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Foreword by Hardy Fink
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These proceedings from the 2012 SIGARC symposium encompasses a broad range of historical, empirical, and scientific articles presented by some of the world's leading practitioners and researchers in the area of gymnastics. This symposium featured presentations about the various gymnastics sports, and with focused research on rhythmic-, men's- and women's-gymnastics from biomechanical, psychological, planning, and methodological perspectives.

The introductory presentation by Russell takes a critical and enlightening look at all of the gymnastics sports from the insights he gained over a lifetime of coaching and teaching gymnastics. He also dispels forcefully the suggestion that gymnastics participation "retards" growth. Four papers discuss aspects of rhythmic gymnastics. The beauty and the challenges related to group rhythmic performances from the experiences of the Brazil group are presented by Lourenc,o et al. The content of rhythmic gymnastics routines are analyzed with reference foreword. to Code of Points requirements by Avila-Carvalho et al. A third paper, this one by Avil'es et al, studies the principles of periodization, planning, and pedagogy applied to training in rhythmic gymnastics. The fourth paper by Toledo and Antualpa deals with the development of high performance rhythmic gymnastics in Brazil as well as Brazilian participation in international competitions. Psychology applied to gymnastics training is also presented in three different papers. Nunomura and Oliveira look at the difficult and essential tasks of coaches in artistic gymnastics by presenting data on coaches' profiles and motivation. Heinen et al. outline how sport psychology can contribute to gymnastics performances from the analysis of the performance demands, psychological profiles, and psychological interventions. Schiavon takes a fascinating look at psychological aspects of preparing gymnastics teams and specifically the Brazilian women's team for the Olympics. Other sport sciences are not ignored. Irwin et al. look at biomechanical analysis and how this science can enhance the effectiveness of gymnastics coaches. Bortoleto and Duarte take a different but equally enlightening approach. It is that of qualitative video analysis that can be quickly and easily meaningful to a coach instead of the sometimes more difficult to understand biomechanical and quantitative analysis. Finally, no overview of gymnastics would be complete without the regulations that attempt to direct and guide its direction. Robin presents the influence of the Code of Points on gymnasts, coaches, and judges.

The totality of these proceedings from the 2012 SIGARC symposium provides a large amount of scientific, pedagogical, methodological, empirical and experiential information that can be of benefit to every gymnastics coach. Even the best or most successful of coaches can improve – can be better – by knowing and incorporating the information provided. Moreover, every book that presents the content and philosophy of the systematic, careful, and informed coaching of athletes is a welcome addition to gymnastics. And for this reason, I very much appreciate that this book will help improve our sports for all participants, but most especially for the gymnasts.