



Surety International

Integrity, Intelligence, Inclusiveness

Interview Sporting Security - Global

The USA's Dave Kelsheimer is an internationally recognised swimming coach, enjoying a successful career coaching swimmers at World Championships, Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games and Pan American Games.

Dave is regarded as a 'coaching visionary' in some circles and has enjoyed previous outstanding success as the Cayman Islands National Coach, where he developed age group athletes into Olympic qualifiers. Dave is currently based in Melbourne, Australia where he directs the coaching program for one of the state's top Clubs. Dave is no stranger to team travel and regularly travels the world with teams of athletes for the purpose of international training and competition.

Q. In recent times we have seen an increased need for appropriate risk management and security awareness in relation to international sport. How do you believe this is best managed by national authorities?

A. Thoroughly though with discretion. I have been to major games in South America, Venezuela, El Salvador, and

Dominican Republic where soldiers surrounded you to, from, and at every venue with massive rifles. Escorts were also in civilian clothes with pistols stuffed into their pants. On top of that you had separate security for any "dignitaries." I think I was more worried about being shot from either a 19 year old conscript or a nervous body guard than by a terrorist. Manchester, Athens, even KL were much more discrete.

Q. When a coach on international teams, and interested in the needs of athletes, how do you factor in security planning without compromise to training schedules and programs?

A. On two occasions we decided to train at the Games Village as opposed to the competition venue due to rioting. Most places have more than enough training venues, it is more a desire to avoid athletes feeling isolated and not being able to enjoy being at a games because they are not allowed out of the village.



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Q. Obviously different approaches are used by different nations in terms of security. What are your thoughts on a Caribbean nation approach to that of the USA?

A. Fortunately, major event security is covered by the competition organising committee. Unfortunately many nations have Olympic Committees whose primary objective is the big wine and dine so any additional security is left to chance. They love medals but seem to love the 4 star-treatment more. In Cayman, we have had to rely on contacts and goodwill for most games. In Moscow, the Dart foundation gave us guides and support. In Athens, as a British colony, the British Olympic Committee with the OK of Bill Sweetenham allowed us to train with them on Cyprus. Apparently this was a good thing given the unrest just a few kilometres away on the Turkish border.

Q. Although major event security may be covered by the competition organising committee, many teams undertake training and staging camps in the lead up to the major events. How is security managed at these events?

A. In depends on the location, the Brits had additional security for both Com Games training venues in Manchester as hosts and at the pre-games training in Cyprus for their own team and us.

Q. In what circumstances would you see it as advantage for a national team to have access to a dedicated security risk management resource?

A. Any time there is a specific risk- for example, your country is the most hated of the moment. I remember in Athens there were two gentlemen with waist packs who were accredited as coaches-US Embassy who followed Michael Phelps around the entire games. These guys at one point ordered the US team off a bus going back to the games village - "Immediately." We also got off!

The next year I organized the Australian team's training camp in Orlando. They had contracted a former police officer to consult but as the city of Orlando had organized a detective and uniform escorts it was unnecessary.

Q. Given your extensive involvement in international travel with teams that range from national representatives down to junior club members, how does your approach differ in ensuring that safety and security are managed and controlled?

A. On a very short leash when travelling with juniors-no one out of sight. No-one out of pairs. National team members are usually very easy outbound but can be a handful on the return. A sign in and sign out procedure is a good idea with adult athletes.



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Q. What are the pros and cons of wearing team uniform with respect to international travel?

A. It can make you a target. The US team travels in civilian clothes. With club teams, it's pretty useful for crowd control.

Q. What are your thoughts and recommendations on how sporting authorities can better manage security without compromising the athletes?

A. Be informed. Be slightly overly cautious but proportional to where you are. Safe is never in conflict with performance. Be realistic. I refused to bring 2 teams to games in Columbia in the late 90's. Cali may be lovely but no thanks. Jamaica has enough atmosphere for me and the other comp in San Fran involves so much less effort.