GCAS NEWS

GOLD COAST ACADEMY OF SPORT

Issue 36, Autumn 2021

Our Proud Sponsors:

EDITORIAL From the **Chair** from the Executive Director's desk

How exciting was the news that Brisbane and South East Queensland was installed by the International Olympic Committee as the preferred bidder for the 2032 Olympics?

The bid received a significant boost when it was recommended to the IOC that the Australian state of Queensland be the major bidder. Exclusive negotiations have opened up with Australian officials with the view to move forward targeting the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Other cities that were considering putting in a bid were Doha, Budapest, Turkey, New Delhi, Saint Petersburg along with a few Chinese cities.

The previous practice of cities bidding against each other was changed in 2019 as it was said it created, "too many losers" among rejected host cities, who would often have spent millions of dollars on promoting their individual campaigns. Queensland's bid was put forward during the hosting of our successful Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in 2018. During the pandemic the Premier announced a hiatus to the bid but at the end of 2020, the idea was again revived.

HOW EXCITING FOR OUR YOUNG ATHLETES WITHIN THE GOLD COAST REGION TO NOW HAVE SOMETHING TO AIM FOR.

Should Brisbane and Queensland get the 'green light' to go ahead and host the 2032 Games, it will be an exciting time for youngsters who are currently involved within Olympic sports. With the number of sports being continually expanded, who knows what sports will be on the Olympic and Paralympic calendar.

In Tokyo this year we will witness the new sports of Surfing, Skateboarding, Karate, Baseball and Softball included. Looking further to Paris, breakdancing will be added to the ever-growing list. In 2032 there could well be some further sports added to the sports to be held in Australia.

2020 was such a difficult year with many potential Olympians putting in the hard yards for selection, with the heartbreaking news of the Olympics being postponed. We will find out within the next few months those lucky athletes who have continued to work extremely hard to see their dreams of wearing the green and gold at the Games in Tokyo.

If you have the wild dreams of Olympic aspirations and are in your mid to early teens, Brisbane will be ideal for you. Start planning, set your goals, understand what you will need to do and then go out and start the journey.

On Thursday 4th March the Academy held a minor "Awards night" at the Southport Sharks. This night is normally held in October each year but due to the pandemic and the many regulations around conducting ceremonies, we were unable to hold it last October. We were pleased to recognise the many athletes and coaches who were part of our Academy sporting programs during 2020.

During the night we recognised an athlete from each sporting program with an Encouragement award, and an Athlete of the Year award. These athletes were selected by the coach or coordinator of that specific program and were decided on their involvement and participation during the program. It included the way they approached training and their work ethic along with the way they interacted with their peers. The 2020 winners are listed below. Also listed are the winners from the 2019 BMX program which only finished late in 2019 after that years Awards night was held.

Congratulations to the winners of the special awards but we would also like to congratulate ALL participants for being part of the Academy programs.

Sport	First Name	Last Name	Award
2019 BMX (senior)	Jesse	Asmus	Athlete of the Year
2019 BMX (senior)	Ashley	Willard	Encouragement Award
2019 BMX (junior)	Alexander	Keed	Athlete of the Year
2019 BMX (junior)	Milly	Ferguson	Encouragement Award
BMX2020	Ben	Keed	Athlete of the Year
BMX2020	Rusty Isla-Mae	Killick Killick	Encouragement Award
Rugby Union	Junior	Siaunuua	Athlete of the Year
Rugby Union	Agapetos	Lote-Felo	Encouragement Award
Rugby League	Benjamin	Road night	Athlete of the Year
Rugby League	Kaylee	Booth	Encouragement Award

The Awards night was a little different to our normal night as we had two special guests who spoke to the audience about their achievements, their journey and their dreams for the future. Both Juliet Hackett and Emelia Surch were part of the 2018 Future Stars program. Juliet is involved in Cheering which took her to the USA in 2019 for the World Summit in Florida. This is the pinnacle of every 'Cheering' athlete's dream.

Juliet also started her own cheer-based Instagram account in an effort to enrich the positive promotion of Cheer sport and its athletes. She had the 5th largest cheer account in the world and in 2020 sold it to an American company. She has won a young entrepreneur competition where she pitched her start-up business plan to corporate tech executives in Melbourne. Juliet is certainly a media savvy young lady and is keen to spread the message of how to maintain a realistic body image and body maintenance, both essential when competing in an image dominated sport like 'All Star Cheerleading'. She also wishes to teach young people how to safely engage in social media.

This year Juliet has begun a Business and Law double degree at Bond University where she earned a $100,000 scholarship. She plans to captain the Bond University cheer team. Juliet has lofty ambition and the GCAS is very proud to have been part of her growth both in sport and as a mature young woman.

Emelia is involved in Track and Field and is currently ranked first in the country for Heptathlon and 100m Hurdles. In 2019, in only her 2nd Heptathlon she placed 3rd in the U/18 National Championships. In 2020 she worked hard to strengthen the events she needed to work on and at the end of the year won the state U/20 Heptathlon championships along with the 100m Hurdles.

With the Australian Championships approaching in April, she spoke about how important it is to commit to your training and challenge yourself. She is hoping to continue her strong showing to take out both titles, but anything can happen.

One of her goals is to attempt to qualify for the World Junior Championships in Nairobi. The Championships were not held in 2020 so they have been planned to happen in Kenya in August this year. She hopes that she can achieve the standards of 13.78 seconds for the hurdles and 5350 points for the Heptathlon.

If unable to achieve the qualifying standards this year, she still has another opportunity in two years times to represent Australia at the next world championships. With a couple of extra years to develop her performances in these events she could well be a strength in both events.

Emelia is currently completing her final year at AB Paterson College this year looking to go on to study next year at University.

The Academy wishes the girls all the best for the future. It was a wonderful chance for our younger athletes to hear what has been achieved in the lives of past athletes. For our young athletes, it shows what dedication and commitment to your sport can achieve whilst also being humble and interesting to listen to.

The Gold Coast Academy of Sport would also like to thank Richard Fowler from 94.1FM for being an amazing 'Master of Ceremonies'. The evening ran like clockwork with all presentations concluding by 7.30pm.

We would also like to thank parents and family for attending to share with their children the pride of receiving their certificates and awards.

We look forward to seeing the next group of athletes moving through our programs this year in October at RACV Royal Pines.

2019 Junior BMX

Angie Bell & Milly Ferguson

Alex Keed & Angie Bell

2019 Senior BMX Group

Angie Bell & Ashley Willard

Angie Bell & Jesse Asmus

2020 BMX

Ben Keed & Angie Bell

Rugby Union Group & Stuart Aikman from Magic Millions

Agapetos Lote-Felo & Stuart Aikman from Magic Millions

Stuart Aikman from Magic Millions & Junior Siauanuua

Rugby League Group

Bob La Castra & Kaylee Booth

Bob La Castra with Ben Roadnight

Juliette Hackett and Emelia Such - Guest speakers with Richard Fowler

Junior Siaunuua

Guest speakers & officials

all the Award winners

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We look forward to welcoming you to Southport Sharks soon!

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SOUTHPORT SHARKS

ALL SPORTS TRAVEL

With the vaccine roll out commencing it is looking more like our lives might return to some sort of normal. (Whatever that might be).

It would be terrific if the GCAS family would look to support our sponsors and partners in their everyday lives. If you are looking to travel, please do not go past Allsport Travel. Give them a call or email them to see what they can do for you.

I have and they have always done an amazing job in servicing me.

Glynis

All Sports Travel update

We have been encouraged by a recent increase in inquiries from sporting groups and individuals from around Australia looking to travel in 2021.

It seems some confidence is returning to Australians, with the improved handling of small COVID-19 outbreaks, coupled with the roll out of vaccinations around the country. Many of the larger sporting events that were cancelled last year look to be going ahead in 2021 and a pent-up demand will hopefully result in a strong turn out for these events this year.

As we slowly regain business, we are looking to local sporting organisations to support us and other struggling businesses, so that we can get back to supporting them.

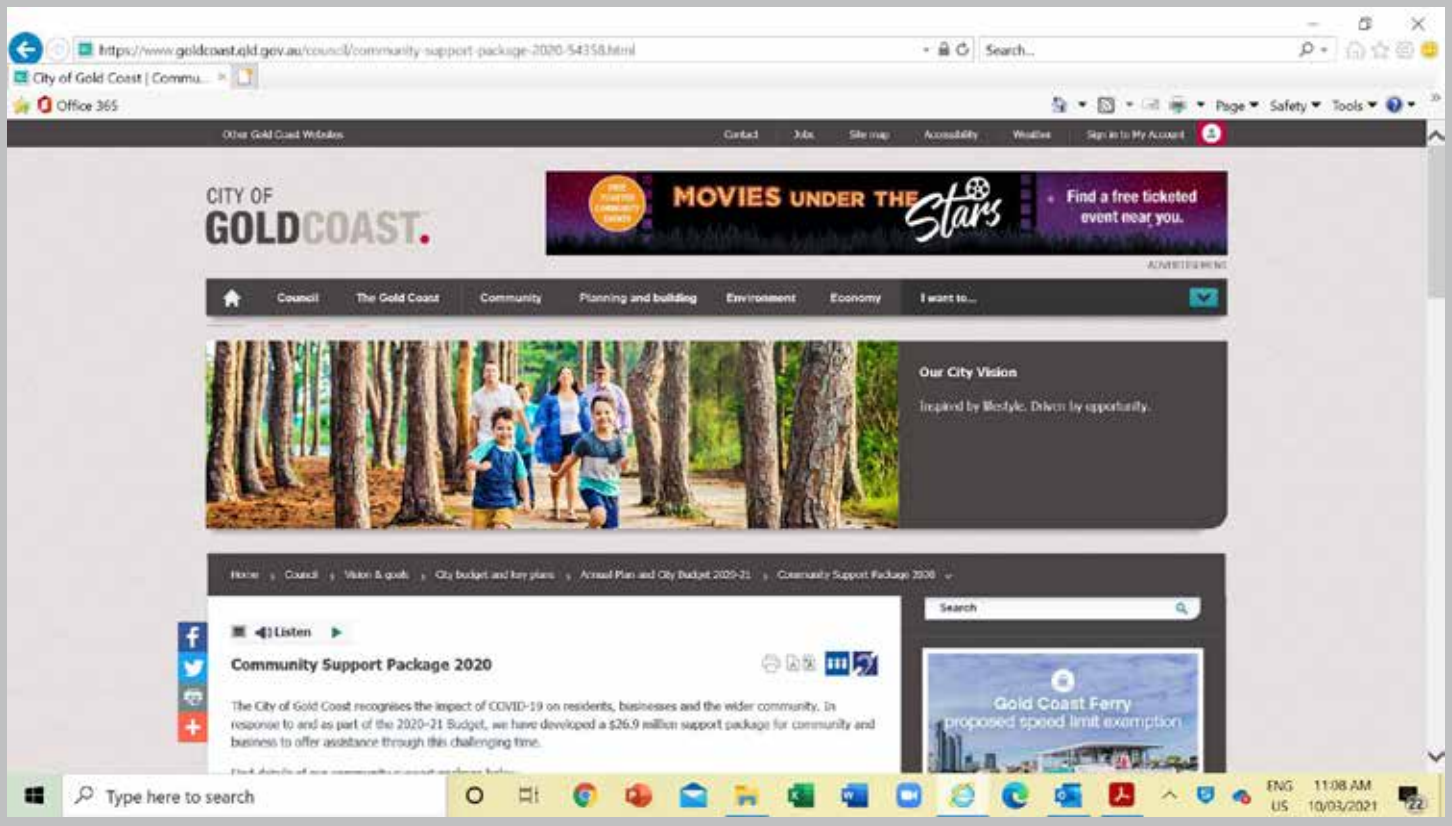
So, if you are planning any travel this year – be it local or interstate – please contact All Sports Travel for a competitive quote and great service.

Email: info@allsportstravel.com.au

Ellen and Andrew

CITY OF GOLDCOAST.

Gold Coast Academy of Sport would like to thank the Gold Coast City Council for its support for sport in the region. Looking forward to 2032, the Gold Coast Region can become excited about inviting the world onto their doorstep.



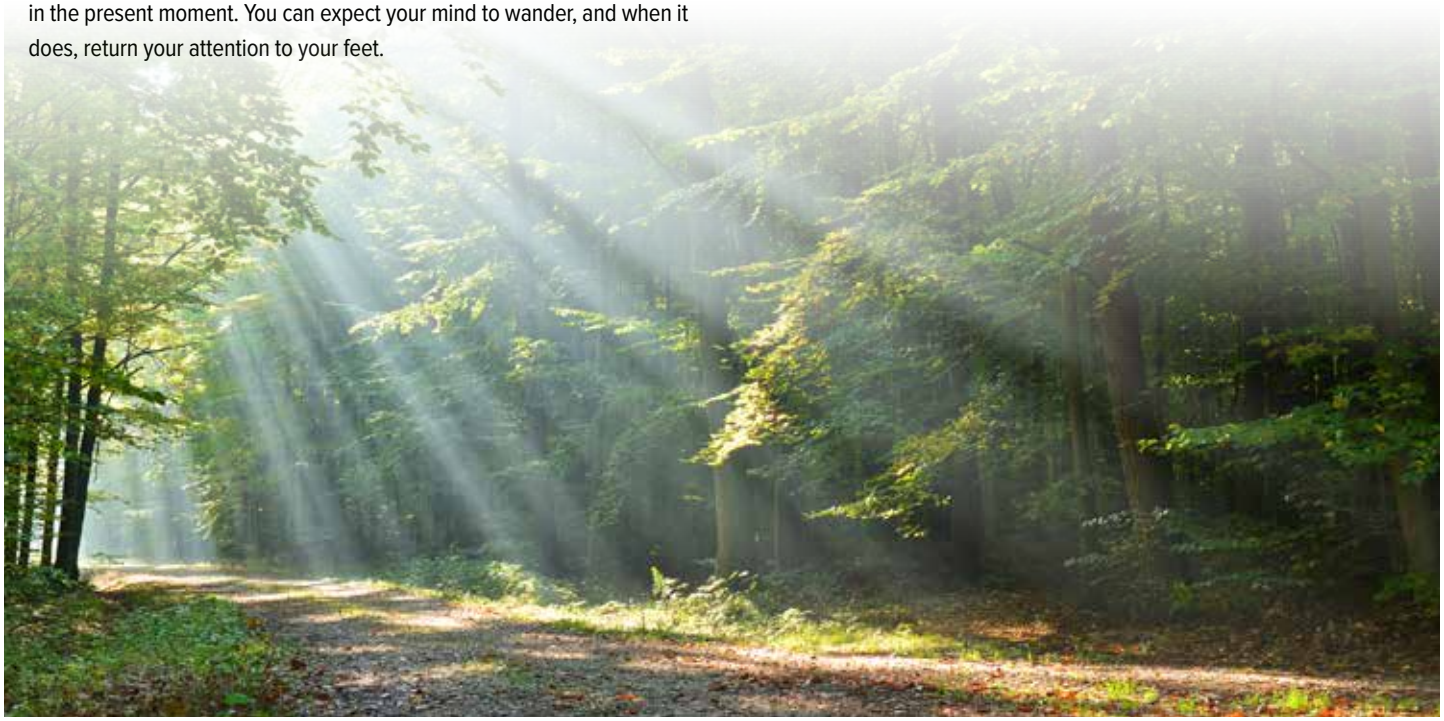
Mindfullness

The following article gives both parents and athletes an understanding of the term "Mindfulness". This relates to someone being grounded, on how to deal with situations that arise to decrease anxiety and help people to focus on the task at hand. Hopefully some of the practices below will help you with difficult situations.

I'm sure you've heard of 'being mindful' before. From mental health experts to athletes, it's being looked at as the next big shift in psychology. The truth is that mindfulness has been around for hundreds of years, practiced in the Eastern parts of the world. The West is slowly catching on. Don't worry, it's not too complex. The main idea involves focusing your attention to the present moment with an open minded and compassionate attitude.

These techniques could help you cope with many difficult situations in life. Here are 7 techniques to practice mindfulness. They might seem difficult at first, but if you keep at it, they'll benefit you for life.

1. **Practice Gratitude** - Being grateful for the blessings in our lives is one of the most important habits you could develop. It reminds us to enjoy what we have, rather than desiring what others have. To practice gratitude, write down 3 things you are grateful for as soon as you wake up. Be as specific as you can be—specificity is key to fostering gratitude. It'll only take 15 minutes. The goal of the exercise is to remember a good time, person or experience in your life and enjoy the good emotions that flow.
2. **Feel your feet and palms** - This will anchor you to the present moment. Draw your attention to the pads of your feet and palms. Notice the pressure of your feet against the floor, the heat and or cold, the comfort or discomfort, feel it all slowly. Once you've become aware of your feet and palms, then clench your hands into tight fists and release. Clench. Release. Clench. Release. This focuses the mind on your body, which will put you in the present moment. You can expect your mind to wander, and when it does, return your attention to your feet.
3. **Notice the environment** - When practicing mindfulness, you don't have to manipulate your emotions to stay in the present moment; just take in your surroundings. Allow your mind to let go and relax. Then you can notice the wonderful sites, and sounds around you. Even as you're reading this article, perhaps your hand is touching a mouse, or a phone, feel this sensation. Notice any objects near you, such as the items on your coffee table. Expand your awareness to encompass your entire environment. Notice the colours of your surroundings. Become aware of any sounds happening around you. Without mentally or verbally commenting on what you notice, just take a moment to become aware of these things.
4. **Breathe Deeply** - Most meditation techniques focus on breathing and for good reason: It's a great way to relax and centre your energy. To begin, inhale for 3 seconds and exhale for 3 seconds. As you get more practice, you can increase the amount of seconds, which will enhance the centreing and relaxation process.
5. **Listen, don't just hear** - Next time you're talking to someone, try to notice the time in which you judge the person you're speaking with. Once you've noticed, you can attempt to avoid judging and focus on the content of the conversation. Judgments cause us to be bias and not really listen to what others have to say.
6. **Watch what you eat** - Mindful eating means paying full attention to the experience of eating or drinking everything. Both on the inside and outside of the body. Pay attention to the flavours, textures, colours, smells, temperatures, and even the sounds of your food. Pay close attention to the experience of your body. Literally try to feel your body and use all of your senses as you eat. You'll begin to realize what food your body thrives on, and what foods to avoid.
7. **The Mindful Shower** - The shower is the perfect time to practice mindfulness. Simply watch the beautiful water hit your skin and embrace the wonder of life. Next you have a shower, become aware of how good the hot water feels as it washes your skin. Take in the smell of the body-wash, and the sensations of your hands passing over your skin.



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The Gold Coast Academy is extremely proud of the partner connections that we have in the community. Sponsors include Gold Coast City Council, Chempro, Southport Sharks, Magic Millions, RACV Royal Pines, All Sports Physiotherapy Group, All Sports Travel, Hart Sport, Spot Productions and Cambio group. The Academy publishes a newsletter four (4) times a year and it is available to all families who have been part of previous and current programs, all Academy partners and sponsors and on our website.

To support the sponsors who support the Academy, I can't stress enough that if you are looking for suppliers or for a particular service please support those group that support the Academy to help us deliver the sporting programs to your children.

Gold Coast City Council – GCCC has been the major supporter of the Academy since its inception. Without their financial backing programs would be conducted. We are truly grateful for their continued support.

Chempro – all your health supplies and anything that you might think of. A great all round provider. Also coming into Winter, start thinking about your flu vaccinations.

RACV Royal Pines – for dinner, accommodation and maybe a game of golf. Looking for a venue for a conference – don't forget to give them a call.

Southport Sharks – Dinner in a few different restaurants, for special functions, for a meeting, accommodation in the Mantra

All Sports Physiotherapy – for assessment and rehabilitation of injury or any little niggle that you may have. Please advise you are a GCAS Family member for a special rate.

All Sports Travel – for ANY travel that you might be considering to take be it personal, business or team. Please just let them know you are a GCAS family member.

Spot Productions – Spot is a Brisbane based business but kindly coordinate these newsletters and print GCAS certificates and other materials. Wonderful family trusted business. Need cards, promotions etc done – give them a call.

HART Sport – for all of your sporting needs – all you need to do is contact HART – they are a one stop shop with great customer service.

Cambio – An accountant group who can look after your financial needs.

NEW OPPORTUNITY.

This is a great opportunity for our immediate GCAS family.

I know that many parents have family businesses that they run. If you own a business or are a professional offering specialist services please consider looking to advertise in these quarterly newsletters.

If you are you interested in spreading your information across the Academy Family contact us and we would love to help? At present, over 1700+ athletes have gone through the Academy in a wide range of sports. This opportunity is one offered to the Academy family – to use Academy businesses and 'look after' each other.

For $80/newsletter or $160 for the remainder of the year (3 newsletters), please look to us to advertise your business and spread the work of what you do to our Academy family.

Please contact either Joanne of I on our contact details in the newsletter if interested. There are also further opportunities for advertising on our Team App. Please discuss with us.

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Magic Millions Talks With One of Australia's Most Successful Jockeys

Darren Gauci

There is always plenty of pressure on the young athlete, whether it be internal or external - but the stresses are always greater when their chosen sport is one that is in the public eye, such is the case with the global pastime that is thoroughbred horse racing.

Jockeys tend to kick off their careers as teenagers and they have plenty to face; heavy work loads (early mornings and plenty of travelling to racetracks near and far), different people to please (trainers, owners, punters), dietary restrictions and the ever present risk of injury.

Fortunately various schemes are now in place to help young jockeys on their way, such as Racing Victoria's Apprentice Jockey Program which runs out of Racing Victoria's headquarters adjacent to historic Flemington racecourse.

The AJTP - the Apprentice Jockey Training Program - runs with the help of partners including the Victorian Institute of Sport and Exercise Research Australia. Each year expressions of interest are taken with those interested in the 2022 intake due to have their applications in by Friday, March 5.

Various professionals are employed to oversee the education of these young athletes, including one of Australia's most famous and successful jockeys Darren Gauci who took up his role as Apprentice Jockey Coach upon his retirement from the saddle in 2017.

During a long and successful career that saw him win 33 Group One races, partnering with some of the most loved horses of recent times - such as Super Impose, Subzero and Lonhro, Darren derives great satisfaction and enjoyment imparting his knowledge and experience to the next generation of riders. We had a chat with him recently...

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What do you enjoy most about your position?

After witnessing how hard these kids work - and it can be a struggle at times - to see the smile on their face after their first ride and their first win. You know then that it is been worth all the effort.

What does the programme consist of?

It takes place over four years with candidates coming to us having already had experience in stables as track riders, etc and it is up to us to put the finishing touches on them. They visit us for a couple of days after their initial application and are placed through a vigorous testing process, one in which we can see if they have the right strength, the right fitness levels. And we also get to know them through interviews; we need to know they have the correct attitude and work ethic.

In year one they spend a couple of days a month with us, in the second and third years they stay overnight at Racing Victoria once a month and in the fourth year three times a year.

Do the apprentices enjoy the process?

They really seem to even though it is pretty full-on, one class on top of the other with a short break for lunch. But they get to meet and learn from a variety of people including physiotherapists, sports psychologists, media professionals, dieticians, finance experts and stewards (those who oversee the rules of racing).

How many apprentices do you train?

We take on around five each year which fits in with the annual requirements of the sport. We have very, very few drop out though some go interstate to continue their careers whilst others may eventually get too heavy.

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Darren Gauci is ideally placed in his role, having been Australia's most successful apprentice; setting records that still hold and which are unlikely to be bettered. He rode 506 winners as an apprentice and in three consecutive seasons from 1983 and 1986 won all three Victorian riding titles; metropolitan, provincial and apprentice. At one stage he rode winners at 18 consecutive city meetings - another record - and such is his fame that each year the Darren Gauci Medal is awarded to the season's most accomplished apprentice.

The Impacts of COVID-19 on Sport and Exercise

ALL SPORTS PHYSIOTHERAPY GROUP

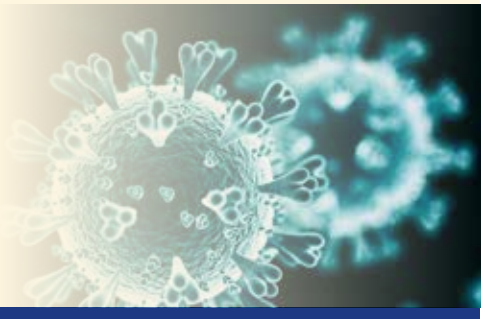
COVID-19 restrictions have affected us all in one way or another with particular regard to our day to day living and routines. The sporting world has been put on standby for different lengths of time all around the world, and for junior athletes aiming to develop in their chosen sport, this has been a hinderance in progressing physically and mentally. Recent evidence from a global study looked at the effect of continued physical activity on mental health and wellbeing of individuals during the initial stages of COVID-19 community restrictions (Faulkner et al., 2021). Findings suggested that those individuals who had a negative change in their physical activity participation during this period had worse outcomes in mental health and well-being measures when compared to those who maintained or increased their physical activity.

The study also found that younger individuals reported more negative changes in physical activity behaviour during this period. This is very relevant for junior athletes and being able to maintain, if not improve, their physical and mental capacity in their sport. Motivation to stay ready for a return to play or return to training is imperative for continued progression in sport, particularly in such trying times. Based on the above evidence, it would be advantageous for a young athlete to maintain, if not increase their exercise participation during COVID-19 restrictions to be one step ahead of their competition who may have decreased in physical activity and therefore potentially have negatively impacted mental health and well-being.

Author Jack Diener (Exercise Physiologist)

References

Faulkner, J., O'Brien, W., McGrane, B., Wadsworth, D., Batten, J., & Askew, C. et al. (2021). *Physical activity, mental health and well-being of adults during initial COVID-19 containment strategies: A multi-country cross-sectional analysis.* Journal Of Science And Medicine In Sport, 24(4), 320-326. doi: 10.1016/j.jsams.2020.11.016



Importance of **Recovery**

There is a lot written about recovery and the food you need to eat. The following is something i came across from the nsw institute of sport many years ago. I thought it was worthwhile sharing.

The quality of recovery after training will determine how good your adaptation and gains are, further to this it will have an impact on how well you might perform or get through the next training session.

Poor recovery can mean arriving at competition or the next training session with depleted energy levels, sore, tired, fatigued, and with poor focus, meaning you may be unable to perform at your best. Recovery happens over a whole day following training not just directly post training. Timing and balanced meals are two key strategies to plan and apply for an effective recovery.

What should I eat for recovery?

The body needs carbohydrate to replenish stores and to assist with muscle repair and recovery. The body also needs protein for muscle growth and to repair damaged muscle to limit muscle soreness.

It also needs some good fats and nutrients to help it all come together effectively.

To start the recovery process, you need a protein and carbohydrate food source in a post training/competition meals as soon as you can after finishing to start adaptation and replenishing stores.

- **Carbohydrate approx. 1 – 1.2 g per kilogram of body weight**
- **Protein approx. 10 – 20g (depending on age & body size)**
- **Low in fat at this time as fat slows absorption and may delay delivery of nutrients and fuel to the muscle**

9 food choice examples

Here are nine examples of carbohydrate + protein snacks:

1. **Flavoured milk popper**
2. **200g low fat or natural yoghurt**
3. **Grilled meat and sweet potato**
4. **400ml low fat flavoured milk**
5. **2 slice bread with slice low fat cheese and ham**
6. **220g tin Baked Beans**
7. **1 cup wholegrain cereal and light milk**
8. **Smoothie with skim milk, fruit, low fat yoghurt**
9. **95g tin tuna on toast or rice cakes**

Continued over

Importance of recovery continued

Top up carbs with fruit, oat-based muesli bars, crackers or bread/ sandwiches or sports drinks. The amount of carbohydrate and protein will vary depending on the amount and intensity of training and physical status goals.

When should I eat for recovery?

20-30 min following activity or as soon as possible, is the most crucial time to replenish protein and carbohydrate to aid muscle recovery. Leaving it longer than this can delay the recovery process, promote further muscle breakdown and slow the body's ability to build and repair muscle and adequately accumulate fuel stores for the next training session.

When carbohydrate stores are depleted they can take around 20 hours to be replenished, so refuelling will not happen in one meal alone. Continuous repair needs continuous fuel, rather than one large meal, so fuel is ultilised effectively. A snack, as outlined, in the 30min following training can start the recovery process and then be followed up with a healthy balanced meal 1-2 hours later until regular meal patterns are resumed.

If you don't think you can stomach food this soon after training, try liquids, a smaller amount to build up tolerance or plain foods that are easier to eat such yoghurt tubes, flavoured milk poppers, sports drinks, yoghurt or cheese sandwich as balanced choices to get the recovery process started then continue with another balanced and more complex meal choice at your next meal.

Another protein and carbohydrate meal is just as essential two hours after training has finished to continue the recovery process.

Planning ahead, being organised and preparing and packing food to have with you over the course of the day or competition, including travel, is really important so good food choices are available when the body needs it. If you wait to find, buy or make food it's all delaying the recovery process, even if it's the ideal recovery food, if it's too late, it's not going to give the best results for recovery.

Importance of hydration for recovery

Water, sports drinks and even low fat milk are the best choices for rehydration directly after activity as juice and soft drink can be too sweet or acidic, this can slow the absorption of fluid which slows down rehydration and can delay recovery.

If large amounts of fluid, sodium and electrolytes are lost during activity it can lead to dehydration which has an impact on performance and concentration and can make you feel dizzy, tired and fatigued, then the more dehydrated you are, the less you will feel like drinking.

Drink fluids regularly over the day and use urine colour as a guide; lighter/ clear = good hydration; dark yellow = need more fluid.

Recipe: Banana cake (serves 12)

- 3 tablespoons margarine
- 1 h cup caster (superfine) sugar
- 3 large ripe bananas, chopped
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 1 cup wholemeal self-raising flour
- 185 mL (¼ cup) buttermilk

ICING (optional)

- ¼ cup icing sugar
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2-4 teaspoons boiling water

Preheat oven to moderate (180° C or 350° F). Lightly grease a 20 cm round cake pan, and line the base with baking paper. Using electric beaters, beat margarine, sugar and bananas until well combined and banana is almost smooth. Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition, then beat in the vanilla. Sift flours into the bowl, and pour in milk. Fold in quickly and lightly until just combined, bm do not overheat or the cake will be tough. Pour into prepared pan, and bake for about 70 minutes or until a skewer or knife inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. Leave in the pan for 5 minutes before turning out onto a wire rack to cool. If you are icing the cake, wait until it is completely cooled. Sift icing sugar into a bowl and stir in juice and enough water to make a thin icing. Spread over the cake and leave to set.

Preparation time:	20 minutes
Cooking time:	1 hour 10 minutes
Analysis	Serves 12
Energy (kj Cal)	967 (231)
Carb (g)	41
Prot (g)	5
Fat (g)	5

Hint: Buttermilk is used for low-fat baking. It is cultured (like yoghurt), and therefore quite acidic which makes the cake tender and moist.

WHAT CAN HELP RECOVERY?

We all coach athletes that we want to help with their recovery. Here are some ideas that you can consider. *Glynis*

Feeling sore after exercise? Here's what science suggests helps (and what doesn't)

Authors are Andrea Mosler and Matthew Driller, both work out of La Trobe University.

If athletes have you been hitting the gym again with COVID restrictions easing, or getting back into running then there should be a few things you need to consider as coach.

As many will know the inevitable muscle soreness that comes after a break can be a tough barrier to overcome. Here's what causes this muscle soreness, and how best to manage it.

What is muscle soreness and why does it occur?

Some muscle soreness after a workout is normal. But it can be debilitating and deter you from further exercise. The scientific term used to describe these aches is delayed onset muscle soreness, or DOMS, which results from mechanical disruption of the muscle fibres, often called "microtears".

Will recovery gadgets work? Not necessarily

Before we even think about recovery from exercise, you first need to remember to start slow and progress gradually. The body adapts to physical load, so if this has been minimal during lockdown, your muscles, tendons and joints will need time to get used to resuming physical activity. And don't forget to warm up by getting your heart rate up and the blood flowing to the muscles before every session, even if it's a social game of touch footy!

Even if you do start slow, you may still suffer muscle soreness and you might want to know how to reduce it. There are heaps of new recovery gadgets and technologies these days that purport to help. But the jury is still out on some of these methods.

Some studies do show a benefit. There have been analyses and reviews on some of the more common recovery strategies including ice baths, massage, foam rollers and compression garments. These reviews tend to support their use as effective short-term post-exercise recovery strategies.

So, if you have the time or money — go for it! Make sure your ice baths are not too cold though, somewhere around 10-15 for ten minutes is probably about right.

And a word of caution on ice baths, don't become too reliant on them in the long term, especially if you are a strength athlete. Emerging research has shown they may have a negative effect on your muscles, blunting some of the repair and rebuilding processes following resistance training.

New recovery methods and gadgets are marketed everywhere, but most of them require further research.

But the efficacy of other recovery strategies remain unclear. Techniques like recovery boots or sleeves, float tanks and cryotherapy chambers are newer on the recovery scene. While there have been some promising findings, more studies are required before we can make an accurate judgement.

However, these recovery gadgets all seem to have one thing in common: they make you "feel" better. While the research doesn't always show physical benefits for these techniques or gadgets, often using them will result in perceived lower levels of muscle soreness, pain and fatigue.

Is this just a placebo effect? Possibly, but the placebo effect is still a very powerful one — so if you believe a product will help you feel better, it probably will, on some level at least.

The 'big rocks' of recovery

Some of the above techniques could be classified as the "one-percenters" of recovery. But to properly recover, we need to focus on the "big rocks" of recovery. These include adequate sleep and optimal nutrition.

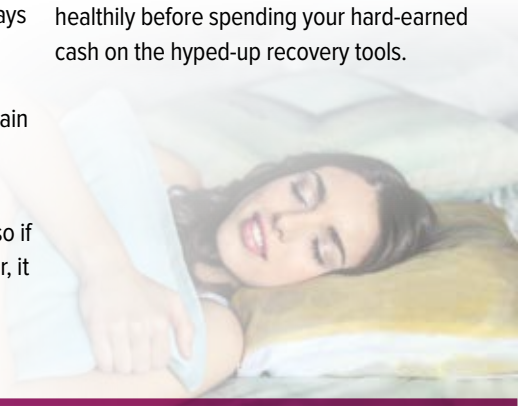
Sleep is one of the best recovery strategies we have, because this is when most of the muscle repair and recovery takes place. Ensuring a regular sleep routine and aiming for around eight hours of sleep per night is a good idea.

Ultimately, adequate sleep and optimal nutrition are the best ways to recover after exercise.

When it comes to nutrition, the exact strategy will vary from person to person and you should always seek out nutrition advice from a qualified professional, but remember the three R's:

- refuel (replacing carbohydrates after exercise)
- rebuild (protein intake will aid in the muscle repair and rebuilding)
- rehydrate (keep your fluid intake up, especially in these summer months!).

We all need to enjoy our newfound freedom when returning to sport and exercise, but we need to remember to focus on a slow return, and to make sure you're eating and sleeping healthily before spending your hard-earned cash on the hyped-up recovery tools.



What does acupuncture do and what injuries can it treat

The below is an article written by a practicing acupunturist. For those who have been wondering about what this mode of treatment can offer, I encourage you to read on.

Acupuncture, along with massage and exercise therapy, has throughout the history of TCM been used to treat a wide variety of musculoskeletal injuries. To put that another way, in TCM acupuncture, massage and exercise therapy was the only way to treat musculoskeletal injury.

Traditional acupuncture is not based on the medical sciences because, of course, it predates them. The philosophical framework that underpins TCM was developed over nearly two thousand years of recording observations of cause and effect, intervention and response, and disease progression and regression. A framework developed using descriptive concepts to describe both the nature of the condition to be treated and the nature of the treatment intervention to be implemented.

Translating this into an explanation of what we expect acupuncture to do from a biomedical science point of view always feels a bit limiting as we have to exclude all the subtleties built into the philosophical foundations that guide the way in which acupuncture is practiced. Within the scope of this article I will attempt to make the process simpler by only discussing the commonly accepted treatment effects as they pertain to musculoskeletal and sports injuries. From these treatment effects I can express an opinion as to which types of injuries you might expect acupuncture treatment to be most indicated.

In my practice I consider the three primary effects of acupuncture in the treatment of musculoskeletal injuries to be:

- **Pain management**
- **Reduction of muscular tone**
- **Local changes to circulation and inflammatory responses**
- **Pain management.**

It appears that acupuncture provides relief of pain, an increased pain threshold, or an altered experience of pain as a result of recruiting the body's own endogenous opioid pain reduction system. Needle stimulation of the afferent (sensory) nerve structures leads the spinal cord and brain to release endorphins, serotonin, norepinephrine, and gamma-aminobutyric acid, all chemicals that serve a role in the natural reduction of pain. Brain studies seem to confirm that acupuncture increases the pain threshold which in turn reduces the pain experience.

- **Reduction of muscle tone.**

Acupuncture may reduce muscle tone via at least three pathways. Firstly, given that an increase in muscle tone (spasm) is a companion to pain in injury, a reduction in pain via the endogenous opioid pathway will in turn reduce muscle tone. Secondly, needling reduces sympathetic nervous system activity associated with the fight or flight response, reducing muscle tone and having a general calming effect. The third way in which acupuncture and trigger point needling will reduce muscle tone is when the needle is accurately inserted into the taut band associated with a trigger point (traditionally known as an Ah Shi point). This may stimulate a spinal cord reflex causing the muscle fibres in the taut band to suddenly shorten in what is known as a "twitch contraction". This is followed by a decrease in muscle excitability and a relative normalisation of tone.

- **Local changes to blood circulation and inflammatory responses.**

The insertion of needles in acupuncture causes a microscopic amount of tissue trauma which leads to the local release of histamine, kinins, prostaglandins, and leukotrienes which act as vasodilators (vasodilator drugs relax the smooth muscle in blood vessels, which causes the vessels to dilate).

The dilation of blood vessels increases the oxygen and nutrients available to damaged tissue and aids the removal of toxic products released by dead cells. Increased permeability of dilated vessels allows platelets and phagocytes to infiltrate damaged tissue where platelets may contribute to clotting and release growth factors, while phagocytes engulf and remove damaged tissue and dead cells.

So, what type of injuries can you use acupuncture for? Well, given the two thousand year history, it's estimated that more people have been treated with acupuncture than any other therapy (and probably all other therapies combined). It stands to reason that acupuncture has been used both effectively and not so effectively for any type of musculoskeletal injury you might imagine.

We are, however, only interested in the most effective acupuncture treatment. On that basis, if we consider all other aspects of injury management are equal in caring for the athlete (exercise adaptation, progressive rehabilitation, concurrent therapies) we can expect acupuncture to positively contribute to treatment of the following types of injury:

- **Post-acute joint sprain.**

While many acupuncturists will achieve some effect treating acutely swollen joints by using points away from the injury site and on the other limb (a cross over effect, a bit like reinforcing a sports technique by learning it on the non-dominant side), I prefer to focus on the RICE principles until the acute inflammatory characteristics have subsided, at which point I find acupuncture to be effective in reducing pain and aiding tissue repair.

- **Post-acute (72 hours) muscle strain or tear.**

All three stated effects of acupuncture are applicable in this type of injury. There is also the postulated possibility that in minor injury, platelet derived growth factors may stimulate satellite stem cells within muscle tissue to divide and regenerate some amount of functional tissue.

- **Increased muscular tone due to fatigue or repetitive loading.**

Ah Shi acupuncture or trigger point needling of identified tight and tender bands within target muscle tissue is an effective means of reducing localised muscle spasm. A more general, widespread reduction of muscle tone may be achieved using other acupuncture approaches to reduce pain and sympathetic nervous system activity.

- **Chronic overuse injuries.**

While associated pain and tightness alone may suggest that acupuncture is likely to be beneficial, I would probably be more interested in using local needling to re-invigorate the body's own natural response to the chronic injury by increasing local circulation and the phagocytic removal of damaged tissue and cells (normally through the white blood cells).

N.B. While pain moderation is probably the most accepted effect of acupuncture, there are many causes of pain in sporting injury (nerve injury, bone injury, etc). Pain by itself should not be considered an indication unless the cause is first determined.

Sports Report – March 2021

Upper Coomera State Secondary College – Future Stars

The educational core sessions that have been presented this term have been Dealing with the Media with Wayne Hickson. The Year 7 pupils simulated a mix zone and press conference. The pupils enjoyed this and had a lot of fun being journalists and sports stars. Exercise physiologist, Jess, from All Sports Physio took the Year 9s through a Strength and Conditioning session. She also delivered an informative session to the Year 8 class about optimal heart rates for training, especially for teenagers.

The Year 7s visited the Gold Coast Sporting Hall of fame. They spent and interesting hour finding out information about sporting legends of the Gold Coast.

Rugby Union

24 under 11 players have been enjoying the start of our U12 Rugby union program. The players have been working on a variety of on field skills. A nutrition presentation by Steffi form Eat Smart got our young players thinking about good food to fuel their young bodies. Sessions on Psychology and injury prevention will be delivered this week.

Taekwondo

The Academy has concluded another BMX program in 2020 at the Nerang BMX Club. The program included eight sessions along with educational sessions specific to their sport. The group consisted of 12 riders aged between 7 and 13. Educational sessions consisted of sports psychology, injury prevention, theraband circuit work, strength and conditioning activities and bike maintenance.

Referees Program

The referees program commenced on Monday 8th Feb and will run for 8 weeks. Numbers in this group has grown from 2020 and currently there is up to 24 in the group. Over the period of 8 weeks the refs will be delivered up to five (5) life specific sessions. On field sessions have concentrated on running technique.

Dealing with Injuries

One of the most challenging times for both an athlete and coach is when injuries occur. Naturally several factors influence the impact of the injury and should be taken into account:

- What is the age of the athlete?
- What is the maturity of the athlete?
- What else in their life does the athlete have – school, work etc?
- What supports does the athlete have?
- What are the athletes coping strategies like?
- How has the athlete coped with previous injury?
- What is the timing of the injury with regard to competitions and goals set?
- What pain levels are associated with the injury and how much does it impact on their general day-to-day life?
- What is the diagnosis and prognosis and is there appropriate, affordable and adequate medical and rehabilitation support?
- Does the athlete need down time or to be kept busy?

All of these questions as well as others are very relevant and should be considered when an athlete experiences and injury.

Considering that the stereotypical role of the coach is to stand at the track or at training and races holding a stopwatch, monitoring the sessions that they have set. The coach role with regard to injury can be quite challenging. Time pressures and challenges of dealing with one athlete and all of the requirements that are necessary for dealing with an injured athlete are all too often under-estimated. In addition, in many sports that I work with at present, including Track and Field the athlete (fairly or unfairly) judges their coach on the support that they get away from training, as much as they do at training. Confidence can be gained or lost by an athlete with regard too how a coach manages or is involved with the injury. Many injuries stress coach-athlete relationships beyond repair.

In the luxury sports such as AFL and ARL, quite the opposite occurs. Due to resources the athletes are able to spend even more time with rehab and conditioning specialists on a daily basis. Support is on-going and readily available at no cost. In one sport that I am associated with they were able to provide a young athlete with cab vouchers to attend rehab and be at their training venue following surgery, which kept them engaged with other athletes, their medical and support teams.

Of course, even with such support, some athletes will still be unable to cope. Their general coping styles are poor and coaches need all of the additional support that they can get. However as a coach you should never forget that the athlete will always see you as the "go to" person and seek your opinion or decisions once advice is given from appropriate professionals. In another sport I recently dealt with an athlete that had some injury challenges prior to their selection trials and even with doctor, psychological, family and other supports, there was still a particular crisis day where pertinent decisions had to be made. They (appropriately) contacted the coach probably at least ten times in a 24 hour period to assists them to make an informed decision about their decision.

Some of the thinking traps that athletes and coaches can both fall into when injury occurs include:

Catastrophising – this is where an injury has occurred, it is not good, but is being interpreted as the end of their career or as if the whole world has collapsed. A more appropriate response is "OK, it's not good, but it's not the end of the world, or the end of your athletics".

Blame – where the injury is someone's fault and the athlete takes no responsibility. It is most likely that the injury was due to a number of causes, an injury is never deliberate and that it has to be seen as a learning opportunity to avoid or reduce from occurring again. The responsibility is shared. This is particularly relevant if an athlete feels that they have not been heard or listened to. It occurs the other way – from coaches to athletes too!

Diminishing – diminishing the likelihood of an injury ever occurring in a sport where the nature of improving requires pushing physical boundaries. Reinterpreting this thinking trap as acknowledging that injury is a part of sport and improving.

Invincibility – I must keep pushing – I feel great or I was flying are common traps in thinking that contribute to ignoring warning signs. Forewarn athletes that such thinking significantly increases their vulnerability to injury.

The thinking trap examples above illustrate how important communication is with regard to injury prevention. It is one area that all sports could embrace better with regard to reducing injury. The challenge is that many athletes are optimistic and enthusiastic and by their very nature are conditioned to switch their attention away from soreness or the signs of an impending injury. However, the value of honest and open communication is underestimated. An athlete has to feel comfortable that they are not being seen as "soft", by giving feedback or information to their coach. Indeed, they also have to be comfortable within themselves to give the communication. Too many times when discussing injuries with athletes they identify that there were warning signs, such as "yes, my back was very tight before I tore my hamstring".

RESEARCH

A study of 136 elite injured athletes from 25 sports in Australia investigated four phases of injury – onset of injury, partial recovery, semi-recovery and full recovery. The duration of injuries was 4-99 weeks. One of the main findings, not surprisingly, was that over the duration of the injury confidence and vigour increased, while negative emotional responses decreased. This implies that it is natural and expected for athletes to be disappointed about the injury. One important finding of this study was that there was NO typical mood cycle that athletes went through following their injury. Some coaches expect a cycle that includes anger, grief etc, however this is not relevant. Athletes did not experience times of highs and lows, nor did they go from being extremely low to very high in their mood in a short period of time following the injury. The negative moods of the athletes were highest at phase one and gradually decreased with each stage through the injury period.

Importantly, it was suggested that knowing that the time immediately following the injury is the highest negative time, this is where the most effort for rehab should be focussed. It was also found that confusion from athletes was highest in this period and therefore, greater care and attention was needed to clearly explain the diagnosis and rehab process in greater detail than typically occurs. It was also found that confidence in a rehab program was high, which is again not surprising considering that the

Continued over

athletes in the study typically had high levels of support. However, it does imply that sub elite athletes with less support can maintain confidence by a clear and well structured rehab program that is not overly arduous when considering their other commitments. It was found that even with the elite athletes, motivation to rehab fluctuated over time consistently through all four phases, although the overall trend was increased commitment over time from the initial injury. (1)

ACTION

Considering the discussion points and research outlined above there are a number of action items that are worth consideration by coaches with regard to injury.

- Emphasise the importance of communication and honesty with regard to injury. To reinforce this, keep basic record / diary of athletes reporting a number of variables that you consider to be important such as a) intensity rating of the session, b) fatigue levels, c) reported soreness, d) sleep. Many professional sports now keep such records on a computer logging system on a daily or weekly basis. Without access to such technology, this can be kept in a good old fashioned paper and pen diary format and facilitates open discussion, as well as recording important indirect performance data.
- Encourage athletes to complete an "injury form" post injury to enhance communication and clarity about the injury, as well as having a learning tool. For example, a) diagnosis b) goals for rehab c) learning factors etc. Such a process sets the athlete on the right path in the important early stages.
- Develop a mental focus for the rehab period, with emphasis on the early phase. Many coaches outline training or rehab exercises weekly or monthly, but this can include emotional and mental aspects in a phase period, such as, mentally keep busy, patience, attack etc. From this a "theme" for the rehab period can be established. This can be incorporated into the injury form.
- Keep a portfolio of newspaper or radio stories about athletes from a range of sports recovering from injury. A good recent example is Michael Clarke, Australian cricket captain discussing how he was overly-ambitious returning from a hamstring injury and that he takes full responsibility and learnt a great deal from it. Such information can be both informative and motivational for athletes.
- Emphasise a team approach to injury management including parents, medical staff, including Sport Psychologist's where possible. Naturally this is inevitable where Dr., physiotherapist or managing practitioner opinion guides the direction of the rehab from a diagnosis perspective, but do not underestimate your role.

In summary, there is no doubt that injuries challenge both athletes and coaches in many ways. Be aware of the many factors influencing an athlete at the time of an injury, as well as possible thinking traps and that the time, particularly early in an injury phase is critical and your influence and involvement as a coach is also paramount. Be prepared for a range of emotional responses from an athlete and involve them as much as possible in the (structured) plans moving forward.

REFERENCE

(1) Quinn & Fallon. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 11, 210-229, 1999

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