

Celebrating 25 Years of the Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching

25th Anniversary Edition
July 2025



25 Years of Leadership, Learning, and Lasting Impact

A Letter from the CEO:

This year commemorates a remarkable milestone: the 25th anniversary of the Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching. On behalf of the Coaching Association of Canada, it is my honour to celebrate this occasion and reflect on a quarter of a century of leadership, learning, and lasting impact.

Since its founding in 2000, the Journal has played an essential role in shaping the conversation around women in coaching by ensuring that their voices are heard. Through lived experiences, research, and critical reflection, the Journal has provided a space where women can share their realities, celebrate their achievements, and confront the systemic barriers that still exist in sport. It has amplified perspectives that too often go unrecognized, and in doing so, has helped foster a stronger, more inclusive coaching culture across Canada—and beyond.

The Journal has also served as a trusted resource for those who support women in coaching: sport organizations, leaders, researchers, and allies. With each issue, it offers practical insight and meaningful guidance, always grounded in the goal of creating a healthier, more equitable sport environment for women. Whether offering practical tools for clubs and organizations or sharing stories of resilience and success from women on the frontlines of coaching, the Journal has remained steadfast in its mission: to support and elevate women in coaching across all levels and contexts.

This anniversary is not only a celebration of what we've achieved, but a call to continue the journey. The work is far from done. As we look ahead, we recommit to championing equity, amplifying underrepresented voices, and ensuring that every woman coach has the opportunity to thrive.

As we honour this milestone, we extend our deepest thanks to the contributors and readers who have brought the Journal to life over the past 25 years. We are especially grateful to our Editor, Sheila Robertson, along with our Legacy Contributors, Editorial Board members, and the many authors who have shared their work throughout the years. Your voices, your stories, and your leadership have made a lasting impact, and will continue to guide us forward.

Here's to 25 years of progress, and to the many voices that have shaped it.

Lorraine Lafrenière
Chief Executive Officer
Coaching Association of Canada



Our Mission and Foundation

Over the past 25 years, the Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching has highlighted effective practices, timely research, and relevant coach experiences to advance gender equity across all coaching contexts.

Mission

To provide timely, evidence-informed, and relevant information that addresses issues and information specific to women in coaching.

Timely Research

By addressing major moments in sport through highlighting coach stories from the Olympic and Paralympic Games to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Journal has offered relevant, evidence-based insights. It has also shared key findings from global conferences and research shaping the future of women in sport.



Coach Experiences

Central to the Journal's legacy are the stories of women coaches themselves. By amplifying diverse voices, the Journal has built a powerful record of lived experiences, offering both inspiration and deeper understanding of the realities women face in coaching.



Effective Practices

The Journal has provided practical strategies to address barriers and strengthen supports for women in coaching. These include mentorship, sponsorship from allies, and policies that support work-life balance —each critical strategies to addressing persistent challenges like systemic bias, imposter syndrome, and underrepresentation in leadership roles.



Honouring the Founders and Contributors

The Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching would not be what it is today without the passion, insight, and dedication of its contributors. It began with a planning meeting between Sheila Robertson, Rose Mercier, Penny Werthner, and Cyndie Flett, leading to the launch of the first issue on September 1, 2000. Since then, Editorial Board members, authors, researchers, coaches, and advocates have shared their voices, their stories, and their expertise to help drive meaningful change. Thank you for your contributions.

Founding Editor

At the heart of this work is Sheila Robertson, the founding editor of the Journal and its guiding force since its inception in 2000. With unwavering commitment, editorial excellence, and deep belief in the power of sport to reflect and drive social change, Sheila has created and sustained a platform that gives voice to women coaches across Canada and around the world. Her leadership has ensured that the Journal remains not just a publication, but a movement rooted in advocacy, inclusion, and lasting impact.



Sheila Robertson

Legacy Contributors

Our Legacy Contributors have supported the Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching for over 20 years through their service as Editorial Board Members and by sharing their research and expertise as authors of numerous journal issues. Your longstanding commitment to the Journal and to advancing gender equity in coaching is deeply appreciated.

Dru Marshall

Guylaine Demers

Gretchen Kerr

Penny Werthner

Rose Mercier

Sheilagh Croxon



Honouring the Founders and Contributors

Authors and Contributors

The Journal has been supported by its Editorial Board members and authors over the 25 years. These individuals have been critical in the mission to advance gender equity in coaching in Canada.

Aalaya Milne	Danielle Alexander	Laryssa Biesenthal
Alan Lynn	Danielle Cyr	Lisa Ross
Amanda N. Schewinbenz	Debra Kriger	Madeline Belding
Amélie Keyser-Verreault	Diane M. Culver	Marie-Christine Chartier
Andrea J. Woodburn	Donna Harris	Marie-Hélène Audet
Ann Dodge	Elaine Cook	Marina Khonina
Ann Pegoraro	Emily Phoenix	Melissa Murray
Anthony Battaglia	Erin Kraft	Melody Davidson
Ashley Stirling	Heather Beatty	Mikaela Papich
Beth Ali	Iman Hassan	Nancy Lee
Bettina Callary	Janelle Joseph	Natalie Durand-Bush
Bianka Viel	Jenessa Banwell	Nicole M. LaVoi
Bradley W. Young	Jennifer Misurelli	Olivia Pope
Brenda Robertson	Jennifer Walinga	Rabia Ozturk Kizilkaya
Brian Gearity	Joan Vickers	Rachael Bertram
Bruce Kidd	Josée Martel	Sarah Leberman
Camille Michon	Kate Kloos	Severine Tamborero
Cari Din	Kelley Anderson	Siobhan Rourke
Cindy Thomson	Kelly Hand	Sylvie Béliveau
Claire Carver-Dias	Kerry Wood	Vicki Harber

A Look Back at 25 Years of Learning

2000

Vol. 1, No. 1

The first Journal issue is released on September 1, 2000, “Being Professional About Your Employment” by Rose Mercier.



2003

Vol. 3, No. 5

“The New National Coaching Certification Program and its Implications for Women Coaches” by Guylaine Demers highlighted a significant milestone for the NCCP and the transition to a competency-based system.



2007

Vol. 7, No. 4

“Shifting the Culture: Implications for Female Coaches” by Gretchen Kerr and Dru Marshall shared the cultural obstacles faced by women in coaching and stated that the “avenue for change” towards gender equity in coaching is a shift in sport culture.



2010

Vol. 10, No. 3

“What It Takes To Win: Perspectives from Vancouver 2010” by Penny Werthner shares the factors leading to Team Canada’s Olympic and Paralympic success at home, as shared by Canadian women coaches and athletes.

A Look Back at 25 Years of Learning

2023

Vol. 22, No. 3

“Black Women Coaches: Building Skills and Community Through Mentorship” by Janelle Joseph celebrated the impact of the Black Female Coach Mentorship Program, a collaboration between the CAC and the Inclusion in Canadian Sport Network (formerly Black Canadian Coaches Association).



2025

Vol. 25, No. 1 and No. 2

“Conversations with Leading Women” by Sheila Robertson shares the stories of 8 women coaches and their experiences at the most recent 2024 Paralympic Games and Olympic Games, highlighting the facilitators to their success.

2020

Vol. 20, No. 2

“Nurturing Social Learning Spaces to Enhance Women in Sport Leadership Programs” by Diane Culver, Erin Kraft, and Isabelle Cayer presented a case study on the CAC’s Alberta Women in Sport Leadership Impact program and the use of a Community of Practice model for coach development.



2018

Vol. 18, No. 2

“A Sustainable and Scalable Mentorship Program for Women Coaches” by Jenessa Banwell, Gretchen Kerr, and Ashley Stirling shares the impact of mentorship on women in coaching, and celebrates the launch of the CAC’s Female Coach Mentorship Model.



2013

Vol. 13, No. 2

“The Value Women Bring to the Boardroom” by Rose Mercier emphasizes that increasing women’s representation on sport boards leads to more inclusive decision-making, which directly supports the advancement and retention of women in coaching.



Insights and Impact: What We've Learned

Invest in Coach Development and Education: Initiatives that foster community and connection among women coaches – such as mentorship, practical experiences and exposure to high-performance environments, coaching retreats and communities of practice – are essential for supporting both their development and long-term retention.

- [Volume 4, No. 1 "Analysing the Impact of the Women in Coaching Apprenticeship Program" by Rose Mercier](#)
- [Volume 11, No. 1 "Examining the Impact of Coaching Apprenticeship Programs" by Rose Mercier](#)
- [Volume 16, No. 2 "Examining the Benefits of Female-to-Female Mentorship as a Result of Participation in a Female Coach Mentorship Program" by Madeline Belding and Ann Dodge](#)

Foster Inclusive Cultures and Policies: Sport organizations must continue to evolve to create inclusive, safe environments for women in coaching and leadership positions. This including implementing equitable hiring practices, transparent family-friendly policies, and challenging gender stereotypes and bias.

- [Volume 3, No. 2 "Laurie Eisler: Lessons Learned from a Champion Coach" by Sheila Robertson](#)
- [Volume 15, No. 1 "A Rationale for Encouraging Mothers to Coach Youth Sport" by Nicole M. LaVoi and Sarah Leberman](#)
- [Volume 23, No. 2 "Transgender and Non-Binary Athlete Needs: Challenges and Best Practices" by Amélie Keyser-Verreault and Guylaine Demers](#)

Promote Allyship and Representation in Leadership: Women coaches benefit significantly from allies in positions of influence who act as sponsors and advocates to open doors for advancement. Equally critical is the presence of women in senior leadership roles within sport organizations to drive lasting, systemic change.

- [Volume 7, No. 3 "Developing Female Leadership in the Canadian Sport System: Recommendations for High-Level Sport Organizations" by Josée Martel](#)
- [Volume 13, No.1 "Where are the Female Coaches?" by Bruce Kidd](#)
- [Volume 21, No. 2 "Navigating a Minefield: Allyship in Women's Coaching" by Amanda N. Schewinbenz](#)



Into the Future: Visions for the Next 25 Years

As we look to the future of the Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching, we honour the voices that helped shape its past. Their insights remind us of how far we've come, and the work that still lies ahead.



"I remember the genesis of the Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching. There was a confluence of women leaders who initiated programs to support women coaches including national apprenticeships, women in leadership programs and the Journal. Twenty-five years later the Journal remains an important vehicle for speaking about issues and publishing research relevant to women coaches. I don't think we imagined then, how the Journal would evolve and become a fixture in Canadian sport."

Rose Mercier

"I look back on our first 25 years with pride in our accomplishments, in issues raised, solutions offered, stories told. It is gratifying. However, we must realise that much remains to be done if a truly equitable and inclusive coaching landscape is ever to be achieved for and by women in coaching. I believe that systemic change is essential to achieving equitable and inclusive coaching."

Sheila Robertson



"My greatest hope for the future of women in coaching is to finally achieve gender equity: same opportunities and same conditions in environments free of any kind of harassment and abuse. We must admit that we are still a long way off, and this is why the Journal is more relevant than ever by offering concrete solutions. I take pride in having helped build a resource that has become truly indispensable."

Guylaine Demers





PHOTO CREDITS

Bogetti-Smith Photography: Cover page

Andre Forget: Page 1, 3, 5, 6, 7

Island Wave Photography: Page 2

Scott Grant - Canada Games 2017: Back cover, page 2, 6, 7, 8

Kyle Clapham - Canada Games 2019: Page 3, 6, 7

Bruno Campagiorni - Canada Games 2022: Page 5

Mohammed Ali Labib - Canada Games 2022: Page 5

Coaching Association of Canada: Page 5, 8

Keith Minchin: Page 6

Tim McKenna - Canada Games 2022: Page 8