2I Jimmy Smith, Gonzaga University
“Practitioner Perspectives on Sport Ministry Outcomes”

The premise of sport ministry (also known as sport outreach) combines faith communities with character building aspects through sport participation that has shown to benefit individuals and religious organizations worldwide (Coakley, 2009). The primary goal of sport ministry is to produce confident youth and adults that one day will provide a social contribution to their communities by guiding them toward a positive relationship with God through a biblical and sportsmanship foundation (Connor, 2003). The primary goal for this research was two-fold: (1) to gain a clearer understanding of how sport ministry programs contribute socially to their communities and (2) to understand the managerial capacity undertaken by sport ministers themselves. The current research applied a grounded theory approach with the intent to emphasize the creation and interpretation of meaning in real-life scenarios (Gephart, 2004; Strauss & Glasser, 1967; Suddaby, 2006). Interviews were conducted with 21 sport ministers, with questions focusing on the two main goals of this study. The results from the current research supports sport ministry efforts by increased community sport participation in such programs even with sport management support limited. The author intends to extend this research by building a sport ministry program in a local setting.

2I Letícia Silva, University of Brasilia & Dulce Maria Filgueira de Almeida, University of Brasilia
“The Significance of Dance in the Brazilian Catholic Charismatic Renewal”

The study’s main goal is to comprehend the significance of dance to Charismatic Catholics. Dance was established as a hybrid physical practice, set between the sacred and the profane. In early societies, dance was conceived as a means for people to make contact with their gods. During the feudal period, dance became associated with profane practices due to the stern Catholic model reigning at that time, which was opposed to any sort of pleasure in this world. Following the Renaissance and the subsequent loss of the Catholic Church’s hegemony, there was a shift in the general view of the human body. It was through Charismatic Renewal that Catholicism began to accept dance, in terms of a physical practice that is expressed through the body’s interaction with the sacred, as a proper medium for religious effervescence. Among the Renewal advocates, the body practices were thus relived with new meanings. Based on research of an ethnographic orientation, a religious group from Goiânia–Goiás/Brazil, was studied. The conclusion was that dance is an element that was inserted into the group to promote social interaction that would also maintain the followers’ active in the religion and to achieve a greater connection with the sacred.

2I Randall Woodard, Saint Leo University & Philp Hatlem, Saint Leo University
“Athletes in Action: Social Justice or Charity?”

This year, with the passing of Muhammad Ali, much was discussed regarding his lifetime pursuit of social justice issues, as well as an apparent lack of involvement by today’s athletes. While there have been recent instances of athletes making symbolic gestures – Miami Heat players posing in “hoodies;” St. Louis Rams players holding “hands up” while being introduced prior to a game – few efforts at invoking social justice have gone beyond this symbolic stage. Many might fairly critique these efforts, no matter how well-intentioned, as deeply lacking as they do little to bring about change directed toward social justice. For Rawls and others, social justice is a means of ensuring elements of “justice and fairness” for others, particularly those who have the least among us. One might ask whether the many attempts of athletes, teams and programs might remain more at the level of charity as they do not attempt to bring about social change for justice. In this presentation, the authors will examine recent examples where
athletes have attempted to invoke social justice to address perceived injustices. Through these examinations, the authors hope to determine that current state of social justice awareness in today’s sport industry.

21 Steven Waller, University of Tennesee

"Hoops and Heaven? A Snapshot of Parachurch Ministry Events at the Final Four"

Parachurch ministries have long used sports as an access point to contemporary culture. In modern America, basketball has become a ubiquitous part of the culture. Nowhere is basketball’s growth and appeal more evident than at the National Collegiate Athletic Association’s (NCAA) Final Four. The Men’s Final Four, the NCAA’s primary revenue generator, has grown into a sprawling, festival-like experience with concerts and attractions for fans across the host city, in addition to the actual games. It has become a mega-event by any measure, including intense media coverage, immense financial aspects, enormous popular interest (Davis, 2009; Packer & Lazenby, 1987) and a strong parachurch ministry presence. The National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) which was formed in 1927 hosts their national convention for coaches every year in conjunction with the Final Four. The events hosted by NABC serve as a source of renewal, rejuvenation, and encouragement for Christian coaches and their families. This presentation is a qualitative content analysis of the NABC Convention programming. Three parachurch ministries - the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Athletes in Action, and Nations of Coaches - lead numerous ministry events aimed at coaches and their families during the nearly week-long convention. This presentation examines the impact of these events, namely on Christian coaches.