

Abstract

Title:

Comparison of a success rate of sprint canoeists in junior and senior categories based on their international results.

Aims:

The aim of this work is to find out the potential future success of Czech junior medal winners in the adult category.

Methods:

We have chosen the method of data analysis to describe the course of a given sport career. The data was obtained by processing the results of the European Junior and Under 23 Championships from the period between 1996 and 2019, the World Junior and Under 23 Championships from the period between 1996 and 2019, the European Championship from the period between 1999 and 2019, the World Championship 1999 - 2019 and the Olympic Games 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2016.

Results:

The analysis of the results suggests that the training system and financial support dedicated to flatwater racing introduced in 2006 helped to significantly improve the success of Czech junior athletes at international events in all examined categories (men kayakers, canoeists, women kayakers).

The analysis further showed that the success of the examined groups within senior categories has different tendencies. While the group of kayakers shows a small percentage of career termination under the age of 23 (23,5 %) and a relatively high success rate of winning medals in international competitions (35,3 % medals at the European Championships or World Championships), the group of canoeists shows a high percentage of "early" career termination (62,5 %) and a lower percentage of further success (12,5 %). The same applies to the women's category, where further success rate is 9 %, on the contrary, the end of career under the age of 23 is 63,6 %. All girls who won the junior medal and took part in the system since 2006 ended their careers before they were 23 years old, while the female kayakers (finalists of the 2012 and 2016 Olympic Games) peak at 27,6 years on the average. It is speculative whether it is only a coincidence, or the given situation could be affected by the training and support system dedicated to the youth, or the training and support system in the adult categories.

The question remains whether medal success in the junior categories is crucial for the future success within the senior categories. Out of the seventeen senior medal winners that we examined, five won a junior medal (29,4 %), a fact that we do not consider to be a fundamental result. However, we can state that four of these five junior medal winners went through the system introduced in 2006, which again points out to its quality. Due to the ever-increasing number of junior medal winners, it will be interesting to follow their future path, which will allow us to further demonstrate the functionality or possible errors of the established system.

Keywords:

Canoe sprint, junior athlete, senior athlete, talent, internacional results