

## Question 22 (continued)

- (c) Analyse the psychological strategies athletes could employ to enhance performance.

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There are many psychological strategies an athlete could employ to enhance performance, but the degree and type of strategies undertaken are different for each individual.

Mental Rehearsal  
Visualisation  
Motivation  
Arousal

Motivation plays a major role. If there is an incentive to win/performance well, such as a prize, beating a rival or gaining a personal best, an athlete will strive to perform at their best. Motivation could be internal, such as the desire to win, or pleasure from results, or external, such as from pressure to succeed from the coach, family and colleagues.

This motivation can be both positive and/or negative depending on how an athlete deals with it.

Visualisation and mental rehearsal can enhance performance. By imagining/visualising how they will perform a skill, an athlete can ready themselves for what they need to do to perform that skill to the best of their ability. They can "see" what and how they are going to do their activity, so when it comes to performing the task,

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## Question 22 (continued)

they are ready. By Mentally Rehearsing like this, and watching competitors, an athlete knows what is required when it is their turn to perform.

Optimal arousal also needs to be attained to ~~see~~ enhance performance.

If an athlete is under-aroused or if they are too nervous and anxious, they will not perform at their best. Part of the mental preparation is to find the level of arousal which enables them to perform at their peak. This could include crowd involvement, the noise of spectators or the confidence of team-mates and themselves.

When combined, the psychological strategies of mental rehearsal, visualisation, motivation and optimum arousal all contribute to enhance the performance of an athlete.

End of Question 22