

## Conversations with Leading Women Coaches – Part Two

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April 2025, Vol. 25 No. 2

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Online

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### Introduction

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Paris 2024 was projected to be “the most gender-equal Olympics in history”, with the International Olympic Committee’s Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Commission predicting a 50:50 balance of women and men athletes. However, in January 2025, the IOC released statistics on the participation of women in Paris, which reveal that parity was not achieved:

- 47.6% of athletes were women
- 49.1% or 152 of events were women’s events compared to 157 for men
- 87% of events were gender balanced

For women coaches there was no shift from Tokyo and Rio; the percentage was stubbornly stuck at 13%! Canada’s statistics were markedly better - 19% of Olympic coaches and 31% of Paralympic coaches identified as women.

In our January 2025 issue, the Journal recognized Olympic coaches Jocelyn Barrieau and Kim Gaucher and Paralympic coaches Carolyn Murray and Nicole Ban. April 2025 features conversations with Paralympic coaches Carla Nicholls and Michèle Sung and Olympic coaches Catharine Pendrel and Laura Brown. Their openness, wisdom, commitment to developing a positive and inclusive team culture offer essential lessons for all who are dedicated to growing the ranks of women coaches in Canada. – Sheila Robertson, *Journal* Editor

The Conversations have been edited and condensed.

*The views expressed in the articles of the Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching are those of the authors and do not reflect the policies of the Coaching Association of Canada.*

## Carla Nicholls, ChPC

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### Head Coach and High Performance Lead, ParaAthletics

**Describe the head coach role.** I'm responsible for the high performance environment and ensuring it's conducive to the athletes performing their best. I plan training camps, select support staff, coaches, IST (Integrated Support Team), clarify responsibilities, establish daily tasks, and ensure we have everything needed to succeed.

When I became Para Lead in 2019, I had high performance experience – the 2008, 2012, and 2016 Olympics, multiple world championships, Pan American and Commonwealth Games. I'm also a nurse, so I understand the medical side of our athletes' disabilities and their challenges.

After 2008, the Para program's medal performances steadily decreased and, at the 2019 World Athletics Championships in Dubai, crashed with the worst outcome in many years. There was no high performance direction, the culture was toxic, athletes, coaches, staff, and IST were fighting. Consequently, the International Paralympic Committee approved a very small Canadian team for Tokyo 2020.

I began Own the Podium's Pursuit program in 2019 thinking I knew everything it takes to be a world-class leader, but to be an intentional leader was something I had missed. Pursuit opened my eyes.

For success in Paris, I focused on transforming our culture, committing to a high performance environment that prioritized athletes as individuals first and included coach development, identifying performance gaps, providing holistic athlete support, arranging international competition, and developing a team philosophy and values.

I created a strategy entitled Push to Podium – not only to win medals, but to create a resilient team. I brought the athletes to our Victoria training hub for assessments and identifying gaps related to performance.

To raise our coaching knowledge to world-class standards, I brought top wheelchair racing coach Arno Mul to work with coaches, athletes in wheelchair racing, and our sport science team, and to mentor our wheelchair racing coach, Geoff Harris.

In Paris, I had 20 athletes, 10 women and 10 men, four national team coaches, and personal coaches. We ended up posting our best finish since 2008 – five gold, two silver, and two bronze medals. The change in culture was critical; we were aligned, tight, and resilient.

**What about stress?** I don't get stressed easily; as a trauma operating room nurse, I learned skills and tools to calm myself, stop and listen, and quickly prioritize during a stressful time.

During a Games, my alarm goes off at 5:00 a.m. and I often go to bed at 2:00 a.m. so my physical preparation is incredibly important as is taking care of myself, eating properly, staying hydrated.

A critical coping strategy is to have a plan I'm in charge of and know all its intricacies. I do a lot of pre-work to make sure I understand the environments we're going into.

**Your pathway?** Broadview, Sask., population 800 – a wonderful place to grow up. My parents, Lynn and Marlene Baker, were amazing; they allowed my brother Trevor and me to do anything we wanted. In summer we swam and in winter we skied, skated, curled; we were outside all the time.

Watching the 1976 Olympic Games on television, I said: "I'm going to the Olympics!" Track and field was my love. I high-jumped in the backyard, long-jumped, ran all the time, set up a podium in my backyard and of course I stood on the top.

My high school's phys-ed teacher, Rocky Chysyk, spotted my potential for heptathlon, created a track and field club, bought a set of hurdles - which he set up in the school hallway - dug the weeds out of the track, and filled the gopher holes. My high school years were marked by track meets and trips to the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) to train with heptathlon great Diane Jones Konihowski.

I went to the U of S to study nursing and train with Diane. When she moved to Calgary, I was devastated. Soon I was struggling with school and injuries, and it became clear I was never going to pass nursing until I quit track and field.

Post-graduation, I returned to training and promised myself I'd never leave my sport again. My coach, Les Gramantik, taught me how to train as a high performance athlete, showed me career possibilities, and steered me to opportunities. I fell in love with coaching because of Les. I wasn't going to make it to the Olympics as a heptathlete but could re-direct my passion into coaching.

I started coaching in 1998 and by 2002 I was the (unpaid) head coach of the University of Regina team – number one in the country for partying. I worked hard at coaching its 17 athletes and by the end of the year had built the team to 120. I suggested to Athletic Director Dick White that my position become full time paid. When he agreed, I left nursing!

The team won conference championships, and its culture blossomed. I was selected for the 2008 Olympic team as event group coach and my positive performance in Beijing convinced me that I belonged at the Olympic level. Athletics Canada agreed and chose me for a full-time, paid coaching position.

**Your advice to aspiring women coaches?** Be confident in your abilities. Trust that you belong. Develop your expertise, and don't shy away from taking on roles you might not believe you are ready for.

Build a strong network and surround yourself with mentors and allies who support your growth. Seek advice from experienced coaches, women and men. Staying connected with support personnel is critical, personally and professionally.

Commit to continuous learning. Always be open to new techniques and strategies. Lead with authenticity and avoid pressure to fit into a mould. Being upfront about your unique strengths, values, and perspectives cultivates trust and respect from athletes and peers.

Build resiliency, which will help in navigating setbacks.

Be ready when a door opens. I joined the CAC's Women in Coaching Apprenticeship Program in 2005. The powerful women who developed that program gave me the tools to handle the many barriers.

I'm part of coach selection for national teams and the number of women who applied in 2024 was incredibly low. NSOs need to have an intentional, structured pathway for coach development for women coaches and that involves having a mentorship program targeting recruitment and professionalizing coaching.

We absolutely must foster diverse and inclusive environments. Diversity and Inclusion must be embedded in an NSO's core values.

**Any sacrifices?** My gut reaction is to say no. I was following my passion and refused to let anything stand in my way. My determination broke down barriers I didn't recognize because I was so focused.

However, there were significant sacrifices. One was my nursing profession. Most importantly, I sacrificed time with my children, time I'll never get back. I worked tirelessly to balance being a coach and a mother. I'd dedicate my days to supporting them and then stay up until the early hours to finish my coaching work.

When I took that first coaching role at the University of Regina, I had just had my daughter, Arden. I was so determined to succeed that I worked full-time building the team while carrying her with me everywhere. It was a wonderful environment for her, but I sacrificed my own well-being; I was exhausted but refused to show weakness or admit that being a mother affected my ability to coach. (My son, Dawson, was born in 2005.)

When I joined Athletics Canada, I had to leave home frequently. Saying goodbye to my children, missing birthdays, school events, and family gatherings - like my grandmother's funeral - was incredibly difficult. Friendships became harder to maintain because when I was home, family was my sole focus.

Nevertheless, I'm not sad or regretful. I remain invigorated by my work.

And now I have an incredible opportunity within Athletics Canada. Simon is moving on and instead of being replaced, Glenroy Gilbert, head coach of the Olympic program, director of operations Colin Whitmee, and I are now the program leads and together we are driving the high performance program.

## Catharine Pendrel, ChPC

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### National Team Coach, Mountain Bike

**Describe the Paris experience.** I became the national team coach two years before Paris. Our goal was to send the biggest team possible – two women and two men – and so we needed good points. Chasing points can exhaust riders. I wanted our riders to focus on performance, meaning they might need to skip a race to train. They needed to make smart choices about where and when they were racing.

I was coaching some of the riders trying to qualify, but many work with a private coach. It's important to make sure they know you respect and value private coaches because that's the only way to get buy-in to the national team program.

As a semi-professional sport, many of our riders are on a professional team, which dictates the races they go to. I can advise, but ultimately, sponsors may determine where these riders need to be and when. I meet the riders to discuss the season, what events they need to attend, and what resources Cycling Canada can supplement. It's ensuring that their plan makes sense and giving input to aid performance.

At the Paris test event in 2023, the riders learned the course, recorded power profiles, and collected videos. Knowing they were prepared increased confidence and decreased nerves. Given major injuries and illness, only world junior champion Isabella (Bella) Holmgren and her brother, Gunnar, the Pan American Games champion, qualified.

The strategy in 2024 was different for both. Younger and less experienced, Bella grew more confident every course lap we rode together. Having raced the test event, Gunnar quickly got up to speed even though the course had changed.

Race week was fine tuning, balancing rest with appropriate stimulation, learning the course, discussing where to attack and where to pay attention, and being prepared for different scenarios.

The number one thing was keeping it normal. "Yes, this is the Olympics, but you've done hundreds of bike races and course practices so let's just do our normal riding our bikes, having fun."

At the Olympics, every athlete wants to do better than their previous best. Both riders anticipated higher results than they achieved but both to varying degrees were happy with what they executed on the day. Bella was 17th and Gunnar 30th.

**Managing stress.** I don't find coaching overly stressful because it's so my world; it's less stressful than racing. The hardest thing? A coach can't make it happen if it's not coming together on the day.

Emotions are so magnified compared to other events, which make it so hard to perform well at the Games, but no work is ever wasted; that's experience.

In Paris I had a support team I'd been working with for two years and I knew and trusted them. Staff values, roles, and responsibilities were set in advance. I wrote daily scheduling emails several weeks ahead, so everything was organized and ready to go.

**Your dreams growing up?** I grew up on a farm in Harvey Station, N.B., and nothing was cycling related. Not until I won my first World Cup did I dream of being world champion. I loved the cycling environment and the people. I had the mentality and curiosity to see if I could improve every year.

Coaching was never on the radar. My husband, Keith Wilson, is a high school teacher. He coached long before me and kept encouraging me towards coaching. I was uncertain; I didn't want to struggle to make ends meet and hustle for athletes but then I started Pendrel Racing, a development mountain bike team, and realized I enjoyed coaching. As retirement neared, I sought coach education and am now NCCP Competition Development trained. I have a degree in sociology and psychology from the University of Victoria and am a four-time Olympian – I won the bronze medal at the 2016 Rio Games – and a two-time world champion.

An important part of my success as an athlete was being more than just a bike racer. Being president of the Kamloops Bike Riders Association, for example, gave me the confidence to step into a leadership role with Cycling Canada's development team in 2022.

**Your coaching pathway?** I'm fortunate to benefit from the women like Jenny Trew, who paved the way as the first mom coach. When I began coaching in 2021, Dan Proulx, then the national mountain bike coach, mentored me and that made my transition to coaching easier.

My daughter, Dara, was born in 2020 and, as a mom and a coach, I wasn't good at setting boundaries my first year. It was about my own expectations. I wanted to excel at my job, but didn't want to value my work more than my family. I had to learn to set my own boundaries.

There are many ways to contribute to sport and so many valuable experiences can come from having a woman lead by example. The more women coaches there are, the more girls will know it's a career avenue. If they see only men coaching, they won't realize it's something they can do.

A concern was that men wouldn't see me as a coach option because I am a woman, that people would see me as just a good athlete. Fortunately, I've had some amazing success as a coach, and that's building my confidence.

**Advice for NSOs?** Gender norms and expectations can be hurdles, especially if you're a mom. Mentorship and leadership programs with women from various backgrounds, with and without a family, are an opportunity to have conversations about how to make it work. Women on boards and management teams are important, too, and making sure that teams led by women are as well supported as those led by men.

Let women lead rather than just assist. Unless you lead, you don't learn. When I was an assistant coach, I didn't have the same ownership and leadership confidence as when I had to make hard decisions and take ownership of those decisions.

I've had the support to succeed. I moved into Dan's role; he has such a passion for coaching so supporting me taking a role he loves was amazing.

Dan recognizes success. Every time I have an athlete who performs well, he says, "Great job, coach!" And if something doesn't go well, it's, "You put a lot into that. Good job." Recognizing success and providing support tells you that you have somebody who has your best interests in mind.

**What's it like internationally?** It's getting better. In a room with coaches, I am the only woman coach; however, Britain and the United States bring only women technical skills coaches to races. Switzerland's women's development coach is a woman I raced with. Typically, there's only one national team coach for most nations and they stay for years, so there's few opportunities for that position to open up.

**The future?** I'm in the exciting situation of getting to plan for 2028 and 2032 with a strong riders in the pipeline and a clear vision of what's needed to further develop team culture. I'm enjoying the confidence I've gained and knowing how things work. I hope to take a full team to Los Angeles and have some top-10 performances.

## Michèle Sung

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Head Coach, Women's Wheelchair Basketball National Team and University of Manitoba Bisons

**When did you first coach women's wheelchair basketball?** It was 2012 and I was leading a practice as an assistant coach with the University of Manitoba (U of M) stand-up women's team. Some players from the Canadian Wheelchair Basketball (CWB) women's team were in the gym and asked to join my workout. When they returned the next day, Bill Johnson, their



head coach, noticed their interest. He told me he could use an extra pair of hands, so I signed on as an assistant coach and was with the team until they won the gold medal at the 2014 IWBF world championships. I went on to head coach jobs in the stand-up world.

Fast forward to February 2024. I had been coaching the U of M women's team for 12 years when a current CWB player contacted me: "We're in a jam; we need a coach, and you know some of the athletes. Would you consider helping us to qualify for Paris?"

A lot of my coaching experiences have been agreeing to situations that found me, so I decided to jump in. First, we had to qualify and that meant doing well at the Women's IWBF Repechage Tournament in April. A victory over Algeria, and we were in.

We entered the eight-team Paralympic tournament ranked sixth. A realistic goal was to be competitive in all our games. In pool play, we defeated Great Britain, Spain, and Germany and lost to world number one China. We lost to Netherlands in the semi-final which meant playing China for the bronze medal. We lost, but it was the first time Canada competed for a medal in 20 years so finishing fourth was good.

I was more stressed about performing well than thinking about the gold medal. I had a great support system, people believed in us, and that decreased the stress.

If this turns out to be the greatest coaching experience of my life, then it was awesome: 12,000 fans, every game sold out, treated like professionals, having everything we needed. The level of support absolutely blew me away.

**Were you a sporty youngster?** I always played sports growing up (in Millgrove, Ontario.) My brothers, Sean and Tyler, and I spent hours playing basketball on our driveway.

I came to U of M to study kinesiology and played for the Bisons from 2006 to 2010, was captain for three years, and Academic All-Canadian. I received the 2009-2010 Sylvia Sweeney Award and was a coach with Junior Bisons. After graduating, I spent 2010-2011 with the ZKK Partizan Club in Belgrade, Serbia, and then returned to Winnipeg to study biomedical engineering. Along the way, I completed National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) Train to Compete and NCCP Mentorship Certification.

**A coaching career?** No, but when opportunities came up, I decided to give it a try. I was an apprentice coach for two years with Manitoba's U-17 provincial women's team and joined the Bisons as an assistant coach in 2011; before long I dropped engineering for coaching. I was selected for the 2013 Canada Games Apprenticeship Program and was part of Manitoba's bronze medal team at the 2013 Canada Games. I became Bisons' head coach in 2014.

Growing up watching Canadians compete on TV, I wanted to be a part of it. I knew I was never going to play Olympic basketball, but maybe I could find a way to do something in the sport at the highest level.



**Any barriers?** I started when it was trendy to hire women because of the equity provisions.

COVID-19 allowed me to finally sit down, systemize things, and get rid of that feeling of always playing catch up. I knew I was a decent technical and tactical coach. I like thinking the game, problem solving – that’s my engineering skills - but that’s maybe 20 per cent of the job. I needed to figure out all the other things. Organize the program. Fund-raise. Recruit. Ask for the support I need before it’s too late or overwhelming.

**Balancing family life.** It was super impactful for me to see other “moms in coaching” early in my career – Jodi Graham, Dani Sinclair, and Albena Dimotrova. That was what I wanted to do, so to see it logistically made coaching feel doable.

I have a six-year-old son and a three-year-old daughter. My partner Eric, a high school teacher who’s also involved in basketball, has always been extremely supportive.

There’s pressure to distribute my time given everything that has to get done, but I’ve chosen to include my kids in my coaching, so they’re around the gym a lot. Having them with me may role model for others, but I understand it’s not for everyone. It’s taken a while to be confident in saying that. I remember early on when someone asked: “If you were a business person, would you bring your kid to the boardroom?” Maybe not, but that’s not why we coach. Flexibility is one of the benefits, and I get to include my kids. I didn’t ask a lot of questions and therefore I didn’t get a no.

I tell aspiring coaches to just do it. When negotiating contracts and trying to define workload, ask questions about expectations and what’s allowed. Say yes to opportunities that excite you. Be around people you like and admire, and not only from a coaching perspective.

**What’s an NSO’s role?** Facilitating mentorship for sure. Being assigned a mentor as soon as you take a coaching job creates a connection for brainstorming and sharing ideas. Bringing your mentor to training camps and/or competitions means you can problem-solve together and feel supported.

The Enhanced Female Coaching Mentorship Program ran during COVID and paired me with 2012 Olympic coach Allison McNeill. I still bounce ideas off her. She’s so important to my resiliency and giving me support. She said: “Be your own coach; be the coach you want to be.”

**What do you need to succeed?** The world of sport tends to make things seem bigger than they are. Yes, we have an impactful job, and we make a difference, but it’s not life or death. Our impact isn’t wins and losses; it’s motivating and guiding young people and getting them to love sport, which will ultimately help them to do something bigger and better.

As a kid, I had extremely high anxiety and my parents spent a lot of time with me processing these emotions, which gave me a solid foundation to not get overwhelmed by things in the moment, not being super-reactionary.

**The future?** I'm living my dream job, and it found me. I love basketball because it's super-tactical and you don't have to have the best individual players to have a winning team. I constantly strive to find better ways to teach the game and simplify systems. It never seems like an end-product; it's always evolving. The game is exploding and it's really cool to be part of.

Mine are two of the greatest jobs a coach can have in Canada and I'm enjoying what I have right now.

## **Laura Brown, ChPC**

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### National Team Coach, Men's Track Endurance Program

**You were a 2016 Olympic bronze medallist in team pursuit. What was your goal upon retirement?** In 2018 I wasn't sure I wanted to continue to the Tokyo Olympics so Cycling Canada gave me the opportunity to keep training, start earning cycling coaching credentials, mentor the Next Gen women's team, and make my choice after one year. Part way through, I didn't want to train anymore; I wanted to be a coach.

Jenny Trew, who was leading the Next Gen programs, asked me to lead the men's track endurance team and that's how it started. In January 2020 I first officially coached the men to the bronze medal at the Nation's Cup in Milton, Ont.

I came on full time in 2021 and in 2023 was selected to coach at the Paris Olympics. It was scary at first. Few women coach track and I'd never seen women coaching men at that level. But it didn't matter; I just did the best job I could.

From 2020 through 2024 we had a core group of athletes and every race we tweaked our strategy, tried something novel. I asked athletes for their input, engaging them in developing our strategy. As an athlete, it was more being told what to do - my style is quite the opposite.

It wasn't easy, but we qualified for team pursuit, omnium, and madison, and so could enter a full team.

The athletes, our sport science team, and I were innovative and always tweaking tactics. In team pursuit, room for error is very, very small. The team pursuit riders - Mathias Guillemette, Dylan Bibic, Michael Foley, and Carson Mattern and alternate Sean Richardson - finished seventh, which, being high achievers, wasn't good enough for them, but it's so hard to win Olympic medals. Their qualifying time was the fastest in Canadian history so that's encouraging. They

were the youngest team by far, so I'm inspired and motivated looking forward to LA. (Dylan raced the omnium and Michael and Mathias raced the madison).

**What was it like to be at the Olympics as a coach?** People see me as cool as a cucumber so it's great that I didn't project the stress I felt. When I was competing, I was in control but as a coach, you train them and then all you can do is watch. Dealing with stress meant taking care of myself, sleeping and eating well, taking time alone every day, drinking water, just basics. Last year I purchased a folding bike that fits in a suitcase. I tried to ride every day to decompress and clear my head. It's been a gamechanger.

**Were you an active youngster?** Growing up in Calgary, I was obsessed with gymnastics, with becoming an Olympic gymnast and winning a medal. I didn't grow up watching the Tour de France; it was all gymnastics.

When I was 13 or so, I was having back problems, my body was changing, and I was getting afraid of skills I'd done a thousand times. My mom, Dawn, who worked at the Olympic Oval, decided to find me a new sport because she knew I needed an outlet for my energy.

It was 2002, and cycling coach Dan Proulx suggested Try the Track at the Glenmore Velodrome. I tried it, hated it, wanted nothing to do with it. My mom said: "If you still hate it after six months, fine, but you have to give it a shot."

Gymnastics to me meant girl power. I had a big group of girls who were my best friends, Olympic gymnasts were my idols, and women athletes my heroes. Cycling was all boys, but once other girls joined, I found friends. I think friendships can keep girls in sport.

Once I realized I wasn't going to the Olympics as a gymnast, my ambitions and goals transferred to cycling. At 18, I moved to Victoria to train and race and attend the University of Victoria. I earned a Bachelor of Science majoring in psychology in 2010 - very helpful for a coach. (I'll complete the Masters of High Performance Coaching and Technical Leadership from the University of British Columbia in 2026.)

My first international medal was gold in team pursuit at the 2009 World Cup. From 2009 to 2018, I won medals at multiple world championships and was a World Cup champion. I took it step by step; my success wasn't overnight. I tell my athletes that it's a long-term journey. I kept going and ultimately achieved my dream.

I remember being on the start line at the Rio Olympics and thinking, I'm about to race at the Olympics! The rest is a blur. It took my whole life to get to that moment and it's all the stuff in between that's so special and that I hold close to my heart. So many memories ...

My mom, my dad Mark, my sister Jessica, and my partner Tim all supported me. I'm so grateful for them, now more than ever because they never pressured me.

**What do you need to succeed as a coach?** It's such a hard career. We're responsible for our athletes' health and wellbeing and success and it's a lot of responsibility. Take it seriously but also find joy in it. Surround yourself with good people because it can be lonely, have other coaches to talk to, find mentor groups, especially women coaches. There are so few women in high performance coaching roles that it's important to connect.

**What can an NSO do?** Women's cycling has skyrocketed. It's on television, there's sponsorships, but for most of my career it was male dominated. To show women athletes nearing retirement that coaching is a career option, introduce them to coach education and give them opportunities and mentorship to inspire them to stay in sport in coaching roles.

I don't have children but for those who do, I've observed that there's an extra layer of challenges. NSOs need to work with these mothers and figure out ways to make it work so they can be a career coach and a mother. Don't be stuck in traditional, patriarchal ways of doing things.

**Barriers?** I feel lucky that I got opportunity and support in my coaching transition. I don't think that's common. But internationally people have said terrible, rude things to me. People still don't believe I'm the coach so it's constant sexist, micro-aggressions to my face. "You coach men! Women don't coach men!" You have to let it go ...

**Attributes as a coach?** Leading with my heart and caring about people. I take coaching seriously and work hard but try to make it fun and enjoyable. The technical is the easy stuff; being athlete-centred, having high emotional intelligence is what makes coaches great.

**The future:** I'd love to see more women in coaching. I'd love to see our men's track endurance program win medals.

Whether or not I go to LA, every day I try to leave the sport better than I found it. Helping people gives me joy and purpose and seeing athletes achieve their dreams feels better than any success I had. It's important that I continue to put the athletes first. I hope they win Olympic medals but for me it's so much more than that.

## Conclusion

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In our Conversations, the coaches' suggestions for developing healthy, productive, and rewarding environments often focused on national sport organizations (NSOs). Changing the landscape includes:

- Creating an intentional, structured pathway for coach development for women coaches.
- Embedding diversity and inclusion in an NSO's core values.
- Showing women athletes nearing retirement that coaching is a career option by introducing them to coach education and providing coaching opportunities.
- Incorporating mentorship and leadership programs as policy, targeting recruitment, professionalizing coaching, and involving participants from various backgrounds and with and without a family.
- Guiding women coaches in setting boundaries between their professional and private lives to balance coaching and family responsibilities.
- Ensuring that women-led teams are as well-supported as those led by men.
- Ensuring that women coaches lead rather than just assist.

## About the Author

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### Sheila Robertson

Sheila Robertson is the founding editor of and a contributing author to *The Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching*. Her most recent book is *Stories of Resilience and Courage: Women Coaches Form a Global Community*.