



THE TEAM
BEHIND THE TEAM

USSA Sport Science

Talent Identification



Talent Search – The Reality

It is not a miracle cure



Talent Search – The Reality

It is not a Quick Fix



Talent Search – The Reality

It is a tool



Talent Search – The Reality

It is a systematic approach
of determining an athlete's characteristics
(or their strengths and weaknesses)
and then matching these characteristics
to a sport to increase the likelihood of success



Talent Search – The Reality

Do you Gamble?

Do you Invest?



Talent Search – The Reality

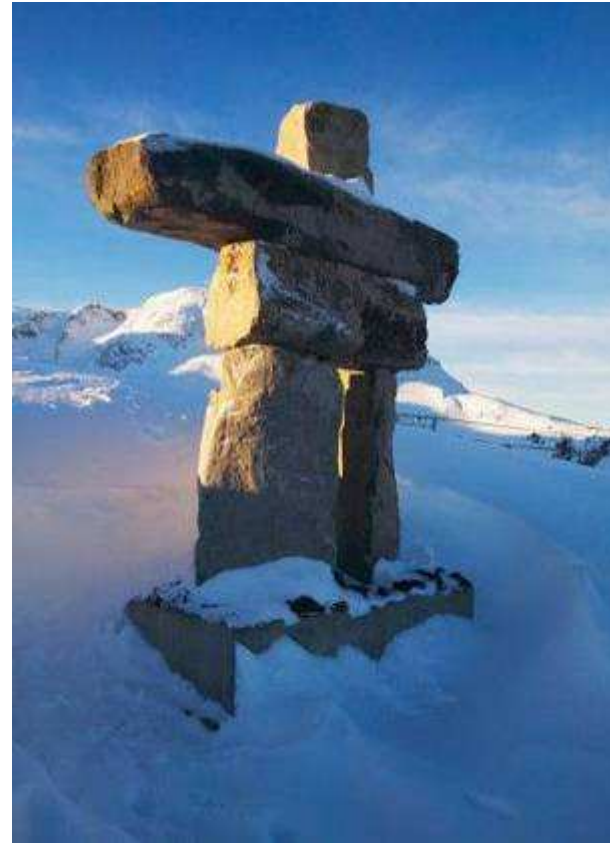
We are simply playing the odds

Reducing our long term risk



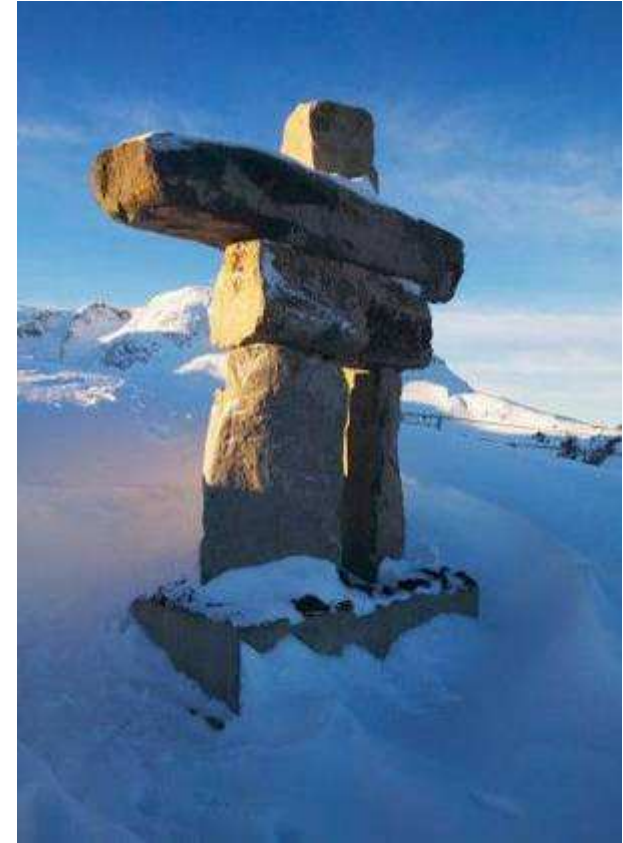
Talent Search – Small sections to make a Whole

- Talent Detection
- Talent Identification
- Talent Selection
- Talent Confirmation
- Talent Development



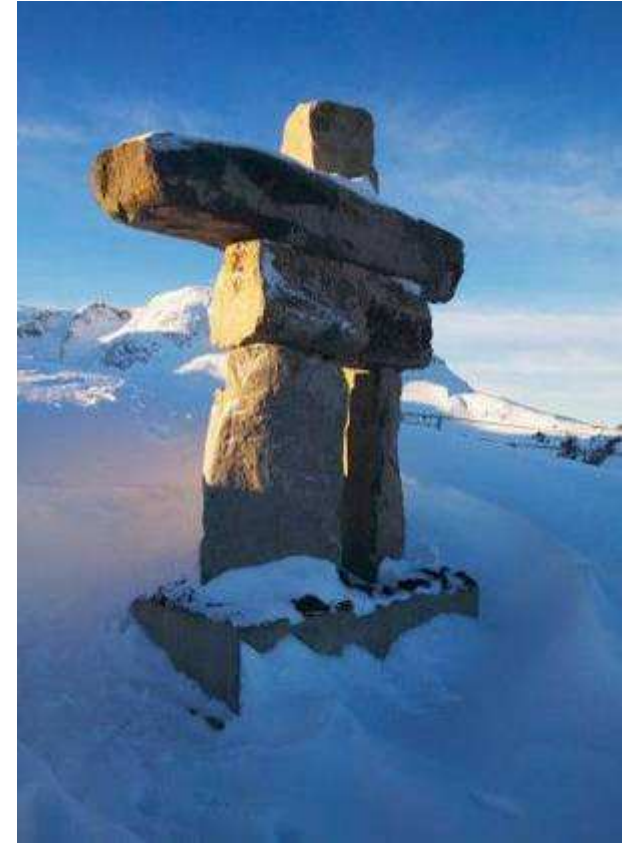
Talent Search – Small sections to make a Whole

- Talent Detection
 - occurs when high level athletes are tested to determine which characteristics (e.g. anthropometric, physiological, neurological, visual, etc) are important predictors of success.



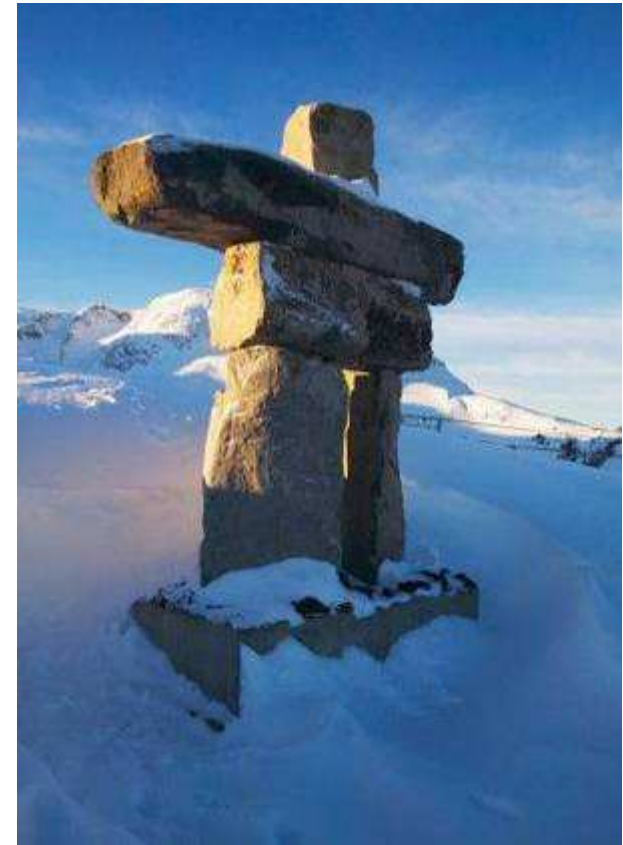
Talent Search – Small sections to make a Whole

- Talent Identification
 - Tests young athletes not currently involved in a particular sport using the tests from talent detection to find children that possess the correct characteristics for a particular sport.



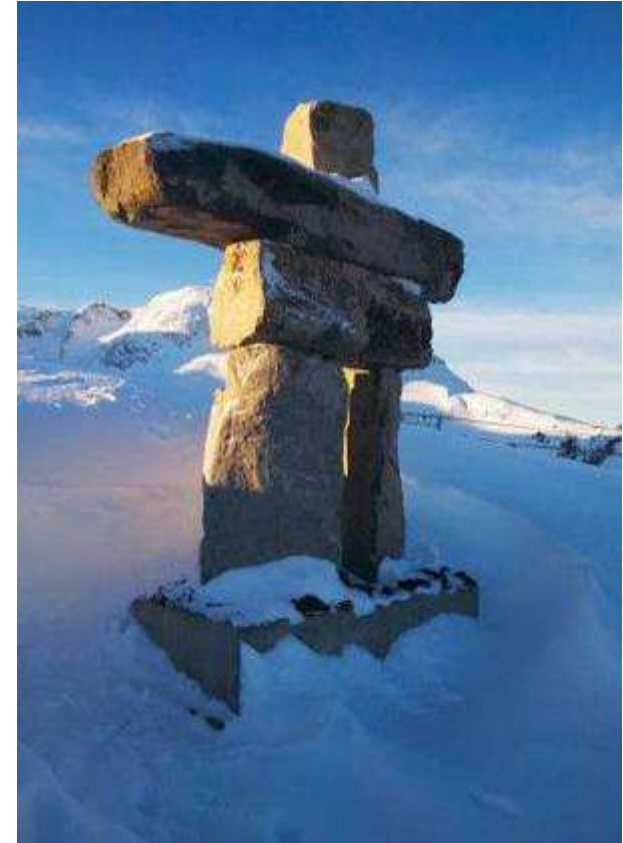
Talent Search – Small sections to make a Whole

- Talent Selection
 - the process involved in utilizing the test results from the talent detection and identification phases to make objective selection decisions regarding which athletes should move on to more advanced training levels (talent development).



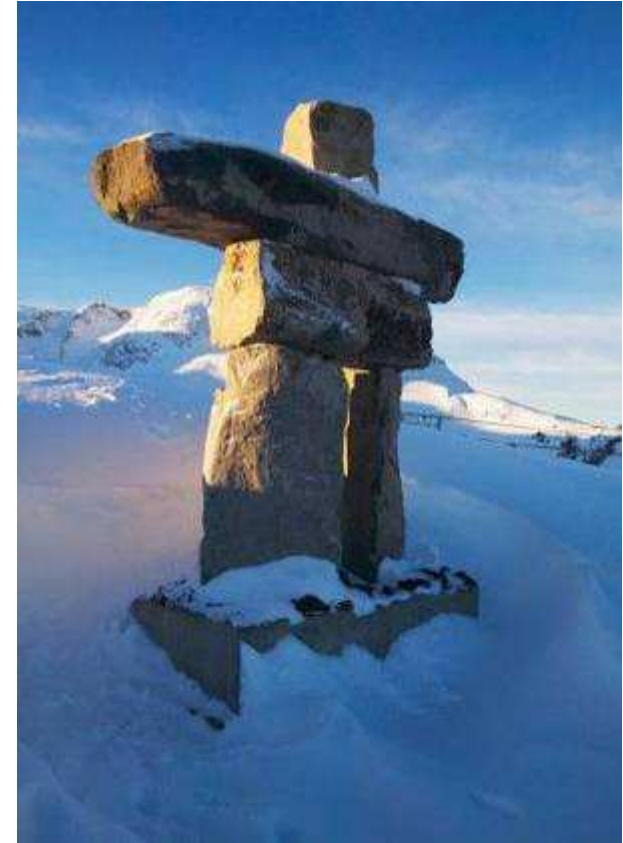
Talent Search – Small sections to make a Whole

- Talent Confirmation
 - the process involved after selections are made to make sure (or confirm) that the athlete is suited to the sport and the sport is suited to the athlete. It is a process that allows everyone a “get out of jail free” card.



Talent Search – Small sections to make a Whole

- Talent Development
 - the final aspect of the process where the “confirmed” athletes are placed into programs that have the proper facilities, coaching staff, equipment, and competition to provide the best possible chance to reach their maximum potential.



Talent Search – A “Real” Example

- Qatar:
 - Population 860 thousand (actual Qatari’s... less than 250,000)
 - Environment (Desert; Winter 65 – 85 F; Summer 120 to 140 F)
 - Sports (all but... best at indoor/skill based sports and motor sports)
 - Genetic environment (200/400 meter sprinters)
- Aspire
 - Fully supported Sport Academy
 - Education
 - Room and Board
 - Elite level coaches
 - Elite level sport science and medical
 - Elite level facilities



ASPIRE



Talent Search – A “Real” Example

- Qatar’s Unique Talent Identification Program
 - Bronze
 - 10,000 to 12,000 boys and girls tested in the schools
 - Objective measures
 - Anthropometrics, speed, upper and lower body power, endurance
 - Silver
 - 350 boys tested
 - Objective and Subjective measures
 - Anthropometrics, speed, upper and lower body power, endurance, agility
 - Gold
 - 100 boys tested
 - Objective and Subjective measures
 - Coaches run small groups
 - Aspire (acceptance)
 - 26 boys invited

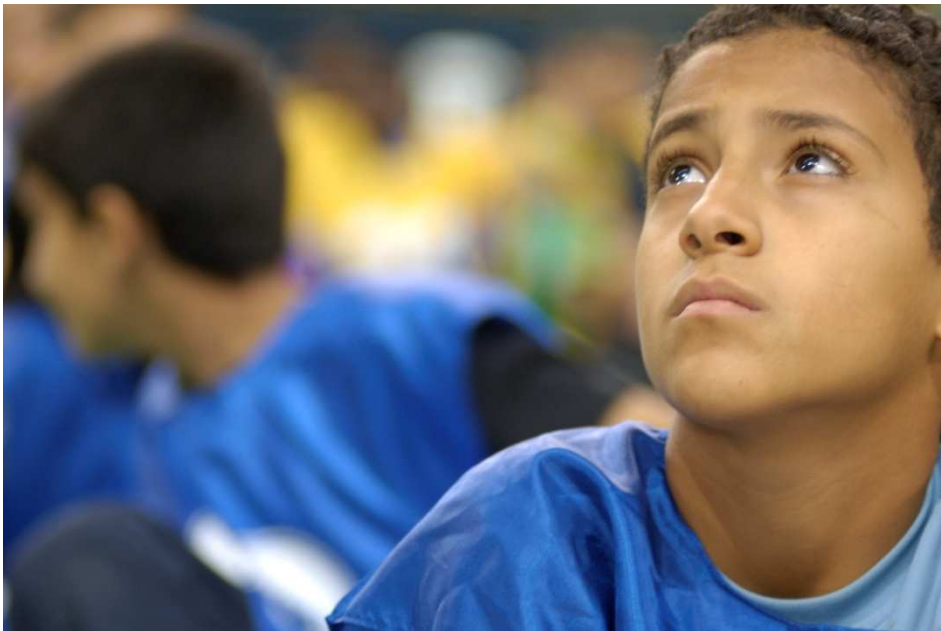


Talent Search – A “Real” Example

- The whole process was set up to increase our odds of finding the best athletic talent in the state of Qatar
- We were trying to reduce our risk of making poor choices



Talent Search – Was Taking This



To Get This



Talent Search – USSA

- Issues...
 - “We” take it for granted that talented people will make it through the production line
 - “We” take it for granted that our system is better than other nations
 - “We” will be making a terrible mistake
- Australia has been doing one form or another of TID since 1993
- The UK has started a full fledged TID program (7 years out) for 2012
 - “Searching for Giants”
 - “Sport Swapping”
- Don’t stop to smell the roses, just enjoy the smell as you pass by.



Take home message

- Talent Search programs are a tool
 - If used incorrectly will produce mediocre results
 - If used correctly will give you a competitive advantage
- Primary function is to increase the quality of information given to the coach (you) to increase the quality of their (your) decision making process



The rest of the world is not resting...



If you think you have it tough...



Talent Search – How can we use it

- Best used for “Engine” relative to “Skill” based sports
 - Nordic “easier”
 - Alpine more difficult (but still a very useful tool)
- Talent Selection
 - Inclusion, exclusion
 - Deciding between two athletes
 - Deciding the traveling team
- Systematic way to view long term development
- Helps you make objective, “professional” opinions without letting your own bias get in the way



Talent Search – How can we use it

- Characteristics to consider
 - Development first
 - Do we have programs in place to put them?
 - Do we have the infrastructure to deal with it?
 - Genetics (physiology, neuromuscular development)
 - It is where you start that is the most important
 - Responders and non-responders
 - Medical characteristics
 - Any biological defects?
 - Injuries? Past, present and future.
 - Skill based talent
 - Natural vs. earned
 - Learn rate, creativity
 - Psychology
 - Equipment, environment, facilities
 - Development, development, development

