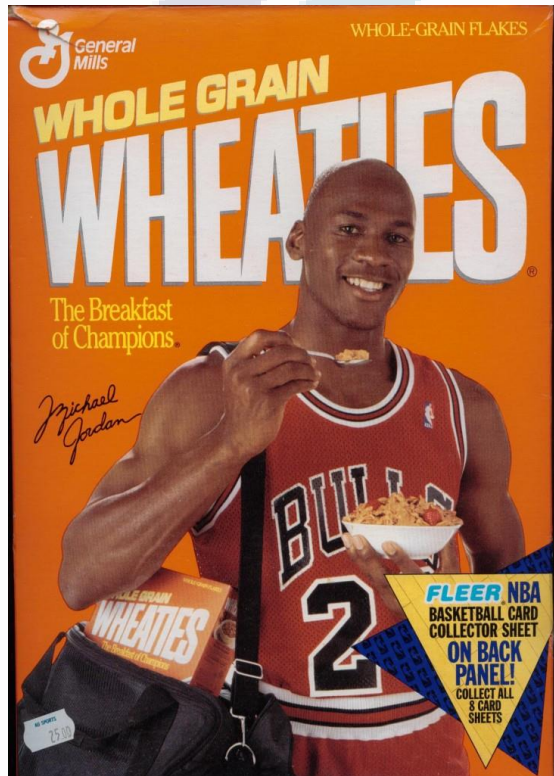


The Hype Behind Sport Specialization

Robin Tharle-Oluk
BPE, Adv. Cert AT, CAT(C)

The Ultimate Goal ?

Fame, Fortune & Success



Fun, Health, Life Long Sport



Sport Specialization – The Root

- Eastern Europe
 - Sport Schools
 - Early identification
- 10, 000 hrs or 10 years – Ericsson's theory
- Tiger Woods phenomenon
- The Desire/Need Excellence
 - To be successful must start early
 - What is the definition of success?



The Dream

- Scholarships
 - Post secondary gets more expensive
 - Sports is the Golden Ticket
- Pro contracts
 - Return on investment
 - Glamour/Prestige
 - Endorsements



Tiger Woods

- Phenomenal Athletic Success
 - Considered greatest golfer of all time
- Financial Success
 - Estimated net worth of \$600 million
- Started golfing before 2
- By the age of 38
 - On his 5th comeback from injury



Rafael Nadal

- Began playing at 4
- Started doing one handed forehand and backhand at 9
- Injuries
 - Knee (multiple times), wrist, and back
- Is only 28



Martina Hingis

- Started age 2- competition at age 4
- Retired at 22 due to injuries
 - “I want to play tennis only for fun...”
- Came back 3 years later
 - Couldn't quite get back to form
 - Still suffered injuries



INJURY MANAGEMENT

Baseball Pitchers

Tommy John surgeries by year (MLB players only)

2014 - 16*- in May

2013 - 19

2012 - 36

2011 - 18

2010 - 16

2009 - 19

2008 - 18

2007 - 20

2006 - 18

2005 - 16

2004 - 12

2003 - 15

2002 - 13

2001 - 12

2000 - 13

Source: Baseballheatmaps.com

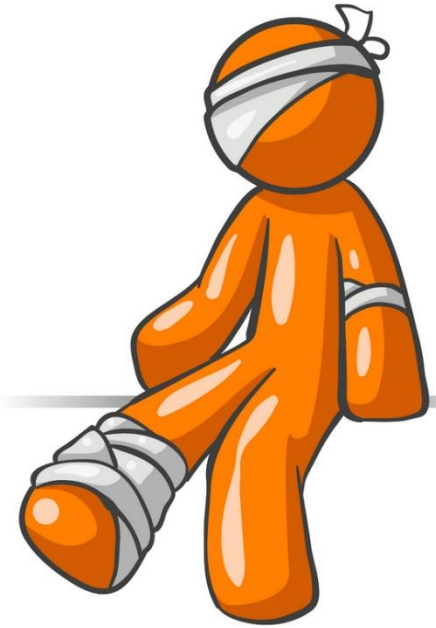
*Yankees RHP Ivan Nova and Rangers LHP Pedro Figueroa
are scheduled to have surgery

The Numbers

- 35, 000 Russian athletes at select schools – never went from entry to high level
- 192/11 287 elite level German school athletes medaled at int. championships (0.017%)
- 2.2 % of USHS girls, 2.0% USHS boys got partial scholarships
- 1.2% of USHS girls, 1.1% USHS boys got full scholarships
- Burnout – by the age of 70% of athletes will have dropped out of their given sport

The Reality

- Physical Injury
- Mental Fatigue
- Long Term Health Issues
- Social Isolation
- Burnout
- Manipulation



Reality – 2

- Proper growth and maturation is halted
- 50% of pediatric injuries come from sport specialization
- higher rate of adult physical inactivity
- 70-93% are more injured than their counterparts
- parents and children place lots of trust into coaches/officials,
- they don't get to experience other things – people, sports, outings.

Diversification is Good

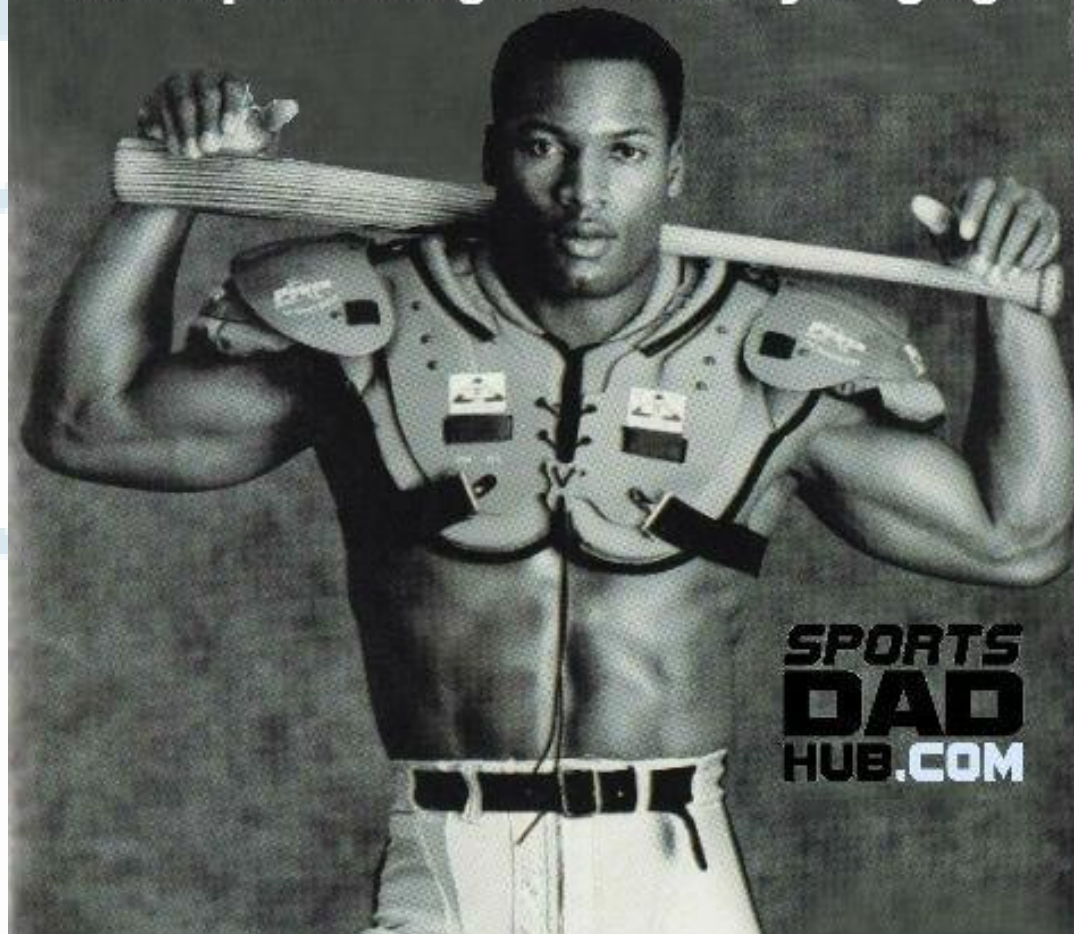
- Improved general fitness
- Improved motor development
- Broader social contexts
- Intrinsic motivation
- Longer sport involvement
- 64% of German national athletes who were international finalists
Competed in more than one sport during their career

- Russell Wilson, QB Seattle Seahawks
 - Baseball- Drafted, Football
- Clara Hughes, Speed Skating & Cycling
 - Only athlete to medal in summer & winter Olympics
- Joe Mauer, Catcher, First Baseman Minnesota Twins
 - Baseball, Basketball, Football
- Tom Glavine, Hall of Fame Pitcher
 - Hockey, Baseball
- Larry Fitzgerald, Wide Receiver Arizona Cardinals
 - Football, Baseball, Basketball, Track
- Wayne Gretzky, Joe Nieuwendyk, Jon Tavares, Brendan Shanahan, Brendan Ranford, Jonathon Toews, Adam Oates, Paul Coffey
 - Hockey and Lacrosse

- Charlie Ward, Heisman Trophy Winner
 - Drafted MLB, College Football Hall of Fame
 - 12 years NBA
- Bo Jackson – only athlete to All Star in 2 major American Sports
 - College Baseball, Football, Track & Field
 - MLB – All Star MVP, Football – Heisman Trophy Winner
- Jim Brown – Greatest Football Player of All Time
 - Football, Lacrosse, Basketball, Track
 - NFL & College Hall of Fame
 - Lacrosse Hall of Fame
- Jim Thorpe – The World's Greatest Athlete
 - Olympic Track & Field, Pro Baseball, Pro Football

BO KNOWS

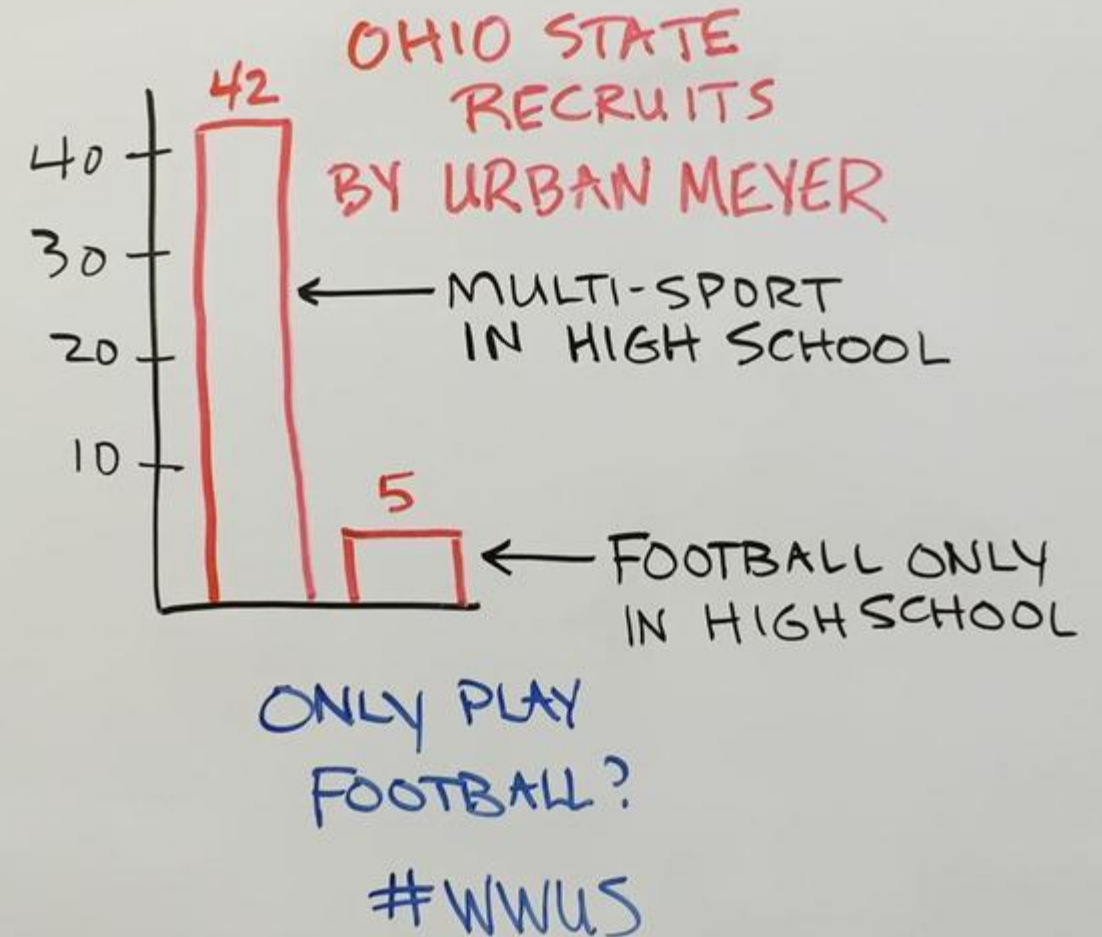
**Kids are better off playing multiple sports
than specializing in one at a young age.**



**SPORTS
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Why Coaches Like It

- More well rounded
- Increase drive
- Athletic IQ increases
- Transitive Properties Increase
- Overall Muscular Development



How to Make it Work

- Early Diversification or Sampling up to age 12
 - Age 13-15 50/50
 - 16+ can handle specialize in one with some other thrown in
- Time off between seasons
 - 2-3 months if doing one sport
- Training limits are per body not per team
 - Pitch counts, training hours
- Don't use adult training/competition schedule
 - IOC recommending monitoring



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