

Talking Sport & Tech

Baz Moffat, Co-Founder, The Well HQ

Episode Transcript



- Alex Zurita: Hey, everyone. Welcome to this episode of the Talking Sport & Tech podcast, this week brought to you by me, Alex Zurita.
- Milly Pelmore: And me, Milly Pelmore. I'm really excited about today's guest and here's a sneak peek about what we've got in store.
- Baz Moffat: And they were like, "Oh, thank you. You have now given me permission and you've given me a space where it's okay to learn about topics that if I'd not come to this, I'd have been seen as weird or inappropriate," because it's private, isn't it? You'd be like, "How do I talk to them about their sports bra?"
- Milly Pelmore: So let's get into today's episode.
- Alex Zurita: What an episode. So yes, we have today Baz who's a former medal-winning GB rower and the Co-Founder of The Well HQ. Baz is hugely passionate about working with women to achieve their fitness goals and understand more about their body for new mothers to early athletes. The Well HQ was founded with the intention of bridging the knowledge gap about women's biology, physiology, psychology and ultimately help them embrace their full potential.
- Milly Pelmore: Baz, it's great to have you on the podcast today and thanks for being with us.
- Alex Zurita: Thank you very much for having me.
- Milly Pelmore: We start every episode of the podcast by asking one question. We know that you were an elite athlete, so you don't have to choose that sport as your answer, but if you could go back and be an elite athlete or a professional sports person in any sport at all, what would it be?
- Baz Moffat: So I was thinking about this question and I think for me, it would be something that I'm not particularly qualified to do in terms of the fact that I'm six foot. But I just love that feeling of flying and that feeling of being in the air. So it would be gymnastics or snowboarding or skateboarding where you take off and fly. And I always loved it as a child, but then I just grew massive and so I didn't really take off and fly. But that's what I would be, somewhere where you have that feeling of being in the air.
- Milly Pelmore: I absolutely love that. It's got me goosebumps. So you did gymnastics as a child, but stopped when you grew.
- Baz Moffat: In the garden a lot, handstands against the wall, practicing my cartwheels and my walkovers. I just adored it.
- Milly Pelmore: And would you give it a go now as a six foot adult?



Baz Moffat: I think I believe I am physically very capable. When you actually try and do it, it's a whole different ballgame, isn't it? When you're a little bit older and you've got a bigger body and you've had children, yeah.

Milly Pelmore: I think something like snowboarding where they do all of these incredible things, to learn that as an adult, I can't imagine how to even start.

Baz Moffat: They look amazing, don't they? It looks so effortless. And that's the feeling that I would love to have.

Milly Pelmore: Brilliant.

Alex Zurita: I did a little bit of reading, I'm fascinated by that. The undertone within all of that is a challenge, right? There is like, "I want to do something that I almost feel like is a little bit out there." And I read at four-years-old, there's a story of six lifeguards around a pool on red alert, I think the word is, because you're about to do a length. I mean I've got two girls and they're just starting that journey of learning and it's a life skill, right? But talk me through that. I'm interested because there's the undertone around just wanting to really challenge yourself.

Baz Moffat: So that story, my granny taught me how to swim and she used to give me a penny a stroke, and I was very motivated by money from a very young age. But then by the time I got to a width, she changed the deal and it's like, "Okay, I'm not counting the strokes anymore. If you do a length, you get a pound." And I was like, "A pound, that is extraordinary. That's so much money." And so I didn't care how I got to the end of that pool, I was going to get to the end of that pool and it was just inside me. It's just what happened. And I think that I've always had that and I've always said, "Oh, I'm going to do this," and worked out a way to do it.

Alex Zurita: Do you feel thinking about transitioning from an elite athlete? So again at 22, you made the team. Then you are in world championships and training in and around that environment. Is that something a skill or a part of you that you feel supported you getting into that? You got into rowing at a later stage too, right? And then I'm always then fascinated on what happens thereafter. So do you start thinking about, Look, my lifespan as an elite athlete is X and I need to think about what happens thereafter? Or is it just one challenge at a time?

Baz Moffat: Yeah, I think it's one challenge at a time. And if I look at the things that I've achieved in life, I've never gone out to achieve that from the start, if that makes sense. So, I've almost got into something and then really got into it and then gone, "Oh, how far can I take this?" And I think that that's with everything that I've done. I don't go in saying, "I want to be an international athlete." I don't go in saying, "I want to get a really good degree. Didn't go in saying, I want to set up an amazing business." And I don't know whether that's giving me, my psychology, not being prepared to go all in at the start and then just saying, oh, we'll just give it a go. So it gives me a way of backing off if it doesn't go right.



Baz Moffat: But it's also, specifically with rowing, I'd got to London as a graduate and just wanted to meet new people. And I thought my international opportunity to be a sports person that ship had sailed. I think athletics, as a child, really wanted desperate to get international representation. And didn't I thought, oh, I'm done. I'm I've got to grow up now, I'm 22. And so I thought, oh, well let's just do sport for fun. Let's see if I can do that. Having never done sport for fun in my life. It's like, let's just see if I can make this fun. And I did, but then I thought, oh, I'm getting quite good at this now, maybe I can do this. And that's when I went for it.

Alex Zurita: And at what stage are you thinking about then transitioning to Baz as a entrepreneur business woman, coach?

Baz Moffat: Yeah, so I was on the team learning my craft, if you like. And then I got onto the full British team at 25. So I've, I essentially had one Olympiad in me because I was only just on the team. It's not like I came in and was a household name. I was hanging onto that last spot. So I knew that I wanted to do a lot more with my life. And I was like, "I've been an international athlete. I've loved it, but I'm kind of done. I need to be done by 30 because I need to set up a career, and all that kind of stuff." And I feel that if I work for myself, I'm in the driving seat. Before I'd started rowing, I had got a graduate job at a massive corporate and I hated every minute, literally every minute of it. From minute one of walking into the building, I was like, "what is this?" And I think that because of that experience of being part of a big organization, I was like, "oh, I need to just do this on my own."

Alex Zurita: And talk me through as opposed to passion behind The Well HQ. So there is obvious, I suppose, reasoning in terms of your experience as a woman, your experience as an elite athlete, your experience of potentially lived experiences around how maybe coaches that support network around you, maybe lack the knowledge to support you more or maybe had it. And maybe you wanted to sort of get a little bit of that into everyone else. So, what is the inspiration behind the business?

Baz Moffat: So after rowing, I went into personal training. And I had a reasonably successful personal training business where I coached people one to one. And I kind of enjoyed it and it was good. And then I went more into pelvic floor coaching and women's health. And again, pretty successful business. I had two really young children, so it was really good to do my PT and be with the children. And it was great. Again, I'd set this goal in mind. I'd said as soon as my youngest gets into reception, I want to be in a place to push the button. I don't what button I'm going to push, but I want to go big with something. And in the meantime, I'm just going to learn my craft and I'm going to get really good at working with people and understanding women and all the issues that they're facing. And so this was kind of like a manifestation.

Baz Moffat: I just had this out in the world that I was going to go big but I didn't have a path. I didn't have a set way that I was going to get there. I was just open to this

happening. And Cooper became three and then he became four and I'm like, "Oh, he's going to be in reception soon. It doesn't take long." And so I was like, right, I just need to start looking around, looking at what's going on. My sort of philosophy with everything is surround yourself with brilliant people. And it doesn't really matter why they're brilliant or what they're brilliant at, but that energy that brilliant people have. Even if you don't feel necessarily in a confident or brilliant space, it just rubs off on you and you'd see what's possible or you get invited to things. Or I just started surrounding myself with people that inspired me. And being open to what potentially I could do.

Baz Moffat: And I thought what I'm doing on one to one? I'm doing the same stuff. Literally every single session I do with anybody is pretty much the same. We need to get this content to a bigger audience and I need a platform away, a business to support me to do this. And that was my individual motivation to get The Well organized and set up.

Alex Zurita: Before a dive into The Well, want to pick up on that aspect of surrounding yourself by great people. And as other guests have said it on the podcast. If you hear a lot of really good leaders, that's the common phrase as well around, don't have any fear that there might be people around you that are not more than you actually, that's a great theme. You might have one or two key expertise that you can really zoom into and then let others thrive in their own environments and their own expertise and pull out their own knowledge and lived experiences. Two questions, the importance of your co-founders. So if I am a listener that is an entrepreneur and maybe looking for co-founders or have a co-founding team. The importance of that surrounding network, but also you are a sibling, a woman, a mother. So how do you balance all of that as well?

Baz Moffat: Yeah, I'm going to answer a third question as well, which you haven't even asked me, but...

Alex Zurita: Go for it.

Baz Moffat: I have always been really comfortable being the worst person in the room, always. And I think I was the worst person in every single boat that I was in, from the novice boat, right up to the GB boat. I was the worst novice, but it didn't stop me. It was, I'm the worst novice, but I'll be the worst person in the third eight and then the second eight and then the first eight, but it never stopped me progressing. And I don't need to be the best person in the situation that I'm in. What I do is I'm really comfortable being around people who are brilliant. Because I'm like, well, I'm going to learn from them and I'm going to use that to springboard to the next level.

Baz Moffat: And I'll just be the worst person at the next level. And I think everything I've done I've had that approach. When it comes to the co-founders of The Well, I knew in a heartbeat. I knew in a heartbeat that they were the ones. So I met Dr. Bella, first of all, who's a NHS GP. And for me it was finding the people that could present, and could hold an audience, and could hold a space talking about

taboo topics, which is nonsense, but they are. What we talk about is to boo topics in a way that whoever was in that room felt comfortable. Because what I feel really passionately about, and we all do, is that it'd be very easy for us to be really ranty and shouty and put people on edge, not knowing what we know. And almost criticizing the audiences and the sports and the governing bodies and the coaches and the directors of sport and the teachers for not doing what we know they should be doing. But to find people that can bring in a new concept and then meet people where they're at and take them with you.

Baz Moffat: So I met Dr. Bella first and we started presenting on menopause together. And it was just an absolute no brainer that we were going to work together. And I didn't know at that stage that we were going to have a third person come along, but I was like, oh, this is it. Bella and I can take on menopause and we can do the medical bit and we can do the lifestyle bit and we can work collectively and provide everybody with this holistic offer. And that worked really well. And then I read about Emma in a Telegraph article and I was like, "Oh, I need to work with her." She's mentioning pelvic floor. I'm sure she's brilliant, but I'm pretty sure she's not brilliant at that. And I know that I can help her get better. And also she's an absolute expert and pioneering in the area of menstrual cycles and menstrual health.

Baz Moffat: And I don't do that. And I'm like, "Oh, we've got Bella on menopause. We've got Emma on puberty. We've got me in the middle." This is the dream team. So I connected with her and I said, "Right, let's put on a menstrual cycle workshop in Putney and let's just see how it goes." And I had no clue at this stage if she was good or not good, but I had room full. I had about 80, a hundred people in this room waiting to listen to her. And I've never been so nervous. I was like, oh my goodness, how is this going to go? And as soon as she opened her mouth, honestly, I cried. I was like, "We've got it. We've got the team." She was so good at what she was doing. And I've presented with many people, and I've presented with people that you almost have to carry.

Baz Moffat: Like they're really knowledgeable. Don't get me wrong. They know everything, but they just can't hold a room. And I was like, this is it. We've got the gig. And so I said to them, I said, "Right, I've got a plan. Again, I don't really know what it's fully going to look like, but us three, we've got something special here." Because we've got the credibility from their academic backgrounds. Emma's PhD and work in academia, and with the Olympic and Paralympic teams. Bella's been in the NHS for 20 years working literally on the front line as an NHS GP. And as me with my background in elite sport, I was like, "this is a brilliant combination." And we all have absolutely the same values. We have totally different life experiences, but our values are, we need to educate women. And we're so genuine about that. And no one's going to change that.

Baz Moffat: So yeah, I think having those co-founders, and I always feel that with everything that you do, if things happen easily, and I don't mean easily by like sat at home doing nothing. But when you start putting the wheels in motion, if things start to happen easily, it's the right thing to do. So those co-founders were absolutely

key. And the, how do I manage multiple roles? It's not easy, is it? It's not easy. I think because I came into this in my early forties. So it was really important to me not to be somebody that was always working. Right. So I've got two young boys. I love being a mom, but I really love working too. And if I wasn't working, I'd be a really rubbish mom. But when I'm with them, I genuinely want to be with them. And it's taken me a while to work out that balance and to work out...

Baz Moffat: So, if I'm working in town, it's like, when I arrive home at 5:00, 5:30, one step into the house, I am mum. I'm not like, "oh, I actually just needed to send this email or I need to check on something." I'm in it and on it and all them. And that's taken a while to work out that balance and work everything out. And I've just been on holiday with the boys. We've all been down to Cornwall and we had a brilliant time, but I didn't check my emails once. And I'm like what we're dealing with is not life or death. Things can wait. And I'm really strong on that. I don't want to expect people who work for me and with me to have a certain lifestyle and then me to be totally different. I am quite good at compartmentalizing stuff. And I'm quite good at having time off and not multitasking.

Milly Pelmore: It's coming across quite strongly that you found those boundaries between work and home life. In the startup sector, it can be glamorized, the hustle. And there are people at opposite end of the spectrum. Some people would say work hard, graft hard. That's the only way you're going to achieve it. And there are others that perhaps go, my family is really important and I'm going to switch off the minute I walk through the door. What advice would you give to people setting up something about how to find out where their balance is. And I guess it is all very individual. Some people they might be in a very different life situation. Therefore, love the 3:00 AM working and want to work on the beach. But what advice would you give?

Baz Moffat: Everyone is really, really different. And I think that if the hustle is dragging you down and it's dragging your family down or whoever you are caring for are looking after and no money's coming in. And I think you've got to be really realistic. And I think that's what we do really well. So the three of us are brilliant at making decisions. We make decisions really quickly. People are amazed when they're like, "Oh my God, you make decisions really quickly." And we and I are... We're quite good at just pausing and taking a step back and going realistically, where are we? How are things going? Sometimes you really are in it, and you are in a bad place. And that's kind of okay. And this next couple of weeks is going to be bloom and tough, but that's just got to be a stage that cannot be the chronic situation.

Baz Moffat: I don't want my chronic situation to be all guns blazing. I want our normal to be totally manageable, to have a life, to be able to have time for myself, to care for myself and do physical activity and enjoy life. And when you are leading a business or you are in the world of sport, you have to have passion and you have to love things. And I've got quite a good radar of myself. And if I start finding people really annoying. Or I start finding situations, which should be

brilliant, boring, I'm like, the balance is off. And it's kind of on me to sort that out. Sometimes that takes a long time to sort out, but it is on me to sort out. Because if you are leading something or you are doing pioneering work in a sector, you've got to have the energy to drive it forward.

Baz Moffat: And you can't fake that sustainably. You can fake it for a bit. Don't get me wrong. I've got a great game face. And before Christmas, my game face had gone. I was busted. I was so tired and I couldn't even fake when I was seeing people that I didn't really want to meet up with. I was like, oh my God, my game base has disappeared. And I may well get back into that place at some points because you will, but you've got to recognize that's the place you're in. And you've kind of got to sort yourself out.

Milly Pelmore: It's coming across strongly from you and from our other guests, the importance of liking what you do and having that passion and energy. Particularly, whether it's a startup or much bigger organization, when you are leading it. Obviously not everybody in is in a position to be able to follow their passion and find something that they love. But particularly in the startup world, when you do have to find that balance yourself and you are on your own or with your co-founders. It's really important that you really believe in what you are doing. And in your case, it's you said taboo, one day it won't be taboo and that's what you are aiming for. But it's really important that you really strongly believe and have that energy to drive what you are doing.

Baz Moffat: Absolutely. What we're doing is no one's doing it. So we've a hundred percent got to believe that this is the right thing to do. Because, the first question we get from people that think this is probably not important, is "Well, who's doing it?" We're like, "Nobody". We're like, "Can you give us an example of where this has worked really, really well?" We're like, "No", they say, "Oh well, but we're a really successful sport. We get this much money. We've got this much sponsorship. We've got this many gold medals, or we were top of the league. Why do we need to start looking at the stuff that you are talking about?" And we honestly spent the first six months having conversations over and over and over again with people that you thought would lap up what we'd come to the market or the sector with going, oh, honestly, I think we're all right.

Baz Moffat: I think we're okay. Or how about we just test it. So come in and give us everything for free. And then we'll just see what the interest is. That was a real shock, because I think that when you believe in something so passionately, you kind of assume that everyone else will, and they don't. And so you're having these really basic conversations and it's grind you down. And I think that's when you rely on your team. And you rely on each other to share those frustrations and say, "Oh my God, you cannot believe the conversation I've just had. What was that about?" You wallow in it for a bit, but then you just step back up. And then there'll be a shining light will come through, and a crack will open on a door and you'll be like, right, we're in, we've got this. And you move forward that way.

Baz Moffat: But we know we are doing the right thing. And we know we're a couple of years ahead of the curve. We generally do. And in a couple of years, time, the work that we're doing in female health, it will just be normal. And I always compare it to where mental health was five years ago. People would think twice about mentioning their depression or their anxiety or their mental health issues at work. But now it's really normal. It's really normal for sports people. It's really normal for the workplace to provide counseling and therapy and support and have the mental health first aiders, but that's taken time. Hasn't it? And women's health is where mental health was.

Milly Pelmore: So what's the biggest challenge at the moment with the world? We're on the right path as a sector. As a sport and physical activity sector. From the grassroots to the elite level, being able to talk about things like menstrual cycle, menopause, pelvic floor health. What's one of the biggest challenges you are going through. There's clearly a big education piece around what you are doing.

Baz Moffat: The big challenge is what I've just said. If I was going to be rude and say what I thought the biggest challenge is the patriarchy. And it's... The system is just designed by men and the system is dominated by men. So we can have these brilliant conversations lower down the tree, but the higher up it gets up the tree, they go, oh no, we're all right. To we honestly have to spend that much money. Can we not just do this instead? And why are we having to do this? Now? We've got women doing our sport. So that's a cheap jab. Okay. So if I said, what's the biggest challenge? I think it's women are woefully uneducated about their body. So everyone's uneducated. Men are uneducated about women. And we don't know how to start incorporating the content that we're covering into sport.

Baz Moffat: Because essentially women have been put into male systems. And so the system needs to fundamentally change and that's a much bigger gig than getting us in to do a one hour webinar. And I think that many people are like, oh, just come in and talk about everything just for one hour. And then they feel they've ticked the box. But again, if you look at that mental health piece, people are really starting to realize how holistic the offer has to be. And how it's going to take time to integrate it. So we are doing brilliant work with England netball. And we're working with them for at least two years, and we're working across the whole organization and it's an absolutely massive partnership and they get it. And they get how hard it's going to be, how they've got to involve all their volunteers, all their coaches, all their clubs and schools and all their different programs. And they know it's going to take ages to put this together.

Baz Moffat: To get their head around that is quite big. And I think England netball are, and there are other people doing bits and bats, but I think it's very easy to think there's an off the shelf solution for it.

Milly Pelmore: We talk a lot about startups wanting to work at pace, and do things quickly. And the sector traditionally, perhaps doesn't work like that. But actually through more and more conversations. We are understanding that you do have to meet

in the middle as a startup, as an entrepreneur, you have to understand that the sector doesn't move that quickly. And actually things don't change overnight. What you are talking about as a whole behavior change. It's a whole system change and that's not going to happen overnight. So whilst perhaps we would like the sector to be receptive, to taking risks and moving at speed. Actually, there is a balance between understanding it's not going to happen overnight. And it is a long term plan.

Baz Moffat: It is a long term plan. And I think I'm kind of okay with that. And I think that there's so much work to do. And that as entrepreneurs and new businesses, people always like to give you advice and say, "Oh, have you heard of this? And have you talked to this person and have you read this article?" But actually, we just put our energy where the interest is. So even if we haven't talked to the most important person in a particular charity, if they don't want to talk to us, then we're not going to waste our time talking to them. So, you go where the energy is and you do a blooming, brilliant job with whatever you are doing and you make that happen. And I think we just gather momentum and we just don't keep going if someone's keeps shutting the door in our face. We're like, "Okay, we're done, when you're ready, you come back."

Milly Pelmore: I love that going where the energy is. I'm going to take that one.

Alex Zurita: Yes. Finding early adopters, right. Is that curve of you want to find the organizations that are like, "I get it, I see it." It's about then two years of work because this is not going to be over night, all of a sudden, every coach volunteer environment that a woman is within, workplace, elite sport, grassroots sport is going to change. Right. But yeah, it's about in essence, finding early adopters. And I suppose if you're a listener that is an entrepreneur, spend the energy where you are getting that energy back. Bring the other ones on the journey, or keep the other ones coming on that journey. So they can always hopefully progress in that adoption curve. And then actually, if you're someone working in the sector really embrace it. This is I think the analogy to mental health. It's a really good crossover that whether we'd like you or not, and for the right reason, this is coming and we've got to be addressed, right.

Alex Zurita: I worked in women's football for a number of years. And I remember I can see their angle from a coach's point of view being me and an assistant coach, we got 15 under 17 players that we are trying to best prepare for a game, for a progression into a first in environment or international football. And whether you like it or not, this is a good conversation to be having. I want to touch on the role of technology. So, obviously what you have as co-founders is that human capital, is your experience, is your knowledge, whether it is professionally, academically in a elite level environment. COVID has helped the adoption of tech. And although participation levels and progress we were making had been stalled. Anecdotally, there is a piece that women in particular were quite receptive to using tech, to stay active, start a physical activity journey, the comfort of being active within your own home and so on.

Alex Zurita: So, what is your take on maybe the role that tech could have from an scalability point of view, right? Because there's three of you and we want this thing to lead every govern body, every grocery sport, every coach. So have you got any views around where could that be helping? And again, if you're an entrepreneur with a tech product and you got a highly engaged audience that are female,. What can you be doing in that space? But actually if you are not, then potentially this is something that you can create or bring a unique angle to your product to help get ahead of others.

Baz Moffat: Yeah. So I think it's probably two points there. So in terms of The Well, and its use of technology, that's our next level. And when we set up our business and we had our business plan and we went out for investment, we kind of thought it might work this way. It hasn't worked the way we predicted, in any way. And actually what we have now is an absolutely brilliant consultancy business, which relies on Emma, Bella, and I going out, working with corporates and schools and governing bodies and supporting them in the work that we are doing. That is not scalable. It is not. And we are at capacity right now, anyway. So we are now looking for that next level of investment. And that's what we're working towards over the next few months. And it's getting that so that we can become scalable. So that when people go to Sport England for their funding and are saying, "Oh, we want to work with The Well", they're like, well actually we need you to be scalable.

Baz Moffat: Because we can't work with all these governing bodies because even though every single thing we say is more or less the same. We do the same chat about the menstrual cycle. Triathlon, want it about triathlon. Football want it about football. Weightlifting want it about weightlifting. And it's subtle, subtle changes. But unless you get that communication right, it will not land with those groups. And so we are now putting together this investment deck to make sure that we can be scalable and it will be, and it has to be digital. And I don't think we were expecting to get to this place so soon. I think we were going, oh, we'll just carry on doing all the... Us doing all the content and providing all that. But it's outgrown us very quickly. I think in terms of the use of tech in the physical activity market, especially with women, I think it's brilliant, but it's not it.

Baz Moffat: So there's lots of menstrual cycle trackers out there. There's lots of training around your menstrual cycle apps. There's things with nutrition and all that kind of stuff. And what we know is that women have to get to know their bodies. And I think that if you are reliant on even just on a step counter, like, oh, have I done my step today. But is that figure, whatever figure you've put in your head, whatever figure your watch or your phone is telling you, does that actually work for you? And it's that piece that I feel the human element comes in. So I think that all the advances in technology are fabulous, but they have to be supported with education about what we call body literacy, so that everyone knows what normal is. And then they also have a really great connection about their energy levels. How likely they are to get injured, what impact their hormones are having on their health.



Baz Moffat: And you don't have to be clever. You genuinely don't have to be clever or know the science behind it. It's just tapping into you and trusting you. And I think that technology can often remove that trust because it's giving you answers. It's giving you solutions and it's therefore taking responsibility away from you. So I think we have to bring back in that human element. So people know when they're hungry, they know when they're full, they know what a good weight is for them. But it's not because so, and so has told them, it's because they know that's how their body works, brilliantly.

Alex Zurita: We often have a conversation at HQ as such around what we do in Sport Tech Hub, I suppose for colleagues in and out of the organization could be perceived as replacing off. And actually it is our view that, and I think reading between the lines that it is our view that technology is an enhancer too, right? The value of that human interaction, the value of going to that sports club, going to a specialist around a certain condition or around a certain query. Lifestyle query, whatever it might be, cannot be replaced or light for life replicated. But it is the ability to tap into, in this instance, I suppose women, at scale at the touch of a button, on demand, as and when they need it. So there is a fine balances, isn't there? Around actually, how can this be a tool or technology be a tool, however, we should eradicate the fear that this is a replacement for.

Baz Moffat: Yeah. And I think for some people they don't necessarily see it as a fear, as a replacement for. They welcome it, because it means, oh, if you've got this tech, it means I don't actually have to have any conversations with these people. Because I can just see when they're on their period, or I can see what symptoms they're having. So I don't have to have the conversation, but the conversation is the golden bit. And that's the bit where you get to understand your athletes and you get to understand the women that you're working with. And I think that the tech can help have those conversations, but it cannot replace them.

Milly Pelmore: I think that what you've said there is key with the work you are doing in this space and wider, is exactly that. It helps the conversation. It kick starts it. I'm an athlete. I do use tracking apps. I also talk to my coach about my menstrual cycle and he uses it as a kick starter for the conversation. What we don't want to do is get to a point, whether it's grassroots or elite level. We don't want to ever get to a point where the patriarchy see that we are sorted in this space now. Because we've got an app and they just need to read the app and go, oh yeah, Milly is at this stage in her cycle, she can do that training. That's not what we're aiming for. So the whole education piece, the conversation is as important as the tech that helps it.

Baz Moffat: Yeah. And it core short kits, which are kind of packed whether they're in toilets or in kit bags where you provide girls and women with sanitary products that they'll need, if they come on their period unexpectedly. It's kind of a classic example. We're talking with a lot of sports people were like, "Oh yeah, we've got sponsorship or we're working with a brand and we're going to get core short kits. We're going to give it to all the girls and we're going to put it in the coach's bags. Great, what education are you doing around that? And they're like, "what

you talking about?" I'm like, well, you can't just give out. If you imagine yourself, coaching your girls and someone suddenly rocked up with a bag of tampons and sanitary pads and gave it to you. You'd be like, what am I supposed to do with ease? The coaches need the education, say a hundred core short kits at however much they are ahead is a very easy budget line to sign off.

Baz Moffat: It's a product it's tangible. It's like, oh, we're going to reach this many girls and it's going to cost this much to replace them. I get it. The education bit is a bit, that is at the moment, seems to be forgotten or just not considered. If you don't educate, if you don't get the education piece in first, it's not sustainable. It's not sustainable and change won't happen. And we're in this for the long term, we have to do it right. We can't just come in with the next app and the solution or the best core short kit. This will get everyone sorted. There isn't a fix because everybody's lived experience of their bodies is totally different. And so for some people... Some people will never come on their period unexpectedly and they'll never come on their period unexpectedly on a football pitch or on a park run. So that's not going to make any difference, but they might have knee pain or their breasts might hurt. Or they might leak sometimes when they're doing double unders or whatever it might be. And so that's why we have to just change the whole system.

Milly Pelmore: And I'm somebody listening to this and I'm that energy within my grassroots organization, my governing body, wherever I might be. And I've got the drive to go against the norm and change it. What do you need from me?

Baz Moffat: That's brilliant. And we get that. And we get a lot of women who are really enthusiastic. Either because they've had a lived experience themselves of some kind of women's health issue or it's happened to their daughters or someone really close to them. And go for it, start trying to make those changes. But you also need to surround yourself. Like I said, at the start, you need to surround yourself with brilliant people that are going to provide you with that energy because honestly it might not land well. And you might go to a committee meeting and you might say, "Oh, I've noticed that not every toilet in the girls loo has a sanitary bin or why are sports bras not on our kit list." Or whatever it might be. And people go, well, we can't afford it. Or it's underwear, no one cares.

Baz Moffat: You're just shut down. And that's why you need to come into our community or follow us or work with us or find like-minded people that keep you going. Because when you are really passionate about something, you always believe everyone else is. But actually when you take one step outside of this world, that I'm in, people don't get it and that can knock you down. And it's really hard to just keep driving stuff all on your own. I think that's why, but women are brilliant at working together. And I really interestingly in this space that we're in, although sport is clearly competitive and clubs are competitive with each other. I do feel that women's health is potentially one of the areas where collaboration will be really key. And I think people are really open to collaboration. And I think that this school can't afford for us just to go in for them.

Baz Moffat: They're like, oh, well, we'll join up with all the local schools and we'll all... And they wouldn't necessarily do that, if they were going to get a masterclass in tennis or a masterclass in football. They'd be like, we want to keep that information to ourselves. But I feel with women's health, we are at such a low place. Really, very few people are doing very much at all. So everyone's starting from basics. We've got so far to go. If we are all doing it on our own, it's going to take ages. It's going to take absolutely ages. Whereas actually, if we start collaborating, sharing good practice, working out what's going well, what the issues are, what are people finding that is working? What if people have tried, but hasn't worked. It will really accelerate the rate at which we progress. And I do feel that women like collaborating and it's almost the thing that's like, oh no, we will share good practice and we will work together. So I think collaboration is absolutely key.

Alex Zurita: I've got one in terms of a follow on to that, which is, what is the role of a man ally? Because obviously you talked in there around women collaborating, obviously lived experiences come into play. Your own as a growing teenager, becoming a woman, you might be a mother. You might have seen relatives going through those phases, menopause, for example, and all the sibling and so on. So, but what is the role I'm interested to know? What can we do? How can we support those conversations? How can we instigate those conversations or trying to create that change?

Baz Moffat: Yeah. So it's fundamental because most girls and women will be coached by men, not all, but most. And father's often a key part of their relationship with their daughter is sport. We want to keep that going. And men generally have had one lesson in year eight on the biology of a female and how not to get her pregnant. And that's kind of it. And that's the only lesson directors of sport in the top girls' private schools in the country will have. And so it's really key that we bring the men up, the men are educated as well. And we put on a webinar at the start of this year and it was our classic webinar, but we just put in brackets at the end for men. Right? So up until that stage, I don't know, 5% of our audience have been men, because we put in brackets for men, please come along, you're welcome. We had 600 men sign up for this webinar. And I was like, why have you not come before? But it's because we needed to invite them. And they were the local coaches of the under twelves rugby team or like a badminton coach.

Baz Moffat: They had people from all over the world and they were really receptive. And they were like, "Oh, thank you. You have now given me permission. And you've given me a space where it's okay to learn about topics that if I'd not come to this, I'd have been seen as weird or inappropriate." Because it's private, isn't it. And it's stuff that you'd be like, how do I talk to them about their sports bras. Especially in this day and age where everyone's so worried about getting things wrong, or being accused of things for us, it's about, we need to create a safe space where men can show up and not be embarrassed about not knowing anything and not being embarrassed about asking silly questions.

Baz Moffat: And that's on us. We have to create that safe space for them. But also, I think men need to be open and they need to say, "Right. I actually, I need to learn this. I need to learn what on earth are these girls going through during puberty? What does it mean? And I need to be able to set, create an environment where I go to them and say, I'm going to get this wrong. I'm not going to have all the language. I'm probably going to be as embarrassed as you are, but I really want to help you because I don't want you to drop out of sport. And I know that for some of you, these things are going to be uncomfortable. I don't want you to stop. So let's try and work this out together." You do not need to be an expert. You don't need to do a degree. It's just being open, isn't it? And being able to have a conversation, but we a hundred percent, the men need to come on this too.

Milly Pelmore: And I think it's broader than just the specific space that we're in. We're talking that The Well is focused on women's health in sport there's work to do at all sorts of levels within sport. But actually the conversation is so much broader than that, which in turn will help the conversations within sport. Take our director of sport at expensive girls school, who's probably had that one lesson in year eight. And that's the only time he's really spoken about periods, except for perhaps an awkward time where he had to buy his teenage girls something in the supermarket. But actually if in the workplace we are more open about it. If schools were more open about it, then men and women will grow up and the topics won't be so taboo. So, hopefully I don't want to put you out of business, but hopefully in 30 years time, stuff like this isn't needed so much because it's just part of our conversation, not just focused on this specific element in sport, it's just there.

Baz Moffat: And I got this lovely message from a swimming coach in Utah. I've got no idea how she's come across us, but she's a coach of an elite group of teenage swimmers in Utah. And she sent me this message on Instagram saying, "I have to share it with you because no one else is going to get it. But I know that you will." And she was at this swimming meet and they'd done their practice in the morning. And they were all having lunch together. It was four or five girls, four or five boys. And one of the girls had a hot water bottle on her tummy. And one of the boys says, you all right? What's going on? And she's like, "Oh yeah, it's my period." And she said it underneath her breath. And he's like, "Sorry, I can't hear you." And he wasn't being annoying. He just couldn't hear her. And she's like, "Oh, it's my period." He's like, "Sorry?" And the friend said, it's her period.

Baz Moffat: And he was like, "Oh, I'm really sorry to hear that. Is there anything that I can do to help?" And the coach was like, "Oh my goodness, this is amazing. This next generation coming through don't care. It's normal." And I think we've got to have faith in that. We've got to have faith in the young people coming through where they're fine. They're fine. They're fine. And we need to sort ourselves out. Don't we?

Alex Zurita: I feel like it's almost like safeguarding in coaching where there's a requirement. Surely we got to start contemplating some of those immediate actions, right?

Because again, going back to my own lived experiences of being a coach. Actually, I've got a duty of care for those 15, 17 players that are under 17. That yes, I'm trying to help them progress into first team environments or potentially international environments. Or just actually just keep playing sport because you enjoy it. You've got a community circle. You've got a social circle that you continue to thrive in. So I almost feel like as a coach I had to do coaching qualifications and DBS checks. And I have to safeguarding training. This is surely got to be part of that conversation at the earliest stage.

Baz Moffat: And you've hit the nail on the heads. It is, but until it becomes a duty of care issue. So our prediction is that in the next couple of years, an athlete is going to sue a coach or sue a governing body because they're on hormone replacement therapy in their twenties, because they haven't started their periods, because their coach has this set mindset about you need to be a certain weight. We're going to train you this hard. You can only eat this amount. So the stories are coming out now, young women who have osteoporosis in their twenties and the research is backing it up. But no one's gone that far, but we're talking about lawyers are coming to us and talking with us about what's happening in the sports. And they're like, it is not going to be long before lawyers are going to be following around track athletes, triathletes, weight categorized sports and saying, you know that this isn't okay.

Baz Moffat: We find it ridiculous that to learn anything about girls and women, you have to do a special course. And there aren't very many of them, you have to get a special qualification. Even at university. It's a specialist topic in a week of special populations, which will be diabetes, old people, disability for women will be part of that week. But it needs to be part of every single coaching qualification. And we are working on that. We're working at that strategic level to kind of get a standard organized, but it's silly, isn't it? That we're in 2022 and this is the conversation we're having and people going, oh yeah, why isn't it in coach level one and why isn't it in coach level two. And why does people that coach children not actually have to know with any of this? So it is a duty of care and we know enough now, 20 years ago, we didn't know enough. We didn't know that what happens when a girl, when you don't get your period, what happens when they're undereating. But we know it now.

Baz Moffat: And so therefore, a hundred percent is a duty of care. And I think people are starting to wake up to that. Like you say slowly, but it's okay, they're coming, it's starting to happen. And we are having brilliant conversations. We really are. And I think that it's a really positive space to be in.

Milly Pelmore: I think the beauty of what you do is that it translates to all levels. Which we're going to a fair bit about perhaps more elite level sport, but actually it trickles right down to, we know at London sport, we're all about getting more people active. And we know recent researchers come out that says it's around 50% of teenage girls drop out of sport around puberty because for a whole host of reasons. One of them being, they just don't really know what to do with their body and what's happening. So the education piece, you are doing it with the

governing bodies, with schools, with grassroots organizations that's going to have an effect at the top level and at the teenage girl who just wants to go for a swim and know that she can get out if she needs, or how to use a tampon.

Baz Moffat: Yeah. And I think the participation piece is huge and the biggest dropout is in puberty and girls just are dropping out in droves and it's never been tackled with a female lens. It doesn't necessarily just have to be physiology. It will be safety. The female piece is really significant and that has to be incorporated into any offer and getting rid of those barriers that but it's not a barrier. The logical step is, oh, they come on their period and therefore they're getting embarrassed. So they have to leave. So we'll give free period products. It's not that, it's bigger than that.

Milly Pelmore: I just want to dial back to something you said quite early on about the three of you, kind of your co-founders quite cleverly, specifically chosen for your skills and credibility within what you do. How important do you think it is that on something you are embarking on with these taboo inverted commas subjects, having a team who do have that NHS background, the clinical background, the real expertise in it, you're going against the norm. You're trying to break down these barriers, but you can say, we really know what we are talking about. Is that important?

Baz Moffat: Yeah, I kind of think it is. I think it's fundamental to be quite honest because I think we know the evidence base, and we know the science. We're coming from a place of authority and also all of us have worked with hundreds and thousands of women actually trying to get them to do what we are now trying to change a sector on. I think I know authenticity is such an overused word and it's so cliched, but you have to have authenticity and you have that from your knowledge. And I think you can't fake it. And I think that we don't want to fake it. We're not faking it, we're doing this right. And we know we're doing it right. And we know that because of all our studying and our research and all that kind of stuff. So I think if you're going into this space, yeah, you have to be authentic with it.

Baz Moffat: So we work with quite a lot of brands. And they will come to us with a marketing piece and they just want to create content. And it's like, but you're not changing. What's going on. And it's that? It's like, okay, well let's do this properly. And you come to us because of who we are and what we've done. And there are plenty of people out there who know what we know, but it's really important, I think, especially in this space, going back to what Alex had just said about that duty of care. Yeah. We have a duty of care to get this right. And I think we have to have had the experience that we've had.

Milly Pelmore: Yeah. Completely. And I think that's really useful advice for entrepreneurs in the sector, setting up their business. Whatever it might be as a big drive at the moment to use artificial intelligence, but actually having a co-founding team where you've got the brilliance and the skills to set up the technology. But then you've also got someone who's an expert in [inaudible 00:45:24] to health

problems. That's going to be the winning formula is putting that together. So that between you've got that magic.

Baz Moffat: Yeah.

Milly Pelmore: Brilliant. Well, it's time to move on to our quick fire questions. So this is where you have 60 seconds to answer as many questions as possible. And at the end of the series, we will see which guests has come out on top. So Baz, your chosen topic is pelvic floor health.

Baz Moffat: Correct? I can speak for 60 hours on this. I've got 60 seconds.

Milly Pelmore: I know that our colleague had fun researching these. And I think that in itself is an education piece. We've now got one more person who knows more about pelvic floor than they did before. So true or false people of all ages can be affected by pelvic floor problems.

Baz Moffat: True.

Milly Pelmore: According to the NHS, what fraction of women experience problems with their pelvic floor during their lifetime?

Baz Moffat: One in three, but that's wrong.

Milly Pelmore: Okay. We'll give you that. What is the technical name for a doctor who treats patients with pelvic floor disorders?

Baz Moffat: Gynecologist.

Milly Pelmore: A Urogynecologist, maybe half a point.

Baz Moffat: Okay.

Milly Pelmore: True or false pelvic floor problems only affect women?

Baz Moffat: False.

Milly Pelmore: Correct. Who has the larger pelvic cavity men or women?

Baz Moffat: Women.

Milly Pelmore: Correct. How did Kegel exercises get their name?

Baz Moffat: From somebody called Mr. Kegel.

Milly Pelmore: Yeah. Give you that. What is the urogenital hiatus?



Baz Moffat: Oh, I don't know.

Milly Pelmore: It's a gap in the pelvic floor through which through urethra passes. Name us three symptoms of pelvic floor issues.

Baz Moffat: Stressing continents, prolapse and constipation.

Milly Pelmore: What is the name of the NHS app, which can be used to help people strengthen their pelvic muscles.

Baz Moffat: Squeezy and it costs three pounds. And it's really good.

Milly Pelmore: Brilliant. Time is there. There we go. Thank you, Baz. Thanks for coming on the podcast.

Milly Pelmore: Alex.

Baz Moffat: Milly.

Milly Pelmore: Well, I really enjoyed that episode. I think I had to remember, at times, that I wasn't just having a chat with Baz over a glass of wine and that we were recording a podcast to put out. But a really rich conversation. Couple of things to pick up on. Baz really highlighted the importance of the education piece, alongside all of the work they're doing, whether that's educating leaders within the sector or women on their own bodies. I really liked her idea of going where the energy is. And we're at that time with topics like this, where there are those pockets of driven people within the sector. And it's really important that for her as a founder, she goes to where those people are and doesn't let herself get driven down, perhaps by those that are less receptive. She also mentioned how important it is that we see tech as an enabler alongside either understanding your body. So not just relying on an app, but also kind of interactions with human coaches. We talk a lot about making sure that tech doesn't replace the human workforce.

Milly Pelmore: And I think Baz brought that out really nicely and really sees tech as supporting what they're doing, but not being it. I think she said, it's not the solution, it's just part of the solution. And I think that comes across in all of the work we do at Sport Tech Hub is how we integrate tech seamlessly with the in person world.

Alex Zurita: So for me, the two key drivers that command in such a reach conversation, there's lows in there. And I hope whoever is listening to the episode can, should take a least one thing from that. For me, the two things where common thread with other guests, surrounding yourself with people that share that vision, drive, aspiration with you but have a diverse set of experiences, knowledge and skills. Really making sure that you've built, in essence, a safety net, a supporting network that can help you through those stages of growth. In this instance, within a business. The second key point was be prepared, be happy, be



prepared with being the worst person in the room, it's not a bad thing. Whether you're in a boat, really like the comment that Baz made around hanging by the fingernails, fingertips on that last seat, on the boat a, at GB level. But also be prepared to be, be happy, be comfortable within the worst within your business, within whatever room and environment you're in.

Alex Zurita:

And I don't think she obviously clearly doesn't mean it from a detrimental point of view or from a negative connotation point of view. It is just a case of embrace that others might share or might have a greater expertise on certain things. And nowhere you can add your own value into the conversation. So hugely inspirational, as always, learning loads from every conversation that we have. And I'm hopeful that everyone that is listening to these can take something really inspirational, aspirational from that. So, that is it. I hope you enjoy that as much as we have and be sure to subscribe, download, share and leave a comment on your preferred platform. Tune in to the next episode, to hear from another amazing leader within the sector and talking all things, sport, tech and leadership. Many thanks to all the people behind the scenes, our colleague, Amy Palmer, plus Amber and Imran from our production partner [inaudible 00:50:34], see you later.