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Science Meets Sport

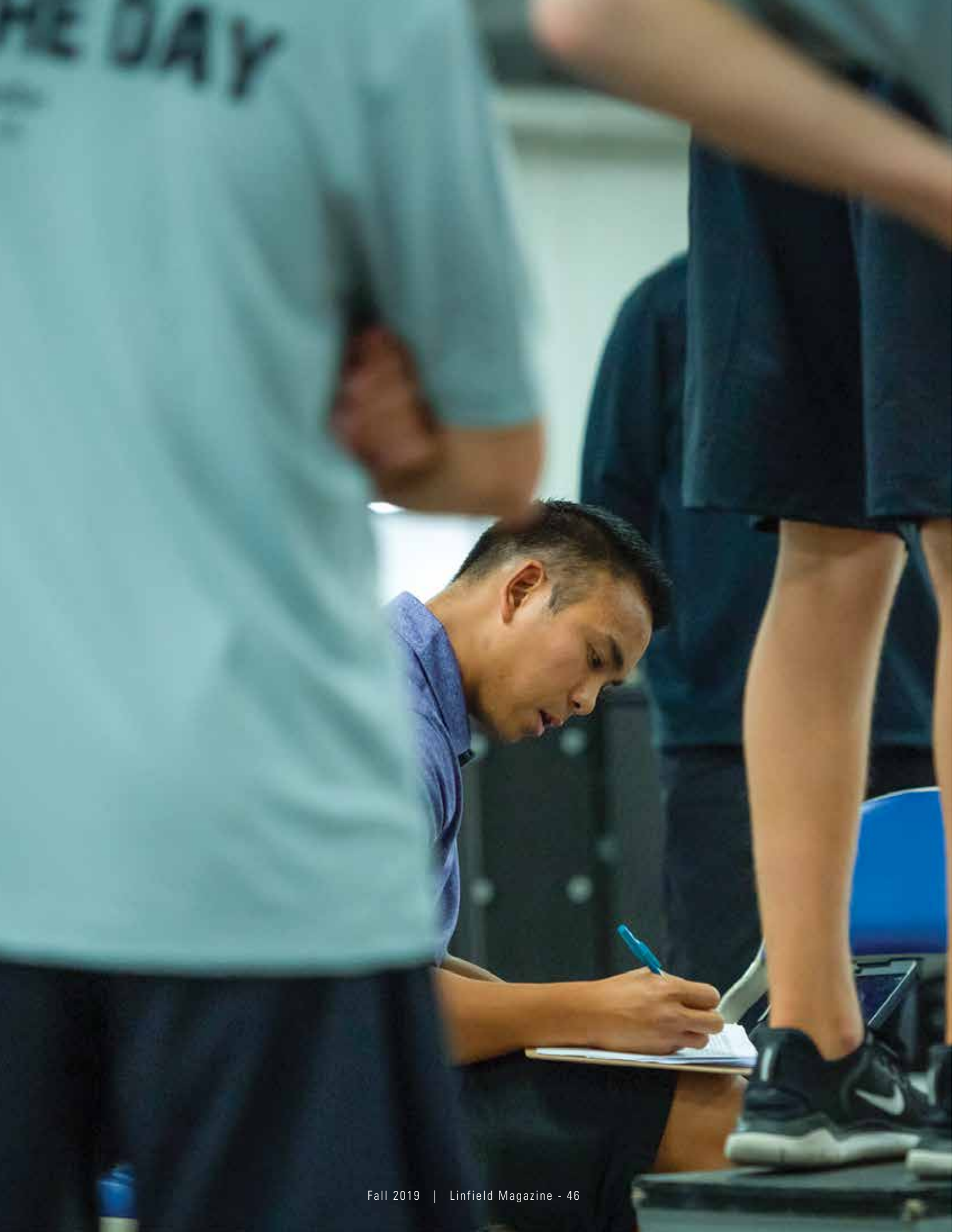
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THE DAY

Science meets sport

In the evolving world of sports, Cisco Reyes uses spreadsheets and metrics to maximize athletic potential. His work with kinesiology and body movement is sought after by professional athletic organizations across the region.

Deep in the basement of Portland's Veterans Memorial Coliseum, dozens of athletes huddle around a wooden box, nervously swaying back and forth awaiting their turn to impress a scout. The dull, concrete room – just steps from the glitz and grandeur of the Portland Winterhawks' arena – is a testing ground for hockey players vying for an opportunity to wear the Winterhawks' red and black. Intensity hangs in the air. And at the center of it all is Cisco Reyes.

Reyes, associate professor of health and human performance at Linfield, blends strength and conditioning with data analytics. On this training day, he administers a reactive strength test. Athletes jump from a box to the ground and straight back up to the box while lasers wired to an iPad record ground contact time and vertical jump height. The test offers a deeper understanding of an athlete's explosiveness compared to traditional tests.

"Cisco's assistance during these training camps is helpful because we are trying to effectively evaluate so many athletes in such a short amount of time," says Rich Campbell, Portland Winterhawks athletic trainer and strength and conditioning coach.

Reyes has also collaborated with the Portland Trail Blazers, Seattle Seahawks, Portland Timbers and Portland Thorns. He owns a sports performance gym in Tigard called RISE (Reyes Integrated Sports Enhancement), coaches youth softball and is the Oregon director of the National Strength and Conditioning Association. He uses all these roles to build connections for Linfield students.

"When people hear 'strength and conditioning,' they often think of lifting weights, running on the track or hopping on the elliptical," Reyes says. "But there is another avenue of strength and conditioning called sports science."

Sports science, the practice of using data analytics to improve performance, was popularized in mainstream media

by the book (and later film) *Moneyball*, by Michael Lewis. It is based on the true story of baseball general manager Billy Beane, who ignored conventional wisdom and implemented a technical, metrics-based approach that made his team competitive despite a small budget.

With a master's degree in physical education and a doctorate in education (sports science emphasis) from the University of Idaho, Reyes uses statistical analyses to offer training and rehabilitation advice based on what the numbers are saying and how the athlete feels.

Yasmeen Ramos '19 assisted Reyes at a Winterhawks summer training camp in 2018. She sat among professional athletic trainers and scouts as they made roster decisions for the upcoming season.

"I was so excited to be able to help out," says Ramos, who studied exercise science. "The field is ever growing and being a part of something like this gave me, as an undergrad, the opportunity to see that. Out-of-the-classroom experiences like these really opened my eyes to various professional opportunities."

Reyes says one of his goals is to "set students up to be transformational leaders in the field. I really try to get students off campus and out doing things. I am trying to push them out of their comfort zones, because that is where they are going to grow and experience amazing things."

Those sort of connections are among the reasons many Linfield faculty members maintain connections and work actively outside academia, says Jackson Miller, dean of faculty.

"When faculty form community partnerships, it not only enhances their teaching, but it also opens up opportunities for students who are working with them," he says. "It's a huge net positive when faculty make those sorts of connections."

– Liam Pickhardt '20

In addition to working with the Portland Winterhawks hockey team, Cisco Reyes, associate professor of health and human performance at Linfield, has collaborated with other top-tier athletic organizations in the Pacific Northwest. His work helps him stay current in a rapidly changing industry, and enhance the classroom experience for his students.