

Player (1964-1989)

- 25 years from 6 till 31 y.
- National youth teams 17-18 y.
- S.C. Lokeren, professional, captain national university team World Cup 1982, Mexico
- Second & third national league (semi-pro)



Coach UEFA A license (1990-ongoing)

- Talent youth academy (1995-2006)
- Third national league (2 semi-pro teams)
- Second national league (2 semi-pro teams)



Technical Director (1990-1996)

- Second league (2 semi-pro teams, F.C. Cappellen & OH Leuven)



Coach Educator (2003-ongoing)

- UEFA C, B & A courses
 - Taskforce Topsportschools with Belgian FA, Ministry of Education
 - Taskforce Growth & Maturation with Belgian FA & UEFA
- UEFA Coach Education
 - 22 workshops since 2015
- A huge network of football coaches and performance staff in all 55 UEFA NAs as well as in other Confederations
- Sharing valuable experiences with former pupils that are successful as performance staff in professional football across Europe & abroad



From player to professor: a lifetime advancing the game

- Areas of expertise
 - Expert perception and performance
 - Visual control of goal-directed movements
 - Talent detection, selection & development
 - Load monitoring & injury prevention



Sports Scientist & Performance Consultant (1999-...)

- 1999-...: UEFA (18 flagship tournaments, 9 EUROs, 150 courses)
- 2000-2010: FIFA (15 flagship tournaments & 3 World Cups)
- 2002-2019: KBVB
- 2001-...: Courses in National Associations (35)
- 2003-...: Courses with nat. ref fitness coaches (33)
- 2015-...: UEFA Fitness4Football Advisory Group
- 2017-...: IFAB/FIFA VAR worldwide project & New offside rule
- 2021-...: Founder of Perception4Perfection (P4P), an online platform for perception and decision-making training
- 2023-...: Consultant for Romanian & Turkish FA



FROM PLAYER, COACH, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR & COACH EDUCATOR TO SPORTS SCIENTIST & PERFORMANCE CONSULTANT

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PROFILE

Football and research are my two passions. Bridging the gap between practitioners and scientists using innovative tools and advanced technology remains a daily challenge.

Rather than focusing only on 'evidence-based practice' what most academics do (starting from a theoretical framework), I consider 'practice-based evidence' at least as important and valuable (research questions emerging from the training ground).

As such, I have extensive experience in the sports science support of elite match officials, youth academies, professional clubs and national teams.



- As of October 2025: 15,452 citations; h-index 60
- 150+ papers in leading peer-reviewed journals across behavioural sciences and neurosciences, including Psychological Bulletin (IF 17.7), Sports Medicine (IF 11.1), NeuroImage (IF 6.5), and Journal of Sports Sciences (IF 3.3)
- Supervisor of 14 PhD graduates and 300 master's thesises
- Reviewer for 46 international journals
- Frequent keynote speaker at global conferences

Principal investigator of many grant proposals submitted to Flemish (IWT), Federal (FWO, National Lottery), and International research agencies (FIFA, UEFA) that were funded during the last 5 years for a total amount of more than 3 million €.



Trusted coach, educator, and performance mentor – on the pitch and beyond

- Over the past 2 decades, there was exemplary cooperation with UEFA, both with respect to the UEFA Refereeing Department on the one hand, as well as with the UEFA Technical department, the UEFA Coach education and its National Associations on the other.
- Specifically, during the UEFA 'Fitness4Football' workshops we use heart rate monitors, GPS-tracking devices and web-based online logbooks and training platforms to learn and facilitate (national team) coaches on how to best use these tools to make players and the game better.
- Media releases (available upon request):
 - 20161121 UEFA Direct - The Technician - How to remedy the relative age effect?
 - 20180609 The Economist - What makes a country like Belgium good at football?
 - 20180613 Bleacher report - Akan Simon - The Belgium process: what are the pillars?
 - 20180730 Forbes interview on the worldwide Video Assistant Referee research project
 - 20200506 UEFA Inside - How the UEFA refereeing family is keeping fit @Covid-19?
 - 20201011 iNews.co.uk Richard Edwards Belgium star factory
 - 20211001 UEFA Technician - Fitness Competence Framework for UEFA core diplomas
 - 20220311 NRC How will the VAR of the future look like?
 - 20230417 How the Belgian FA are collaborating with universities and the Ministry of Sport to develop fitness course content

9 European Championships



4 World Cups

