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Participation in sports is a major feature of daily living for children and adolescents in many countries of the world. Structures of organized programs vary within and among countries. Likewise, sport offerings and values attached to these sports vary with cultural context. Sport is also important in the primary demands that face all children and adolescents, i.e., the business of growing, maturing and developing. Sport is also a primary source of physical activity for many children and adolescents, and is an arena in which personal and inter-personal values and behaviors are developed and nurtured. Key players in these important functions of sport are peers, coaches and parents.

The volume is aimed primarily for students of Physical Education and Sport Sciences, coaches, trainers, parents and others involved in youth sport programs and in the preparation of young athletes. The contents have application to a variety of cultural contexts given the near universality of sport for youth throughout the world. Focus is on the youth sport participant or the young athlete as a child and adolescent with the needs of a child and adolescent. The demands of sport are superimposed on the biological and behavioral demands placed upon children and adolescents. All too often this is overlooked, especially at the more elite levels of youth sport, where the young talented athlete is often viewed as a commodity. The editors hope that the contributions which comprise this volume will serve to enhance the sport experiences of youth, minimize potential risks, and maximize potential benefits by educating adults who work with them in the context of sport.

The second edition of Youth Sports is divided into two volumes. Volume 1 includes chapters in two parts. The first focuses on Participation – statistics, benefits and risks, motivation, coaching values, and parents. The second part focuses on Trainability, Readiness and Injuries – the effects of training on growth, responsiveness to training for sport, physiological dimensions of training, and risk factors for injury. Volume 2 includes chapters in three parts. The first focuses on growth and maturation - young athletes in general, young athletes participating in soccer, swimming and artistic gymnastics. The second focuses on Talent – specifically talented young athletes in tennis and soccer and physiological characteristics of elite adolescent athletes in several sport. The third part focuses on Training – quality of training experiences, tactical training and talent coaches. The two volumes bring together research-based knowledge and understanding from the perspectives of the biomedical (human biology), social and sport sciences. Readers are thus provided with a wide spectrum of contemporary insights.
relating to the participation of children and youth in sports, on one hand, and sport developmental processes, on the other. We believe that the compilation of chapters presents a reasonably comprehensive overview of topics and issues in contemporary youth sports research.

The chapters comprising the two volumes were prepared by senior researchers many of whom were working with their young colleagues, often beginning professors and students working on advanced degrees. Contributors come from nine different countries in Europe (Belgium, Czech Republic, Portugal, The Netherlands, United Kingdom) and the Americas (Brazil, Canada, Mexico, United States). We are sad to announce the deaths of three individuals who contributed to the first edition, Eyra E Cardenas Barahona from Escuela Nacional de Antropologia e Historia in Mexico City; Martin J Lee from the Chelsea School Research Centre of the University of Brighton in the United Kingdom; and Thomas Reilly from the Research Institute for Sport and Exercise Sciences of Liverpool John Moores University in the United Kingdom. Eyra was a physical anthropologist with a genuine interest in the study of sport while Martin and Tom were students of the sports sciences. All three will be dearly missed as friends and as scholars.

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