Engineering Colloquium Series to explore 'Aerodynamics of Sports'

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Dr. Jani Macari Pallis, UB associate professor of technology management and former consultant to the U.S. Olympic Committee, will speak about the "Aerodynamics of Sports" at the School of Engineering Colloquium Series this Thursday at 4 p.m.

The free lecture is open to the public and will be held at Dana Hall, room 107.

"I've got good footage of David Beckham and Roberto Carlos doing banana kicks, the ultimate in soccer aerodynamics," says Dr. Pallis. "You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand this. Athletes learn this so they can use these techniques in their arsenal of weapons as they compete. I hope people will feel welcome to come learn about this. It's a fun thing."

Dr. Pallis is a nationally recognized expert in the field of aerodynamics. Her company, Cislunar Aerospace, Inc., developed multimedia interactive textbooks and an education Web site for National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) that focus on the aerodynamics of aviation, animals, and sports. (The site can be viewed at http://wings.avkids.com.)

It was this work, says Dr. Pallis, that inspired her passionate interest in the subject.

"I was working with a group of students," Dr. Pallis recalled. "They weren't interested in airplanes. So I asked, 'What about birds? Butterflies? Baseball?' Well, that got their attention. They thought it was pretty cool. So I went back to NASA and told them we would add a unit on the aerodynamics of sport on the site."

Soon after, Dr. Pallis began fielding calls from coaches across the U.S., asking her how they could use aerodynamics to improve performance in a variety of sports.

That led to her to advise the U.S. Olympic Committee, the International Tennis Association, and other professional and athletic organizations. In 2000, Dr. Pallis and Ian Burns, the famous racing sail boat designer, worked on the Hawaiian America's Cup challenger boat, *Abracadabra*.

A native of Stamford, Conn., Dr. Pallis received her PhD in engineering from University of California at Davis