

“The degree of success”: What can we learn from UK dual-career badminton players stress and coping experiences?



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The Dual-Career



- The dual-career can offer social (e.g., expanded social support systems), psychosocial (e.g., broader identity) and financial (e.g., enhanced future career prospects) benefits (Vickers et al., 2022).



- However, the dual-career may also evoke a number of challenges that have the potential to harm both well-being and performance (Vickers et al., 2021).



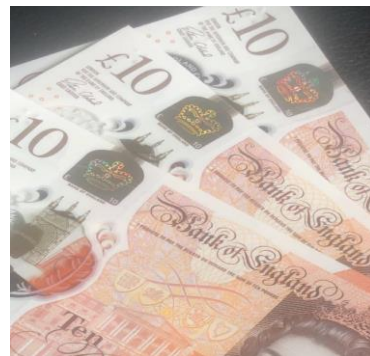
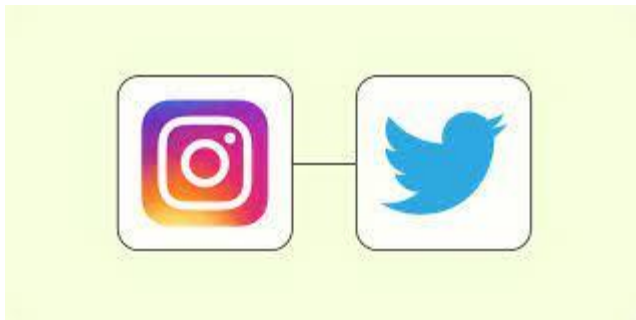
Aim

- What are the perceived stressors encountered by dual-career badminton athletes, along with coping strategies used and effectiveness of these in relation to maintaining academic/ sporting performance and well-being?
- What are academic stakeholders' perceptions of stressors encountered by dual-career badminton athletes, along with coping strategies used and effectiveness of these in relation to maintaining academic/ sporting performance and well-being?

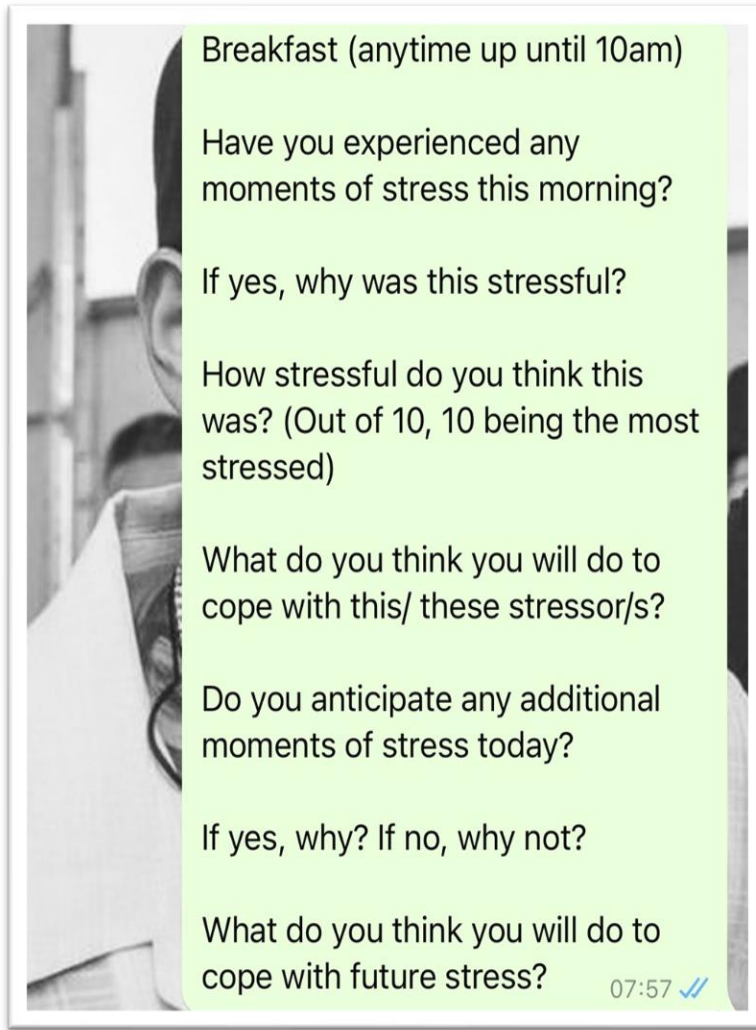


Methodology

| Gender | Age (M; SD) | Educational programme | | Competitive level |
|---------------|-------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| Male (n = 4) | 20.8; 2.7 | BSc | 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">All athletes competed regularly in gold tournaments:Gold (elite/ top-level players competing to qualify for the English National Championships)University scholarship for badminton. |
| | | MSc | 1 | |
| | | PhD | 1 | |
| Female (n =3) | 20.7; 2.1 | BSc | 2 | |
| | | MSc | 1 | |
| | | PhD | 0 | |



Methodology



Breakfast (anytime up until 10am)

Have you experienced any moments of stress this morning?

If yes, why was this stressful?

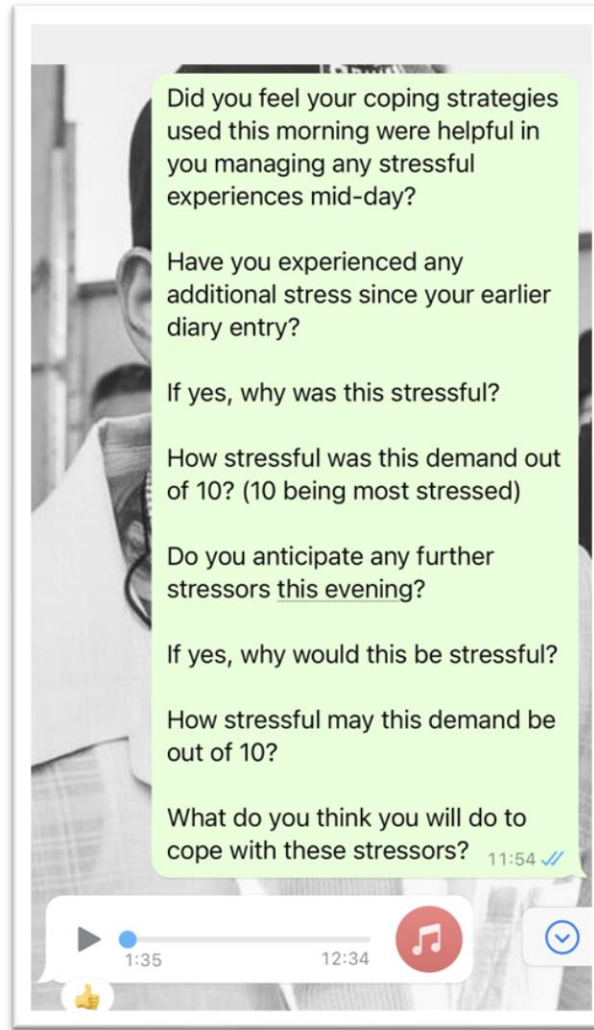
How stressful do you think this was? (Out of 10, 10 being the most stressed)

What do you think you will do to cope with this/ these stressor/s?

Do you anticipate any additional moments of stress today?

If yes, why? If no, why not?

What do you think you will do to cope with future stress? 07:57 ✓✓



Did you feel your coping strategies used this morning were helpful in you managing any stressful experiences mid-day?

Have you experienced any additional stress since your earlier diary entry?

If yes, why was this stressful?

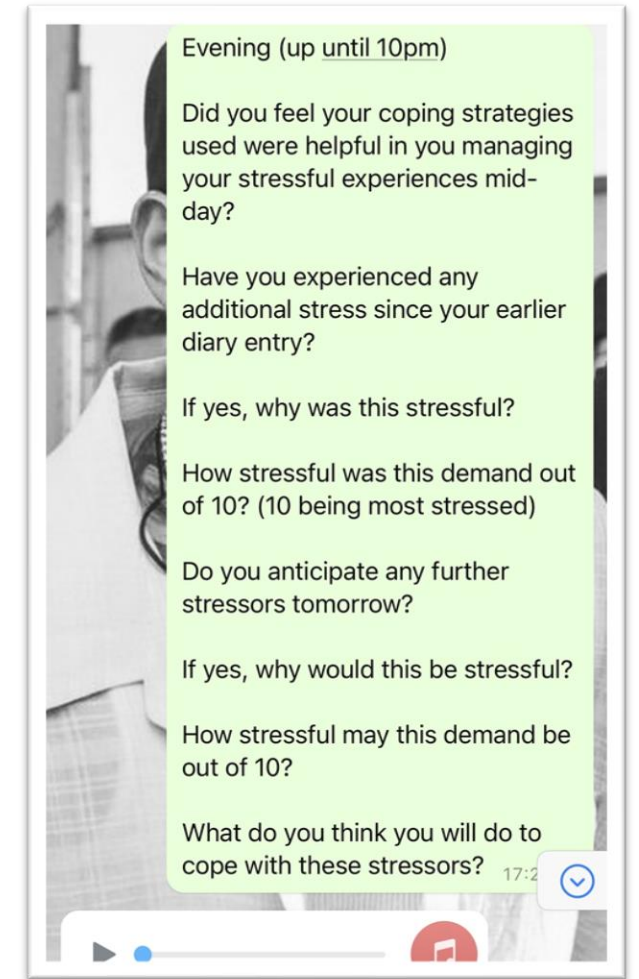
How stressful was this demand out of 10? (10 being most stressed)

Do you anticipate any further stressors this evening?

If yes, why would this be stressful?

How stressful may this demand be out of 10?

What do you think you will do to cope with these stressors? 11:54 ✓✓



Evening (up until 10pm)

Did you feel your coping strategies used were helpful in you managing your stressful experiences mid-day?

Have you experienced any additional stress since your earlier diary entry?

If yes, why was this stressful?

How stressful was this demand out of 10? (10 being most stressed)

Do you anticipate any further stressors tomorrow?

If yes, why would this be stressful?

How stressful may this demand be out of 10?

What do you think you will do to cope with these stressors? 17:2 ✓✓

Key Findings



Appraisal: Understanding the benefits of stress



If an encounter is appraised as stressful, there are four possible transactional alternatives that may be experienced: challenge, benefit, harm/loss, and threat.

- **Challenge appraisals** arise when personal significance of the stressor is in proportion to the available coping resources and, thus, gain may result from the situation.
- **Benefit** when an individual perceives that enhancement to well-being has already occurred.
- **Harm/loss** appraisals occur when an individual perceives that enhancement to well-being has already occurred.
- **Threat** appraisals arise when personal significance outweighs coping resources and, thus, damage to the individual's well-being is anticipated.
 - Threat appraisal was most prominent within this study.



Appraisal: Understanding the benefits of stress

Sam

“Today is the final for BUCS individuals and I think it will be quite tough because I will not be playing myself and wish that I was taking part and lots of people from my team playing. **I think it will be good for me** but stressful... to cope with it I have to remind myself **that there will be a time that I will be able to have the same thing** as them I think it will be interesting to learn”



Lewis

“I think that **nervous energy** from the start crept back in towards the end and just lost all concentration...there was a little bit of **pressure externally**, because we need to perform. Because we're on scholarships, so we're kind of expected to perform. And obviously, internally, I think we just put a bit **too much pressure on ourselves** to try and force anything out of the game.”



Coping: Helpful and Unhelpful

Coping with specific stressors is highly influenced by situational factors (e.g., frequency and intensity of stress) and individual characteristics, for example; personality factors can predict typical responses to stress (e.g., perceptions of control).

Lewis

Week One: Wednesday

Knowing me, the stress will probably get up to about an eight and a half, nine. I do get quite cranky before tournaments, because I just want to focus and want things to go well. I'll probably go to the gym, because I'll probably be quite frustrated after the morning session, especially if things don't go well. So I'll probably go to the gym and let out some steam on the weights as a last big session before we go.

Week Two: Wednesday

I've also been speaking to my S&C coach and he said start maybe introducing a bit of yoga now and a bit of meditation, just to relax and work on some different areas, rather than intense performance.



Coping flexibility

Coping flexibility comprises of the individual's coping repertoire, variation, and goodness of fit (Kato, 2012).

- Strategies available.
- The range of strategies.
- The ability to modify coping behaviour in accordance to the situation.

Steph

Week Two: Wednesday

If I am stressed later, I think eating healthily always makes me feel very like good and cooking a healthy meal and just having a shower and then watching some TV. **with not doing like loads of university work.**



Stakeholder perceptions

| Stakeholders' perceptions | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Barriers | <i>Staff not understanding stressors, lack of ownership and communication, lack of provision, lack of engagement/buy-in, large volume of athletes, relationship with athlete.</i> |
| Facilitators | <i>Academic flexibility, expectations for athlete, timing of resources, workshops and education, requesting, individual programmes.</i> |



Future interventions

Olivia

“I think being able to reflect on what happened in the morning, afternoon and evening helped. I think assigning a number has made it easier to compare and put stressful situations into perspective. On some days I did struggle to fill it in as it wasn’t always relevant and with regards to coping I wouldn’t necessarily say I had specific ones I am much more of a crack on and get it done person.”

Chris

“I did feel that I was thinking more about reasons why I might have felt stressed, it also got me to develop better coping methods such as thorough planning or getting good sleep and preparation before games so yes, in hindsight it was helpful”

All participants cited the benefits of engagement in this study by either developing, refining or affirming knowledge stress.

Coping effectiveness could be enhanced by better supporting athletes with their reflections (e.g. Olivia)



Implications for coaches and support staff: Summary

Athlete

- Development of coping flexibility
- Engagement in reflective practice (and dual reflection)
- Ownership and communication

University staff

- Understanding of stressors and coping
- Supporting ownership and personal development
- Conditions of scholarship (e.g., reflective practice)



Coach

- Understanding of stressors (e.g., competing demands, travel) and coping (e.g., exercise)
- Stress mindset
- Facilitate communication between all parties



*Thankyou for
listening*

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*Please note that although the verbal commentary was identical, the voices used within the presentation was not that of the actual athletes.



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