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Novel strategies for endurance performance

Paul Anstiss, Chris Fullerton, Chiara Gattoni, Alister McCormick, Carla Meijen
Overview

• Talks
  The role of sources of self-efficacy in endurance performance. Paul Anstiss
  Effect of a pacemaker on 1600m time trial running performance. Chris Fullerton
  The effects of mental fatigue on long-term endurance performance. Chiara Gattoni
  Application of the facial feedback hypothesis to endurance performance: Does frowning modulate perception of effort? Alister McCormick
  Running a psyching team: The introduction of mental support at endurance events in England. Carla Meijen

• Discussion and future research directions
Running a psyching team

- Mental demands of endurance runners
- History of psyching teams
  - What is it?
  - Setting up and running a psyching team
- Brief psychological support provision
- Assessing effectiveness and critical reflection
Mental demands of endurance runners

Pre-race
- Have I done enough training?
- Weather conditions

During the race
- Emotional responses during a marathon
- Pain and dealing with discomfort (Buman et al., 2008)
- Motivation
  - Wanting to give up
- Optimising pacing
- Practical worries – where are the toilets?
- Psychological demands encountered away from the competition (pre, during, and post-race) (see also McCormick et al., 2016)
What is a psyching team?

• Provide mental support pre, during, and post race

• Team of (sport) psychology professionals and those in training
  • Provide opportunities for training

• Presence pre-race, during race, and post race
  • Expo at bigger events

• Short and brief interventions
  • “Giving sport psychology away” to the public
Some issues that we dealt with as a psyching team: Pre-race

- Nerves, particularly first timers
- Worries about goals
  - Working towards a challenging goal; feeling pressure to qualify for a big marathon
  - Coming back from an injury
- Negative thoughts
  - Dealing with the pain
  - Boredom
- Have I done enough training?
  - Injury worries
- Tough year with personal issues, how will I deal with this during the event?
  - Particularly for the bigger events
- Pacing
  - Starting too fast – getting caught up in the moment
- Worries about practicalities
  - Where are the toilets?
  - What do I do with my layers?
Some issues that we dealt with as a psyching team: During and post-race

- On the course:
  - Dealing with pain
  - Injuries
  - Goal achievement

- Post race:
  - Post-race blues, unhappy with performance or trying to make sense of it
How to do it? Using brief interventions

- Arousal management
  - Relaxation strategies

- Goal-setting
  - Assess and manage pain (process goals)
  - Different levels of goals

- Imagery
  - Direct attention and pain management

- Cognitive strategies
  - Self-talk: ‘control the controllables’; pacing

- Anchoring
  - Recall past successes (trust your training)
  - Pieces of finish line ribbon
    - Recall key points of the intervention
    - Attach a mantra, or statement to it that reminds you to keep going when it gets difficult
Critical Evaluation/ Brief interventions

• Can brief interventions have a measurable impact on affective experience and/or actual performance?
  • Lane et al. (2016) – online training effectiveness on competitive performance
  • Yeager in Walton (2011) – effectiveness of brief interventions in education

• How to assess?
  • Mostly cross-sectional research
    – Limited time for controlled interventions
    – Difficult to control the environment

• What to assess?
  • Effectiveness of brief interventions
    – Anchoring, finish-line ribbons, self-talk
Critical Evaluation/ Practicalities

- What is your philosophy?
  - Training of sport psychologists
  - Promoting sport psychology to a wider audience

- Who to include as a psyching team volunteer?
  - Undergraduates, post-graduates, those in training, qualified professionals

- How to deal with ‘negative’ attitudes towards sport psychology provision?
  - Important to prepare volunteers for this

- Race selection
  - Distance
  - Number of runners
  - Access to the course
References


Questions?