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# NSCA 2026 Performance Summits: Specialised Training Model Attracts Attention

**Res. Asst. Ayşe Demet KARADAĞ**

National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA), 2026 Performance Summits etkinliğini aynı gün farklı temalara odaklanan dört uzmanlaşmış zirve olarak düzenledi. Bu format, güç-kondisyon ve performans bilimi alanında mesleki gelişimin daha hedefe yönelik bir yapıya evrildiğini gösterdi.



The new event model announced by the NSCA offered topic-focused summits, allowing participants to choose according to their interests rather than a single general conference. According to the organisation's official events page, the 2026 Performance Summits highlighted various topics such as performance science integration, endurance athlete preparation, lifelong athletics, and tactical strength and conditioning. This structure aims to provide a more efficient learning experience, particularly for coaches and performance specialists seeking practical knowledge.

One of the most notable components of the events, the Performance Science Integration Summit, stood out for its sessions that addressed the integration of technology and coaching intuition within the same framework. The NSCA notes that this summit featured discussions on applied sports science research, targeted strength strategies, and leadership approaches focused on performance outcomes. This underscores the importance of modern coaching practice, which now relies not only on field experience but also on data analysis, interdisciplinary thinking, and the quality of decision-making.

References: NSCA. "2026 NSCA Performance Summits" ve "2026 NSCA Performance Science Integration Summit", 28 Mart 2026. <https://www.nasca.com/events/Summits/> ; <https://www.nasca.com/events/Summits/performance-science-summit/>

# Digital Transformation in Coaching Is No Longer Just About Technology, but a Pedagogical Issue

**Res. Asst. Ayşe Demet KARADAĞ**

An editorial published in the journal \*Frontiers in Sports and Active Living\* highlighted that digital technologies have moved beyond performance monitoring in coaching and have become a decisive factor in learning, communication, decision-making and athlete development.

The article, authored by Koh, Newman and Santos, examines the digital transformation in sports coaching across three key dimensions: supporting coach learning through technology, enhancing coaching practices, and strengthening the athlete's holistic development. The study notes that tools such as video-based feedback systems, wearable technologies, performance dashboards and online learning environments are increasingly being integrated into coaching practices.

The editorial's key emphasis, however, is that this transformation is not merely a technical innovation. According to the authors, effective digital use must be considered alongside context, ethics, pedagogical appropriateness and the preservation of human relationships. Consequently, the coaches of the future must not merely be users of technology; they must also be professionals capable of interpreting data, filtering it appropriately, and linking it to athlete development. This perspective strongly underscores the need for coaching education programmes to address digital literacy and pedagogical competence in tandem.



References: Koh, K. T., Newman, T. J., & Santos, F. (2026). "Editorial: Digital transformation in sports coaching—enhancing coach learning and athlete development." *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/sports-and-active-living/articles/10.3389/fspor.2026.1785591/full>

# **Pau Gasol: From Leadership on the Court to a Voice in Olympic Governance**

**Res. Asst. Ayşe Demet KARADAĞ**

Pau Gasol, one of basketball's legendary figures, shared his vision for strengthening athlete representation in sport with the public in March 2026 in his capacity as Chair of the IOC Athletes' Commission. This development drew attention as a powerful example of how legendary athletes can continue to shape the future of sport even after their playing careers have ended.



According to a statement issued by the International Olympic Committee, Gasol has been elected as the new chair of the IOC Athletes' Commission, having competed in five Olympic Games and won three Olympic medals. In a vision statement subsequently published on the Athlete365 platform, Gasol highlighted his goals of finding strength in diversity, making an impact at every stage of his career, and amplifying the voice of athletes. These statements position him not merely as a basketball player who achieved great success in the past, but also as a leader taking on active responsibility in sports governance.

Gasol's new role demonstrates that the concept of a legendary athlete is not limited to records and trophies. Contributing to management, representation and sports policy after one's playing career has become an important part of the concept of role modelling in the modern sporting world. For this reason, the news of Gasol's appointment is not merely a success story for students; it also provides a powerful example of the kind of influence that can be established after a sporting career.

# A Pride-Worthy Achievement by the Istanbul Gelişim University Wrestling Team at the Turkish Championships

**Res. Asst. Bilgehan PEPE**

Istanbul Gelişim University achieved significant successes at the UNILIG Yeşilay Turkey Wrestling Championship, hosted by Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University and held between 28 March and 1 April 2026. Organised by the Turkish University Sports Federation and featuring fierce competition among 619 athletes from 63 universities, the event saw Istanbul Gelişim University athletes successfully represent their university through their outstanding performances.

At the championship, Ahmet Yağan, a third-year student from the Coaching Education Department, finished as runner-up, whilst Kerem Dede, a student from the Coaching Education Department, and Semih Şen, a second-year student from the same department, secured third place. Our athletes, who demonstrated great dedication, determination and fighting spirit on the mat, brought immense pride to Istanbul Gelişim University with the rankings they achieved.

In addition to the athletes who secured rankings, our other university athletes who participated in the championship also displayed a high level of fighting spirit by competing in important matches against tough opponents. This successful team performance once again highlighted Istanbul Gelişim University's ambition in university sports and its progress in the wrestling discipline. We congratulate all our athletes who have brought pride to our university with their achievements, as well as the coaches who contributed to their success, and wish them continued success.



# A New Step Towards Inclusive Sport in Istanbul: The Paralympic School Programme Has Begun

**Res. Asst. Bilgehan PEPE**

The Paralympic School Programme, part of the EPYG Legacy Programme organised by the Turkish National Paralympic Committee, was launched on 13 April 2026 in Istanbul and Adana. The programme's primary aim is to support children with disabilities in taking a more visible, stronger and more inclusive role within physical education and school sport. To this end, both theoretical and practical content is provided to teachers in the areas of adapted sports training, inclusive practices and awareness of para-sport.

What makes this news significant is that it is not merely an announcement of an event; it also proposes a sustainable model for inclusive sport. According to the TMPK's statement, over 200 teachers will receive training on biomotor skills, adapted sports practices and inclusive educational approaches. The aim is for teachers to create more supportive school environments that enhance disabled pupils' access to sport. In this respect, the development represents a noteworthy April 2026 announcement, significant both for the grassroots expansion of Paralympic sports and for the strengthening of exercise and adaptive sports practices within the education system for people with disabilities.



# **A New Era in Sports Technology: SportsInnovation 2026**

**Res. Asst. Muhammed Ali GÖKÇE**

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Latest updates on SportsInnovation 2026. SportsInnovation 2026, which showcases the latest

technological advancements in the sports sector, has kicked off in Düsseldorf. The event serves as a platform for showcasing innovative sports technologies.

SportsInnovation 2026 is attracting attention as a major event showcasing technologies set to revolutionise the world of sport. This event holds great significance in terms of introducing innovative technologies in the sports industry to a wide audience. From sports equipment to digital analysis tools, numerous innovations are featured on this platform. This is of great importance for Sports Technologies SportsInnovation 2026.

The event showcases a variety of technologies, ranging from virtual reality training programmes to biometric data analysis systems. In particular, AI-based analysis tools and wearable technologies are attracting significant interest. These innovations offer great opportunities to enhance athletes' performance

and provide richer experiences for spectators. Developments regarding Sports Technologies SportsInnovation 2026 are being closely monitored.

# The digital future of sport will be discussed in Istanbul

**Res. Asst. Muhammed Ali GÖKÇE**

The world of sport is preparing to welcome a new era, rapidly transformed by technology, in Istanbul.

The SportX Digital Summit, which will explore every aspect of the future of sport—from data analytics to artificial intelligence, and from Web3 to next-generation start-ups—opens its doors on 18 April at the Centre for the Commercialisation of Knowledge.

The world of sport is undergoing a profound transformation driven by technology. We are now

experiencing a new era shaped not only on the pitch but also through data, artificial intelligence and digital platforms. A broad ecosystem—from clubs to content creators, investors to fans—is becoming part of this change.

At the heart of this transformation, the SportX Digital Summit is set to open its doors on 18 April in Istanbul, at the Knowledge Commercialisation Centre.



# Beşiktaş Tüpraş Wheelchair Basketball Team Champions!

**Res. Asst.Onur TOPUZ**

The Beşiktaş Tüpraş Wheelchair Basketball Team faced Club Deportivo Amivel in the final of the EuroCup 3 European Wheelchair Basketball Championship, held in Istanbul between 23 and 26 April 2026. The event, which also saw our university's sports management students taking on roles, was held at the Ahmet Cömert Sports Hall and the Bahçelievler Disabled Sports Hall. In the final, Beşiktaş led 25–23 at the end of the first quarter. The evenly contested first half ended in a 51–51 draw. Taking control of the game in the second half, the black-and-white team led 81–75 at the end of the third quarter. Beşiktaş Tüpraş won the match 106-99 to claim the championship. At the ceremony held after the match, the players lifted the trophy, celebrating the championship with their fans amidst great joy. Our students who took part in this significant event described the experience as both enjoyable and educational for them.



# The 21st Türkiye İş Bankası Istanbul Half Marathon Took Place

**Res. Asst. Onur TOPUZ**



Organised under the auspices of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Directorate of Youth and Sports Services and Spor İstanbul, the Istanbul Half Marathon took place on the Historic Peninsula course with the participation of approximately 15,000 athletes. The event, which featured 21K and 10K categories, broke a participation record with a 14 per cent increase compared to last year.

In the race, which was awarded the “Gold Label” category by World Athletics, the competition among elite athletes was a highlight. In the men’s race, Kenyan Alex Nzioka Matata claimed back-to-back titles with a time of 1:00:01, whilst his twin brother Charles Mbatha Matata finished just 58 hundredths of a second behind in second place. Third place went to national athlete Ali Kaya with a time of 1:00:12, marking his return to the podium after a decade.

In the women’s race, Kenyan Purity Kajuju Gitonga claimed first place with a time of 1:06:50, whilst Ethiopian Ftaw Zeray finished second and South African Glenrose Xaba came third.

# National Para-swimming Athletes Secure Eight Medals in Paris

**Res. Asst.Selim AKMAN**

According to a press release dated 12 May 2025 from the Turkish National Paralympic Committee, our national para-swimmers achieved a significant success at the 2025 Para Swimming World Series, held in Paris, France, between 28 April and 5 May 2025. Turkish athletes concluded the event with a total of 8 medals: 1 gold, 4 silver and 3 bronze. This success can be regarded as a notable development in terms of both international sporting representation and the visibility of Paralympic sports.

At the event, Turgut Aslan Yaraman won a gold medal in the men's junior 100-metre breaststroke event and secured a total of 5 medals with his performances in various disciplines. Baran Doruk Şimşek won two silver medals, Umut Ünlü won a silver medal in the open age category, and Defne Kurt won a bronze medal in the women's open age 50-metre freestyle event.



# The Pride of a Gold Medal on the International Stage!

**Res. Asst.Selim AKMAN**

Eyüp Çetin, a second-year student in the Department of Coaching Education at the Faculty of Sports Sciences, Istanbul Gelişim University, achieved a significant success at the 28th International U20 Champions Tournament, held between 17 and 19 April.

Competing in the freestyle 92-kilogram category at the event, which saw the participation of approximately 800 athletes from 20 countries, our student delivered an outstanding performance, finishing the tournament as champion and securing the gold medal. We congratulate Eyüp Çetin, who has brought pride to both our university and our country with this valuable achievement on the international stage, and wish him continued success in his sporting career.



# FIFA Heroes: Thor vs Maradona

Res. Asst.Şevval ÖZKAN

FIFA Heroes has launched! The game, developed specifically for mobile platforms, was released on 26 April. The PC and console versions are scheduled to follow at a later date, which has yet to be announced.

Unlike classic football simulations, FIFA Heroes stands out as a fast-paced, arcade-style game focused on fun. The game distinguishes itself from traditional FIFA titles with its 5-a-side matches on small pitches and high-tempo gameplay.

One of the most striking aspects of the game, announced as the World Cup approaches, is its roster. Alongside real-life football stars such as Diego Maradona and Harry Kane, the game features mythological characters like Thor and Sun Wukong, as well as FIFA's official mascots. This unique blend stands out as one of the key elements distinguishing the game from traditional football titles.

Announced last October, the game is aimed primarily at a younger player base. Rather than offering a realistic simulation, the game focuses on fast-paced, fun and accessible gameplay. According to official statements, the game prioritises "over-the-top abilities, powerful characters and fluid gameplay".

Matches are designed to be short and fast-paced, whilst players will be able to compete in multiplayer modes and take part in time-limited events. The game also features a season-based progression system.



# “ACE”

## Table Tennis Robot

Res. Asst.Şevval ÖZKAN

According to a report published in April 2026, the AI-powered table tennis robot named ‘Ace’, developed by the Japanese technology company Sony, has achieved a significant milestone in the field of sports technology. Ace has faced elite-level human players and emerged victorious in some matches, thereby becoming one of the first robots to reach human level in a real-time physical sport.

This development is of critical importance, particularly in demonstrating the level of advancement achieved by artificial intelligence systems operating in physical and dynamic environments. The success of robots in a sport such as table tennis, which demands rapid reflexes, precise timing and constant adaptation, demonstrates that artificial intelligence can be effectively utilised not only in digital environments but also in the real world.

At the heart of Ace’s success lie advanced sensing and control systems. The robot analyses the ball’s speed, direction and spin characteristics in real time—and responds accordingly—thanks to high-speed cameras, multi-camera tracking systems and learning-based control algorithms. This system can make accurate decisions even at speeds that the human eye struggles to perceive. Researchers state that such technologies could be utilised in manufacturing, service robots and safety-critical areas requiring interaction with humans.

However, professional athletes point out that the robot still has certain tactical weaknesses.

