

MAKE OR BREAK! ATHLETES' TRANSITIONS FROM PART-TIME TO FULL-TIME PERFORMANCE PROGRAMMES



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WHAT?

This research investigated athletes transitioning from part-time to full-time performance programmes, seeking to understand commonalities in successful transitions alongside potential barriers and pinch points.

WHY?

Understanding the common themes related to successful athlete transitions, alongside potential barriers and pinch points, provides practitioners and broader stakeholders with insights that can be used to refine and optimise their provision for athletes.

HOW?

The research employed semi-structured interviews, speaking with athletes (who have recently transitioned to full-time performance programmes) and coaches (who actively work in performance pathways). Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data, from which three co-constructed themes are presented: (1) *Physical Considerations*, (2) *Psychosocial Strain*, and (3) *Athlete Support*



PARTICIPANTS

x4 Athletes (x2 male, x2 female)

x5 Coaches (x5 male)

A diverse range of sports were utilised throughout



RESULTS

SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS		POTENTIAL BARRIERS
Moderated training loads upon the athletes' initial transition.	Vs.	Dramatic increase in the athletes' training load upon transition.
Athletes partake in rehabilitation programmes, promoting their recovery.	Vs.	Limited prehabilitation or recovery aids undertaken by/offered to athletes.
Athletes have been equipped with the skills to cope with adverse situations.	Vs.	Athletes have not been equipped with the skills to cope with adverse situations.
Athletes have access to a multidisciplinary team, supporting their development in various areas.	Vs.	Athletes do not have access to a multidisciplinary team, and limited additional support is provided.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Coaches and key stakeholders significantly impact the outcome of pathway transitions. To ensure such transitions are successful, coaches and key stakeholders must consider the following:

- Design training volumes to be appropriate for the athlete's current capacity, avoiding injury and burnout.
- Athletes are experiencing appropriate challenges within sessions, equipping them with the skills needed to handle and overcome adverse situations.
- Ensure athletes can access various support mechanisms and expertise (e.g., nutritionist, psychologist, strength & conditioning) to support their development best.

