

OPINION

**Created by Prof. Veselin Zhelyazkov Margaritov, PhD,
according to the materials provided by
Assoc. Prof. Antonio Dachkov Antonov PhD.,
presented for his participation in the contest for the academic position of
‘professor’ in the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski " in the field of
higher education 7. Healthcare and sports, professional field 7.6. Sport,
specialty "Sports (Field Hockey)"
for the needs of the Football and Tennis department.**

In the contest for the position of ‘professor’, announced in SG issue from No. 96- 19.11.2021, the only candidate is Assoc. Prof. Antonion Antonov, PhD., lecturer in the Department of Football and Sports at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski". He has submitted all necessary documents and scientometric data within the established deadline according to the requirements by the ZRASRB as well as the regulations for the development of the academic staff in NSA "Vasil Levski ".

Biographical data about the candidate:

Assoc. Prof. Antonio Antono, PhD. was born on the 24th of September 1967 in Slavovitsa - a village in the province of Pleven. He graduated from the Higher Institute of Physical Education and Sport "Georgi Dimitrov" (currently NSA "Vasil Levski ") in 1992 with a qualification for physical education teacher and athletics coach. Since 1999 he has been teaching the theory and methodology of sports training in Field Hockey. Moreover, in 2006 he acquired an ESD (Educational and Scientific Degree) "Doctor", and one year after, the academic position of "Associate Professor". He has been the Executive Director of the BHF (Bulgarian Hockey Federation) since 2000 and also an honoured coach at the BHF (2001). Furthermore, he was also a deputy dean of the Coaching Faculty (now the Faculty of Sports) in NSA "Vasil Levski" from 2012 to 2016. Also, from 1997 to 2000, and from 2021 until now he is the head coach of BHF.

Assoc. Prof. Antonio Dachkov Antonov, PhD. is a winner of several prestigious awards from the International Hockey Federation (Etien Glichitch Medal, 2010) and the European Hockey Federation (Diploma of Merit, 2017) for his merits and contributions for the development of field hockey in Europe and the rest of the globe.

Assoc. Prof. Antonio Antono, PhD. is a highly motivated, organised and responsible individual who is a well-known lecturer and a true professional in his field. My positive assessment of the scientifically applied activity of the candidate is a result of the performed analysis of his contributions in both theoretical and practical plan.

His participation in the contest is supported by a sufficient quantity and quality of scientific work. This is proved by the following objective indicators:

Assoc. Prof. Antonio Antono, PhD. presented a monograph - 1, "History of Hockey", related to the history of the sport and its development. The monographic work has a volume of 263 pages, 24 cited sources, archives(3), printed publications (12), photo archives (5) as well as electronic sources (19). The structure consists of eight chapters in which the author consistently traces, analyses and summarises the prerequisites for the emergence and development of field hockey both in global and national aspect - from its beginning here in Bulgaria to its present days. The achievements from the development of the sport have been researched as well as the sport's organisations who have contributed to the popularisation and promotion of field hockey. What is more, NSA "Vasil Levski" has been also mentioned due to its crucial contribution for the advancement of field hockey as an Olympic sport in Bulgaria at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century.

The results obtained from both the analysis and summaries carry a great scientific value according to the evolution of the sport today. The main focus of the study are both the developments and achievements after the emergence of "modern hockey".

Publications in scientific journals: 15 pcs.

- ✓ publications in referenced and indexed journals displayed in worldwide databases - 3 independent and 2 co-authored;
- ✓ publications presented in non-referenced journals with scientific review - 4 independent and 6 co-authored.

The aforementioned articles present an in-depth analysis of education methods for children between 10 - 12 years of age who are actively training field hockey, as well as the successful implementation of normative systems for control and evaluation of their physical preparation.

I am positively stating that the conducted research on "*Field Hockey in the kindergarten - opportunities, perspective and challenges*" focuses on the formation of appropriate attitude towards the sport and the ability of children to effectively develop their motor skills. Their health would also be improved considering the fact that they actively engage in various physical activities. Nevertheless, such topics have been highly relevant throughout the past several years.

That said, there are 31 citations from which 17 are referenced in indexed journals included in international databases, 1 in a monograph and 13 in journals included in non-referenced periodicals with scientific review. The candidate is a co-author of 2 text books related to the preparation of students specialising in "Field hockey", as well as an author of 2 additional university handbooks. By using the "Terminological Dictionary of Hockey", he defines the meaning of specific sport terms in the area of field hockey and promotes their usage in bulgarian language between field hockey coaches around the country.

Assoc. Prof. Antonio Dachkov Antonov, PhD. is an established university lecturer with more than 27 years of experience. He is a proven sports specialist with high professional competence, experience and innovative mindset.

Additionally, he has also contributed to the development of several study programs not only for students of NSA “Vasil Levski” but also for field hockey specialists for EQD(Educational Qualification Degree) “Bachelor” and “Masters”, FES (Freely Elective Subject) program - field hockey for non-professionals. Lastly, he has also contributed to the education of personnel responsible for the administrative roles during domestic field hockey tournaments.

Moreover, he is the research supervisor of 3 students who successfully defended their doctoral degree as well as 21 other graduates. As a manager and coach, Antonio Antonov has won numerous awards from both national and international sports competitions.

The scientific materials prepared by the candidate are not only highly relevant and innovative but also have a scientific significance. The main contributions presented in his work are related to:

1. A developed and successfully implemented in practice experimental methodology for field hockey education for adolescents with the use of the variable and game method.
2. An in-depth analysis of the educational efficiency of children between the ages of 10 - 12 who are actively practising field hockey with the use of successfully implemented normative systems for control and evaluation of their physical preparation.
3. A properly developed standard regulating the activity of the hockey system in Bulgaria as well as a successful implementation in the practice systems of games and various forms of mini-hockey.
4. An established effectiveness of the sports preparation in hockey with the use of properly analysed technical and management models.

In conclusion, after an extended analysis of all scientific work and its meaning presented by the candidate himself, I find it reasonable to provide my positive feedback and propose to the Scientific Jury to award the academic position of ‘professor’ to Antonio Dachkov Antonov from the National Sports academy “Vasil Levski” in the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and sports, professional field 7.6. Sport, speciality “Sport (Field Hockey)”.

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Plovdiv

Opinion prepared by :.....
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