

- motivation - pos. neg. intrinsic, extrinsic, soc. mat. internal reinforcement
- anxiety - optimum arousal (overcoming stress)
- managing anxiety - conc./attention skills, mental rehearsal, visualisation, relaxation, goal setting.

Marks

Question 22 (continued)

- (c) Analyse the psychological strategies athletes could employ to enhance performance. 10

Psychological strategies have become increasingly common when it comes to preparation for performance of athletes. Psychological strategies can include different forms of motivation, reaching optimum arousal and managing anxiety in order to enhance performance. Motivation can be positive or negative which mainly comes from coaches and supporters. For the athlete to enhance their own performance themselves through psychological means, they need to employ intrinsic motivation and internal reinforcement from within themselves. To do this they must have a positive outlook on their performance and seek to improve rather than dwell on the negative aspects. Intrinsic motivation is the most important kind of motivation for the athlete to employ because it is coming from within themselves. Optimum arousal is also vital to achieving the best performance and it comes as a balance between high and low arousal. The athletes needs to prepare themselves to reach a state of desired optimum arousal where it is proved by the inverted U hypothesis, that their performance will be at a maximum. However, to reach this desired state is individual to each athlete so achieving optimum arousal cannot necessary be done as a team but each athlete must employ techniques to reach

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## Question 22 (continued)

this desired state. This can be achieved through concentration and attentional skills where the athlete remains focused on the task at hand and listens effectively to instructions so they have a clear mental picture of what they have to do. **Mental rehearsal** can also be used if the athlete is anxious or in a state of uncertainty. By replaying the motions of the game - (such as kicking a goal in football) they will become more confident that they know what they are doing and can do it effectively. **Visualisation** works with the same principles as mental rehearsal where they visualise themselves performing the task and achieving to the extent that will give them positive results. **Relaxation techniques** such as centred breathing and progressive muscular relaxation can be used if the athlete is over aroused and ~~the~~ relaxation will bring them back down to a state of optimum arousal where they will ~~achieve~~ optimum performance. **Psychological preparation** is individual to the athlete and in order to enhance their performance they need to be aware of which techniques will help them reach it. **Goal setting** gives a sense of motivation in order to achieve their maximum performance and stay motivated.

End of Question 22