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**СЕКЦІЯ 5. СУЧАСНІ ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ ФІЗИЧНОГО ВИХОВАННЯ  
РІЗНИХ ВІКОВИХ КАТЕГОРІЙ**

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**PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL ADAPTATION OF THE ATHLETE  
AFTER THE END OF THE SPORTS CAREER**

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**Abstract.** Professional sports, unlike amateur sports, are activities in which athletes receive money for their performance. Professional athletics came to the forefront through a combination of developments.

Sports development is a national priority as it contributes to an active lifestyle, child and youth development, social inclusion, employment opportunities, peace and development, and above all, a sense of belonging and national pride. Sport is not only a specific type of human activity, it is a social phenomenon that contributes to raising the prestige of not only individuals but also the entire society, including the state.

The level of success of sports activities is ensured by the relationships in the system "athlete-coach", "athlete-team", "athlete-athlete" and "athlete-fan" with the leading organizational role "athlete-coach". The psychological and pedagogical potential of this system determines the effectiveness both at the level of sports achievements of the athlete and the team, as well as at the level of attitude towards sports in the space of social relations [1, 2].

**Keywords:** Professional sport, sports career, post-career crisis, stages of crisis, periodization of sports career.

**Introduction.** The term "career" is relatively new in modern sports science. In a certain period, it belonged to the social phenomenon of capitalist

society. This is where the negative attitude towards the concept of "career" comes from creating a career meant by careerism, i.e. respectability, love of fame, and achieving one's own goals using any means. But the goal can be achieved in another way - through hard work and systematic self-improvement, which simultaneously satisfies self-respect and striving for self-establishment and self-realization.

Three important signs are distinguished in any career:

- a) multi-year activity (professionalism) in the field that a person chooses;
- b) high achievements;
- c) Self-improvement of the subject in the given (chosen) activity.

From this, a sports career can be defined. It is a multi-year sports activity aimed at high sports achievements and related to the continuous self-improvement of a person in one or several types of sports.

Any career, including a sports career, is characterized by stages of development and crisis, which to a certain extent coincide with each other, and to a certain extent complement each other. They make it possible to distinguish the peculiar "critical points" of a sports career - transition (transitional) phases from one stage to another [4, 5].

The analysis of the sports career allows us to distinguish seven crisis transitions of the sports career:

1. The crisis of the beginning of sports specialization.
2. Crisis of transition to advanced sports specialization.
3. The crisis of transition from mass sports to sports of the highest achievements.
4. Crisis of transition from youth sport to big sport.
5. The crisis of transition from amateur to professional sports.
6. The crisis of the transition from the climax of the sports career to the end.
7. The crisis of ending a sports career and transitioning to a career in other activities [3].

**Purpose of the research.** Our research aimed to study the main contradictions defining the crisis, which is characteristic of the development of each stage of a sports career.

**Results of the research and their discussion.**

1. The crisis of the beginning of sports specialization is related to the beginning of lessons with a professional coach in a sports school or specialization group. The essence of this crisis is to adapt to the requirements of the chosen sport, to the coach, to the group.

2. The crisis of transition to advanced training in the chosen sport begins with setting a new goal - working on the "result". New, higher goals are set before the athlete, the specific weight of special training increases inexorably against the background of significantly increased general physical loads, the rank of competitions increases, therefore the level of competition in them also increases.

The exit from the current crisis is evidenced by the achievement of the first significant successes in competitions, which essentially moves the athlete to the level of high-achievement sports. Athletes who could not overcome the crisis, but maintained high motivation, either remain in mass sports (continue training "for themselves", or choose a profession related to sports and prepare for it. At this stage, a significant part of athletes even leave sports altogether.

3. The crisis of the transition from mass sports to high-performance sports and from youth to senior sports are closely related, as athletes who have passed the level of high-performance sports usually automatically participate in senior competitions, regardless of their passport data. At the given stage of the culmination of a sports career, sports goals take the form of the main goal of life, which determines the need to completely transform the way of life.

These crises are a heavy burden for most athletes. This is where the "middle level" and "sports elite" are separated. It is possible to get out of the existing situation not only through sports but also through personal maturity.

4. The crisis of transition from high-achieving amateur sports to

professional sports is a relatively new phenomenon for athletes of post-Soviet countries. Getting out of the mentioned crisis ensures consistently high results in professional tournaments, social recognition, and high fees.

5. The crisis of the transition from the climax to the end of the sports career occurs after a certain period, by the regularities of high results and stabilization or decline of results in professional sports. At this time, there is a set of reasons that force the athlete to think about ending his sports career. However, most of them (athletes) try to prolong the "finish" stage and postpone the moment of leaving the sport as much as possible.

6. The crisis of ending a sports career and transitioning to another career is related to the change of place of sports in a person's life, which leads to the need to transform the personal "I" and learn about the values of one's personality outside the social role of an athlete.

After the end of the sports career, during the adaptation process, the following problems are usually faced by the athlete:

- the necessity of forcing professional training and starting a new professional career;
- formation of a new life by acquiring not only a new profession but also new passions, interests, and social circle;
- creating your own family or transforming relationships in a family created during a sports career.

Unfortunately, not all athletes can successfully overcome the crisis of the end of their sports career. The severity of the crisis usually increases in the following conditions: sudden departure from sports without proper preparation, passive position of the athlete, and lack of psychological and material support. Also, it is an important factor between the status of the athlete in the sport and the status after the end of the sports career. The greater the difference between them, other things being equal, the more psychologically severe (difficult) the said crisis is.

As research has shown us, all crises proceed according to the following

scheme:

- origin of crisis (problems, contradictions);
- symptoms (i.e. characteristics of the subjective reflection of contradictions, which are manifested in the athlete's behavior);
- possible aggravating circumstances of the crisis
- possible mitigating circumstances for exiting the crisis;
- ways out of the crisis;
- the impact of the crisis on the success of the athlete's activities;
- forms of "payment" for exiting the crisis;
- peculiarities of psychological support of athletes.

**Conclusions.** In conclusion, we can mention that knowing the contradictions of each typical transitional crisis characteristic of a sports career allows not only to prepare an athlete for it but also to provide appropriate, effective, psychological help.

A complete description of the crisis transitions of a sports career, as well as a description of considering the peculiarities of a sports career in various sports, is the basis for predicting possible negative situations. Forecasting can help athletes and coaches avoid mistakes that occur throughout the life course of both young and mature athletes.

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