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Not only education and research, but also health and psycho-physical balance: these are the values of the University of Pavia. It has a well-established tradition of successful results in competitions: sports play an important role in students’ lives and they are an essential part of their development. The University of Pavia, in fact, participated in the World Physical Activity Day, promoted by the World Health Organization in order to encourage a culture of well-being and physical exercise. By adopting the motto “Be Active Today”, on the 6th April 2018 Sports Science teachers and specialists turned many of the university’s outdoor areas into spaces devoted to physical activity. Participants could do a variety of exercises and workouts: body enhancement, running, stretching, functional tests and also football tournaments, held at Collegio Golgi, one of the local student residences. Furthermore, in order to support the academic career of those students involved in elite competitions, the University of Pavia gives them the opportunity to sit examinations when there is no overlap with the competition period. In addition to this, students receive European University Credits (ECTS) according to their competition level and to their participation in the National University Championships (“Campionati Nazionali Universitari”, CNU) as CUS Pavia athletes.

Finally, a project setting up the “Dual Career” for students-athletes is being finalized. It will provide them with support services, such as tutorials and assistance during their course of study.

UNIPV ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD

The football team U.S. Cremonese plays in the Italian Serie B. In the 2017-2018 season, as a result of a free annual agreement, it showed a patch with the logo of the University of Pavia on the players’ jerseys. It follows that football is an invaluable tool to teach to young generations how important is the value of education and training to achieve success in life.
The University is also planning other projects. Among these, there are the “active breaks” promoted by the University Sports Committee and the Sports Science undergraduate programme organizers. Active breaks consist of short periods devoted to physical activity carried out in classroom between lessons. Several studies show that this practice can boost students’ attention by increasing energy levels which can reduce the feeling of lethargy they have during the lessons. Another project, again involving the University Sports Committee and the Sports Science undergraduate programme, gives the opportunity to 60 students enrolled in the same academic year to take part in a personal training course. The staff within the Sports Science undergraduate programme contribute by organizing ad hoc training for the Master’s degree students. This service operates from November to May. Workouts/training sessions take place every two weeks. Each student has an individualized exercise programme to follow, which includes video-tutorial support. The personal training course involves 60 students and 30 personal trainers from the Sports Science undergraduate programme coordinated by 3 supervisors.

Monica Boggioni is a World Series Paralympic Champion in the 50m and 100m Freestyle and in the 150m Individual Medley. She’s attending the Biotechnology degree course at the University of Pavia.

**How can you reconcile professional sports activity with studying?**

It is not easy, but I am driven by the passion for both. Sport is my life, even though I also want to specialize in Genetics. Therefore it does not matter how hard it is, but how much you strive to do it.

**How did your passion for swimming originate?**

Actually, I was forced to undertake this sport! I started swimming when I was a two-year-old child as a form of therapy, since I suffer from spastic diplegia affecting my legs. Afterwards it turned into a passion. Then in 2013 Davide Bellingeri launched the project “Nuota con noi” (“Swim with us”) whose aim was to create a Para swimming professional team in Pavia.

**Apart from athletics, what do you expect in your future life?**

I want to carry out research in Biotechnology in order to find treatments for undiagnosed diseases.
Due to its geographical features, as well as to its limited urban extension, Pavia meets the requirements of people who want to practice either indoor or outdoor sports activities. On the Ticino river canoeing, rowing and dragon boat trainings take place. The river also offers the chance to practise Venetian rowing. For walkers and runners there are beautiful paths within the Ticino River Park (“Parco del Ticino”) and the Vernavola Park (“Parco della Vernavola”), as well as fitness trails. Furthermore, there is a remarkable number of gyms as well as football, rugby and beach volley fields and areas for field archery.

**PRACTISING SPORTS IN PAVIA MEANS:**

- canoeing and rowing at a highest level, with Olympic and worldwide-known athletes
- national university championships concerning individual and team sports according to the programmes outlined by CUSI;
- sport programmes for students with disabilities
- sports facilities and courses created for the students’physical well-being that integrate with university education
- tournaments involving the town’s student residences.

In 2014 Pavia was awarded the international prize “European City of Sport” due to its 2 sports halls, 4 public swimming pools and 3 private sports clubs, 26 school gyms and 8 university gyms, 20 multi-purpose fields located in church recreational centres, 15 private and public football fields, 5 facilities for lawn bowling, 4 private horse riding centres, 20 public and private tennis fields, 10 other facilities including golf courses, skating rinks and five-a-side football fields.
The association between students and athletes is constantly made when referring to sports practised in Pavia. This means that as Pavia cannot disregard its university, so sports cannot do without students. Sports at university have a peculiar identity, which is both national and global and it combines with the concept of sports in a broader sense. Sports practice is currently regarded as an education tool and therefore as a culture generator. Students, during the learning process, establish their personal contact with science, thus becoming culture-bearers. I agree with Bertrand Russell, who was extremely optimistic about an education aiming at defeating ignorance and assuring “general consensus about what is evil”.

Students who promoted sports at university might have not been aware of this important perspective. They did not even think that sport could be the harbinger of evil. They might have been encouraged by the will of doing an organized physical activity conceived as an essential need for human beings, which might have represented something new for the society of those times. Nowadays, after being pioneers, students can play a key role in combining sports and culture.

Sports at university may represent the final step of student level sport by completing a programme that can be outlined with innovative criteria and that can promote ethical sport. It is not enough for young athletes to be surrounded by talented athletes, good coaches, capable managers: these ones...
must be educators as well, otherwise there is no future for sports.

*Cesare Dacarro, President of CUS Pavia*

**IL CUS PAVIA**
The Italian University Sports Centre (CUSI, “Centro Universitario Sportivo Italiano”) was founded in Padua on the 22nd March 1946. Its aim was to encourage sports activity among university students. In the same year the CUS (“Centro Universitario Sportivo”) Pavia, one of the first university sports centres in Italy, was born. At the moment CUS Pavia has more than 2,800 members and offers a variety of initiatives concerning several disciplines. It gives the chance to beginners to learn the fundamentals of a sport as well as offers the opportunity to practise sports at intermediate- and high-level of competition.

Therefore, by promoting sports, either at a recreational or at a competitive level, CUS Pavia allows a greater number of university students to approach or to continue practising sports activities. Students-athletes are motivated to join it either to relax or to strengthen their interest in a field of specialization through an ad hoc and constant training. These are the courses CUS Pavia offers: sport climbing, canoeing, rowing, body conditioning, fitness, basketball, volleyball, pilates, running school, fencing, rugby touch, archery and yoga. Sports practised at a competitive level are athletics, canoeing/kayaking, rowing, volleyball, rugby, fencing and archery. So far, tens of thousands of students have done sports activities within CUS.

Among them there are award winners such as the rowers Piero Poli, Olympic medal winner in 1988 and Andrea Re, who was awarded 8 gold medals at World Rowing Championship between 1985 and 1995 and won a bronze medal both in 1993 and 1994.

www.cuspavia.org
Canoeing was first undertaken in Pavia in 1966 by a small group of university students. It was soon made into an organization and in 1968, when the Nautical Venue (“Sede Nautica”) was opened, it included both amateur and professional athletes. Nowadays courses are addressed to beginners, amateurs and professionals. Professionals participate in federal competitions and in the National University Championships (“Campionati Nazionali Universitari”, CNU). So far the CUS Pavia canoeists have won more than 50 Italian Championships: among the elite athletes there are the World Champions Mirco Daher and Eric Secco. Moreover, Daniele Mignogna, Rosetta Ravetta, Enrico Calvi and Giuseppe Coduri were all in the Italian team during the European and the World Championships.

In the 2005-2006 academic year the College Paddle (“College della Pagaia”) was created by the University of Pavia and the Italian Canoe Kayak Federation (“Federazione Italiana Canoa Kayak”). Thanks to the College Paddle elite athletes can undertake their university studies while practising sport at a competitive level. This is part of the “Dual Career” initiative: selected athletes from the National Youth Teams (“Squadre Nazionali Giovanili”) move to Pavia in order to pursue their university studies. They stay at the student residence Collegio Gerolamo Cardano. They have access to refectories and to the EdiSU services, as well as to the CUS Pavia’s facilities. A tutor helps them deal with studying and sports. Among the athletes who have had this benefit there are Carlo Tacchini, Olympic finalist during Rio 2016 Summer Olympics; Stefano Loddo, currently coach of the Italian Canoe Sprint Team (“Squadra Italiana di Velocità”); the canoe sprint specialists Andrea Dal Bianco and Riccardo Spotti; the canoe polo specialists Silvia Cogoni and Alessandra Catania; the whitewater specialists Andrea Merola, Mathilde Rosa, Andrea Bernardi and Gabriele Esposito, multiple medallists in the World and in the European Championships.
Mirco Daher attends the Chemistry degree course at the University of Pavia and he is a specialist in Canadian canoeing. He has taken part in 8 World Championships, 6 World Cups and tens of Italy Championships. He is one of the Canoe Marathon top athletes.

**Why have you chosen such a hard sports discipline?**

*Because water and wildlife have always fascinated me. When I was I child I tried canoeing on the Ticino river and I fell in love with this wonderful sport.*

**What is the difference between Canadian canoe and kayak?**

Canadian canoe is a particular kind of boat propelled by kneeling paddlers who paddle on one side only. Furthermore, to make things harder, there is no rudder. Compared to kayak, canoe is much more unstable and it takes you longer to learn the paddle stroke technique. Nevertheless, once you have mastered this kind of boat, it gives you immense satisfaction.

**You are a marathon canoeist: how long is a marathon?**

Marathons are real journeys! They are 26 km long and consist of 5-6 laps, each lap including a portage, that is, you have to carry the water craft over land for about 100 m.

**How much do you train? Is the Ticino river, where stream is fast-flowing, hard for such an unstable boat?**

Paddling on Ticino is just a matter of habit. Ticino is a beautiful river that lets me escape from chaos in order to do the best training. Mine is hard: it consists of 2-3 sessions per day that allow me to improve my performance in order to compete against the best athletes.
Rowing
The Jewel in Our Crown

Rowing is one of the university sports disciplines par excellence. Rowing in Pavia got its start during the Pisa-Pavia Regatta, which first took place in 1929, although it had been practised in town since the beginning of the 20th century at Battellieri Colombo and Canottieri Ticino. These two local amateur sports associations were a reference for the rowing athletes until the CUS Nautical Venue was opened in 1968. That year also marked an important change in the history of CUS Pavia: since then, rowing has become the discipline on which the major investments are made and in which successful results are achieved.

In the early 80’s, thanks to a deal between the Italian Rowing Federation (“Federazione Italiana di Canottaggio”), EdiSU and CUS Pavia the Federal Rowing College (“College Remiero Federale”) was created. So far a huge number of athletes, among which there are Olympic medallists and World Champions, have benefited of this programme.

PIERO POLI, AND THEN..122 MEDALS

During the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul the TV commentator Giampiero Galeazzi announced Piero Poli’s victory in quad scull together with Agostino Abbagnale, Gianluca Farina and Davide Tizzano.

Piero got a Medicine degree and is currently Consultant in Orthopaedics at the Hospital of Lecco. After his great performance, the University of Pavia students-athletes won 122 medals. It is such a huge number that it would be hard to list all the medallists’ names. Daniele Gilardoni deserves particular mention, since he was 11 times World Champion, while Andrea Re won the title 8 times and Maurizio Losi 4. Maurizio is now a well-known accountant and the CUS Pavia’s treasurer.

At the moment, 3 active World Champions are both member of the Rowing College and students at the University of Pavia: Piero Sfiligoi, Stefano Morganti and Daniel Soares. One of the latest World Champions is the physiotherapist Simone Molteni. He added to his palmarès the gold medal he won in Gwanju 2015 Summer Universiade with Matteo Mulas in the lightweight men’s double.
Since 1929 the Pisa-Pavia Regatta has represented an exciting challenge between the students/athletes from the universities of the two cities. The event takes place in Pavia on the Ticino river on odd years and in Pisa on the Arno river on even years. The competition is an Eight +, that is there are eight rowers with a cox. Each boat is 18 metres long, weighs 90 kilos and is very fast, since it can reach a speed of 30 kph.

According to the river navigability conditions the race distance may vary from 500 to 2,000 metres. It is generally held upstream and consists of two heats with reversed lanes in order to balance the flow. So far, Pavia has achieved 35 victories against the 18 of Pisa.
CUS Pavia is undoubtedly a reference for local rugby played within Lombardy. This sport has developed during the years: the men’s team plays in the Serie C of the National Championship and the women’s team competes in the Serie A of the National Championship. The university rugby sevens team participates in the University National Championships.

CUS Pavia also offers the chance to undertake non-competitive activity, in the “Old” category for men and in the “Rugby Touch” one for women. These initiatives allow former players to continue playing and adult beginners to approach this sport.

Nicola Cozzi, a life devoted to rugby. Now you have a degree in Sports Science.

How many matches have you played in the CUS Pavia team?

It is hard to say. I began in 1994 and until the 2013-2014 season I have had a high percentage of caps, more or less twenty caps per season. Actually I do not know, numbers tangle me.

You are coaching the Serie C team and you are involved in the CUS youth sports activities.

Does it still make sense introducing young people to rugby?

Of course it does. Rugby represents the opportunity to learn life lessons. It also teaches you to be ready in any circumstances. It does not matter what is going to happen, because there will be always somebody ready to help and support you.

Would you suggest practising rugby to university students?

I would suggest it to anyone. When you join a rugby team, you join a family.
Volleyball
The Strength of the Youth
In 1963 a CUS Pavia volleyball team debuted in an official match. Since then, the CUS Pavia men’s volleyball has had a long tradition. In the early 80’s also women’s volleyball got its start.

When the new “PalaCUS” was opened, the volleyball practice increased and excellent results were achieved: both the men’s and the women’s teams were promoted to Serie B.

CUS Pavia Volleyball has always regarded the participation of the youth as crucial: it boasts 3 Regional Juniores Champion straight titles in 1975, 1976 and 1977. Thanks to its constant scouting and promotional activities CUS Pavia was awarded as Lombardy sports association that has been affiliated to FIPAV for more than 50 years (currently they are 54). Now it has 19 teams and 21 coaches and trainers who operate on the four PalaCUS and PalaCAMPUS’ volleyball fields.

Federica Rescali is a graduate student in Engineering and captain of the Serie C volleyball team.

How have you reconciled your university career with your team needs?
I have organized my time. When you have little time you have to make plans in advance in order to have time enough to devote to studying. It is not easy and you have to make considerable sacrifices, but if you have a passion for what you do, you do not limit yourself.

Why during matches you are always giving each other high fives on every score?
It is something spontaneous, a kind of sign of solidarity with your teammates. You can have more confidence knowing your teammates are with you, ready to help with every score.

What would you suggest to a girl who wants to choose a sport?
I would say: “Take the plunge!”. Sports help you have a break in your usual routine. They also teach you to cope with stress and to interact with people. When you play a sport, you learn valuable life lessons, such as respect for others and a sense of competition.

Do you have any particular memories concerning your volleyball career?
I have a lot of memories; some are happy, some other are unpleasant. I have experienced wonderful joys, but I have suffered bitter disappointments as well. The best moments were when we were promoted from Serie D to Serie C. You feel such an overwhelming emotion that you cannot explain. You are proud of what you have done and you feel unrestrained joy.
In fencing, competition is defined “attack”. Fencers simulate a duel and the winner is the competitor who scores the greater number of touches on his opponent. Fencers may wield a foil, an épée, or a sabre. Each fencer is usually specialized in one of the three types of weapons. In Pavia the most common weapon is the épée. Currently there is also a group of sabreurs, who are expected to achieve important results in the future. This would diversify the fencing disciplines practised within the CUS Pavia.

Fencing has a long tradition in Pavia, that traces back to the beginning of the 20th Century. Nowadays it is practised in one of the PalaCUS’ gyms, which has eight pistes used during the training sessions. Federico Bollati is one of the many fencers who got excellent results: he was the winner of the Italian Fencing Championship (“Campionato Italiano di Spada”) in 2003. At the moment the CUS Pavia men’s and women’s teams are in Serie A and the men’s sabre team competes in Serie B1.
As far as archery is concerned, Pavia has a rich history. The CUS Pavia Archery was born in 1981 when the Malaspina Archery Group (“Gruppo Arcieri Malaspina”) became one of the CUS Pavia sections. CUS Pavia Archery has been affiliated to the Italian Archery Federation (“Federazione Italiana di Tiro con l’Arco”, FITArco) since 1977.

One of the best known athletes who represented the University of Pavia is Mauro Nespoli. He won a gold medal in the Olympic Games, 2 gold medals in the World Championships and 2 in the European Championships.

Mauro Nespoli is one of the greatest archers in Italy. He is attending the first year of the Master’s degree in Sports Science and Techniques at the University of Pavia.

Mauro Nespoli, how can you reconcile sport and studying?

It is hard, in some periods even impossible. However, it is just a matter of setting targets and priorities. Studying, as well as sport training, requires careful planning.

What would you suggest to a student who practises a sport and who is going to undertake university studies in Pavia?

You have to set targets either in the long or in the medium term: you cannot do everything at the same time. There will be moments when you want to throw in the towel, but that’s life. It took me seven years to complete the undergraduate degree course, but it was worth it.

A lot of young people watched your performances on TV during the World Cup: what is the best example that an athlete can give them?

Sports are similar to life. Endeavour, sacrifice, passion are things that an athlete has to show if he wants to be a model for the others. There are no shortcuts.
The Inter Collegiate Trophy was born in the 1998-1999 academic year thanks to the peculiar network of student residences (namely, “Collegi universitari”) that makes Pavia unique.

This competition was created by grouping existing tournaments and, during the years, it has been renewed and it has involved more and more students. Every year, the men’s and the women’s residences which got the best results receive the Trophy.

This prize is given to the student residence which earned the highest score in team cross country running, in the volleyball, basketball, football and beach volley tournaments and in the dragon boat race. All them are team sports activities, in that the real winner is competition intended as the expression of the community, instead of individual performance.

**WOMEN’S ROLL OF HONOUR**

11 Collegio Nuovo
3 Collegio Castiglioni
2 Collegio Golgi
1 Collegio S. Caterina
1 Collegio Cardano
1 Collegio Ghislieri

**MEN’S ROLL OF HONOUR**

10 Collegio Fraccaro
3 Collegio Don Bosco
2 Collegio Cardano
2 Collegio Golgi
1 Collegio Borromeo
1 Collegio Spallanzani
1 Collegio S. Agostino
CUS Pavia offers a variety of sports activities for people with disabilities. Sports promote social inclusion and encourage integration by combining physical and recreational activity, thus leading to health, longevity, mind and body well-being and bodily self-awareness. CUS Pavia has two different programmes that are accessible to non-university students as well.

The former, named “Zudda Rizza”, is an athletics course. “Zudda Rizza” in Sardinian language means “goose pimples”: this name has been chosen by the Project Manager Francesco De Cortes in order to put the stress on the feelings sports arouse. It is addressed to individuals with sensory, motor, intellectual and relational disabilities, blindness and hypovision. It includes running over various distances, long jump and shot put. This initiative has also been developed in cooperation with the Centre of Child Neuro-Ophthalmology of the National Neurological Institute “Casimiro Mondino” of Pavia.

The latter programme, “Abili si diventa” (lit. “Capable are made”), has been planned thanks to the collaboration between LAMA and S.A.I.S.D. It is addressed to university students with disabilities who aim at improving their own autonomy.

Furthermore, CUS Pavia and S.A.I.S.D. can support in the Paralympic competition those athletes who want to practise athletics, canoeing, fencing and archery. As far as archery is concerned, we must mention Gabriele Ferrandi, who placed ninth in the London 2012 Paralympic Games.
PRACTISING SPORT @ UNIPV
The Laboratory of Adapted Motor Activity ("Laboratorio di Attività Motoria Adattata", LAMA) of the University of Pavia is a research centre of the Department of Public Health, Experimental and Forensics Medicine. It mainly aims at promoting a healthy lifestyle through physical exercise adapted to cardiometabolic and neurological diseases, cognitive impairment and physical disabilities, posture and myo-articular pathologies.

The LAMA activity includes the assessment of aerobic capacity, strength, flexibility and posture, as well as the arrangement, the encouragement and the training in daily physical activity that users shall practise by themselves later on.

THE LAMA MAIN RESEARCH AREAS ARE:

- the examination of the wearable devices suitable for physical activity in order to evaluate the energetic costs;
- the encouragement of healthy lifestyle and of mind and body well-being in individuals with Multiple Sclerosis;
- the study on the effect that physical activity has on neurodevelopmental disorders;
- the study of the psychological and physiological responses to physical exercise;
- the correlation between oxygen consumption values and heart rate during aerobic exercise;
- the study of the hormonal responses during team sports activity;
- the project “Combined physical activity for patients with Multiple Sclerosis” ("Attività fisica combinata per pazienti con Sclerosi Multipla").

This project aims at improving the patients’ physical and functional capacity which is impaired by the disease by means of a tailor-made workout combining strength exercises with aerobic ones.
During the 1999-2000 academic year the Service for the Assistance and Integration of the Disabled Students (“Servizio di Assistenza e Integrazione Studenti Disabili”, S.A.I.S.D.) was created. It offers reception, assistance and integration services and it plans initiatives aiming at involving students with disabilities in the university life. The S.A.I.S.D. activity promotes participation in classes and in laboratories, as well as access to libraries and to all the university’s facilities.

Assistance to students with disabilities implies a reception service which is individualised and a tailored programme in order to identify and enhance individual skills and abilities.

S.A.I.S.D. operates on various levels: it helps students choose their under- or postgraduate programmes, it gives them support and endows them with assistive technology. Furthermore, students are accompanied to the university buildings, they have customised exams, they receive assistance in dealing with bureaucratic procedures. Finally, after the completion of their studies they are supported in their placement in the work environment in cooperation with the Student Orientation Centre (“Centro di Orientamento Universitario”).

In addition to this, S.A.I.S.D. collaborates with EDiSU, whose student residences offer lodging to students with disabilities by reserving a number of accommodations every year.

“Abili si diventa” (lit. “Capable are made”) is a project conceived and carried out by S.A.I.S.D. together with LAMA and CUS Pavia. It is addressed to people with disabilities who intend to practise physical activity.