have provided with three variables that help an athlete properly navigate his sports trajectory or dual career. This context makes the transition less complicated and improves adaptation:

- Commitment and responsibility to his dual sports trajectory.
 - Access to community support.
 - Dual career planning.
- (Chamorro, Torregrosa, Sánchez-Miguel, Sánchez-Oliva and Amado, 2015; MacNamara and Collins, 2010; Stambulova, 2010; Vilanova and Puig, 2013).

When we talk about career planning, referencing Werther, Davis and Lee-Gosselin (1990), we are referring to the act of identifying objectives, situating them in a career timeline, identifying available resources and developing the competencies needed to achieve the set objectives. All of these skills that are expected of the subject-athlete-student must be properly taught and developed by the professionals responsible for covering the topic, in this case, the coaching team (coach-physical therapist-psychologist-trainer). Although it appears to be quite easy to put together a list of skills that one should have in order to tackle a sports career, what is not at all easy is educating subjects-athletes with this personality profile since it is not that simple to put into practice. It is something that involves a lot of work, as with everything related to education.

The social competencies that the subject-athlete-student must have refer to a set of knowledge, attitudes, skills and experiences that allow athletes to combine their studies and sports career in the best way possible (Gold in Education and Elite Sport, 2014).

Studies that analyze the importance of career planning to anticipate specific scenarios, like the transition from high school to college (Miró, Perez-Rivases, Ramis and Torregrosa, 2017) or the transition into withdrawal from sports (finishing a sports career and starting a life without sports) (Torregrosa, Ramis, Pallarès, Azócar and Selva, 2015) have been found in several reviews. Planning, as mentioned on more than one occasion, is anticipating. Characteristics of this kind of planning should be as flexible possible, meaning adaptation to change, a result of how dynamic the life of a high performance athlete ends up being when it comes to encountering a variety of unforeseen circumstances: injuries, illnesses, relocation, etc., all of which cause changes to the

athlete's previously projected path, which can alter the direction of his career; therefore, planning is his main resource.

From the bibliography and first-hand references from subjects-athletes-students, we can interpret that: assuming job responsibilities in parallel with academic studies is understood as the main challenge that must be confronted and overcome, followed by the willingness to make good decisions with regards to one's academic and sports career during the process.

An athlete must become aware of his strengths, limitations and personal challenges, which are considered indispensable resources to have available in order to properly plan a dual career during high school and university. On the contrary, the previously mentioned resources have not been taken into consideration in the same way for the group of subjects-athletes-students in high school.

Continuing with the same study and going through the educational stages of an athlete's career, the conclusion was reached that subjects-athletes-students that are in high school use the following competencies:

- The ability to successfully handle the stress of studying and training.
- Knowing what type of academic education could be compatible with a sports career.

On the other hand, the group of high school subjects-athletes-students recognize the following resources:

- Self-discipline as a priority resource.
- Ability to adapt to change.
- Knowing how to prioritize when making decisions.

The group of university subjects-athletes-students recognize the following resources:

- Willingness to make sacrifices. Not doubting themselves and being confident.
- Ability to create a vision of what one hopes to achieve during and after a dual career.

As we can observe in this review, during the periods of high school and university, the two resources in common that the athlete took into consideration for dual career planning were the same, dedication and decision-making. This shows the transversal nature and stability over time of some of these competencies, making it apparent that during these stages of a sports career the reality of athletes is complex, varied, dynamic, intense and compromising, since what is of most concern to them is making good decisions and being able to dedicate themselves fully to the demands of their situation.

Understanding the dual career as a process, the results of the reviews suggest that the resources that university subjects-athletes-students use to plan a dual career are based on the following conditions: their willingness to make sacrifices, their vision of what they want to achieve and, their awareness of their own strengths and limitations. These

resources should be developed during the previous academic stages along with the groups the athlete counts on to provide support (psychologists-coaches-trainers-doctors, etc.). There is evidence that during this sports stage, as they are drawn to their immediate environment on account of the athlete's age, the sacrifice to continue with the sports project is a priority. Considering that the university stage is complex, not just because of the volume of studying that a subject must assimilate but also because of the level of sports commitment, it becomes tricky to resist temptations that subjects experience during this period of their lives in relation to friendships, relationships, etc. Thus their resources, as mentioned above, must be strong and well-developed.

3.1.4 Sports Success and the Dual Career

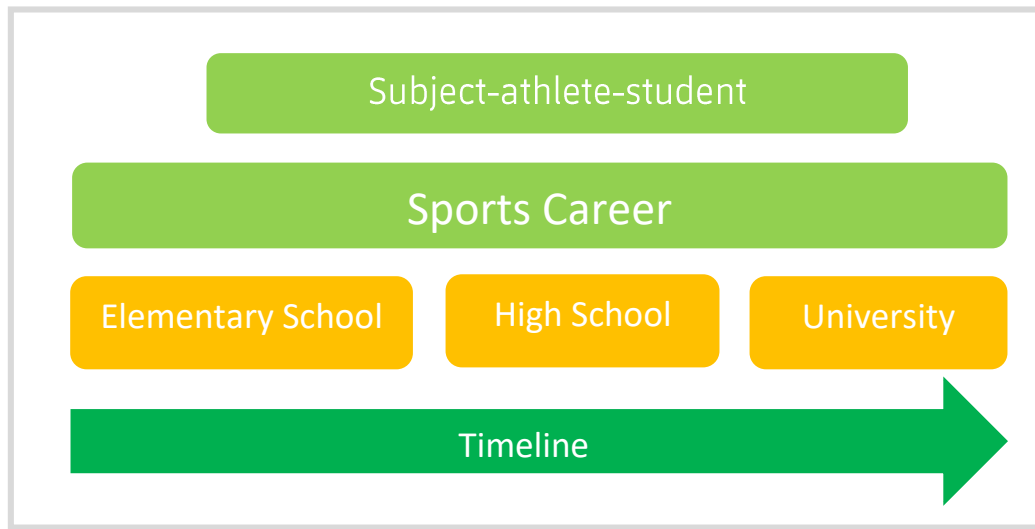
In their case study about balancing sports success and the development of the subject-athlete-student off the playing field, Pink, Saunders, and Stynes, (2015) suggest that it is important to create a club culture that is consistent with the athlete's reality so that he can successfully develop a dual career. This, which is in line with the analysis trend in this module, highlights the importance of the club having training and educational projects in place (sports-academic) for athletes that are in the midst of their high performance sports careers.

As a way of looking towards the future, being able to juggle sports with academics, work and even a social life will increase the odds of success in the future, as much for the athletes who do not reach the high performance level as those who do successfully develop their sports career prior to their withdrawal. The responsibility of promoting a dual career is a matter that involves both political and sports entities as well as the athlete himself and his environment, which should help prevent the anxiety of becoming a high performance athlete as a matter of life or death.

As regarded in previous paragraphs, we know that there are national and international organizations that take steps toward the creation of projects directed at integrating athlete groups committed to dual careers. Facilitating their path along both careers.

The work done by these entities that provide the conditions that a subject-athlete-student needs to navigate a dual career should be based on educating him in order to sharpen his awareness of the importance of developing an academic career in parallel to a sports one, not just as a profession for an alternative future, but also as a way to generate social and psychological support resources. Furthermore, teaching skills related to time management, conflict resolution, decision-making as it relates to academic and competitive demands, or mid-term career planning, among others, will come in handy so that our athletes tackle the maturing process with greater security and guaranteed success. Understanding that we are always working in terms of educational processes in complex and dynamic situations.

Figure 1: Subject-Athlete-Student Timeline



Source: Prepared by the author.

Next, we will share a proposal elaborated by the training institute in Barcelona, Spain. INEFC (National Institute of Physical Education of Catalonia) works on athlete training and educational proposals that provide training and study adaption programs to those who pursue dual careers. As this is a sports science training institute, the high performance athlete can more easily engage in the study of physical education, as these kinds of institutions are able to provide more tools to this group of subjects. If a subject is committed to sports practice throughout his educational stage, he will become familiar with both the academic and practical side of his profession, quickly finding himself with the resources he needs to understand the sport while he readies himself for his eventual withdrawal.

Esport-Estudis is an academic support and counseling program for subjects-athletes based on other similar proposals such as the Tutoresport-UAB project, where the dual career (in other words, combining a sports career with academic activity) is presented as a good solution to finding a balance between sports and other facets of the life of a student-athlete so long as it coupled with an institutional project like in the case of Esport-Estudis.

The purpose of this project is to link the Physical Activity and Sports Sciences university degree program with high athletic performance.

As we have mentioned, subjects involved in the program have, from an academic standpoint, certain advantages that entail curricular adaptations such as:

Time extensions for exams and permission to take exams despite only having an 80% attendance rate, suspending exams or changing exam dates due to sports commitments or injuries, as well as schedule availability and flexibility.

Additionally, each subject-student-athlete will have a teacher or tutor responsible for mentoring him and supporting him, who will be a member of the academic institution

and will take on the task of coordinating with other professionals and assisting the subject-athlete.

One of the aspects to consider regarding this study is trying to determine the satisfaction level of subjects when it comes to applying a university support program to high level athletes. Questionnaire-like surveys and semi-structured interviews were used to gather this information.

The quantitative analysis conducted by Esport-Estudis by way of questionnaires given to subjects-students-athletes shows that they could give more consideration to the following variable: the possibility of exam date or schedule changes due to, for example, an injury as a result of sports activity.

On the other hand, and continuing with the qualitative analysis of data gathered in the interviews, it is suggested that athletes are satisfied with the application of the program in general terms. As far as criticism goes, they pose that teachers or tutors lack the ability to understand each athlete's individual situation, assuring that as their pace of life is complex and oftentimes they are misunderstood, they require more personalized attention when it comes to being provided with assistance in particular situations.

These matters should be kept in mind when tackling projects that aim to provide academic assistance to subjects that are dedicated to high performance while at the same time navigating a parallel education program.

With this we see two major advantages for the subject-athlete-student as he navigates an academic program that is related to his sports profession. On one hand, all of the experience he gained as a result of going through the stage of being a high performance athlete, which leaves him with know-how related to his sport that, on the other hand, he can later build on through formal education, enriching what he already learned in a practical manner. Formal education related to the sport he practices offers theoretical support regarding everything practical that the athlete learned. That support, furthermore, offers context related to learning about the issues that the athlete has already experienced, and thus he quickly finds that he understands the bases of why he carried out certain processes in certain ways. The athlete, finding himself in ongoing stages of analysis and study on his own sport, is transformed into a professional who has experienced the reality of high performance alongside academia. This is an advantage that a subject-athlete-student who opts for a dual career has, where he relates his schooling to his sport. Here we are dealing with practical and theoretical know-how. The same thing can happen when dealing with a professional occupation, when the athlete combines work and sports. If his work is related to the sport that he also practices, this can create more support tools in the workplace, as in this case he also possesses practical know-how. Let's not forget to point out that in the case of athletes who navigate dual careers related to training and working, it may end up that once they retire they dedicate themselves exclusively to working and may never formally study the sport performed, thus they will have access to fewer theoretical analysis tools. This is a pillar of the utmost importance for athlete trainers.

As high performance psychologists, it is important to understand the process the athlete goes through during his career, since it helps us identify the subject's particular characteristics and personal preferences in relation to what type of undergraduate degree to pursue. If sports institutions address these types of projects with high degrees of responsibility and fuel them with the expertise of trained professionals, these proposals can be successfully implemented. This way, a subject-athlete can dedicate and commit himself to his sport and not have to worry so much about his academic career in the future since he is provided with optimal vocational guidance by a multidisciplinary group and will be able to find a profession related to sports that is gratifying and does not cause him frustration in the future.

Multidisciplinary work teams are of great importance on clubs since they can allocate part of their proposals to creating spaces for counseling and mentoring to athletes in dual career stages. In these spaces, not only is the athlete provided with productive interventions, but they will also go on his track record. Insomuch as clubs set a goal to create these spaces within the institution, there will be less margin for the athlete to enter into a crisis because of his withdrawal from sports or dual career.