Motivation has long been considered a vital part of sports performance. It has a future orientation and involves perceptual, decision-making and evaluative processes (Roberts, 2001). The resulting behaviour may be directed and caused by integration of emotions and drives forming the basis for thoughts and behaviours in general (Robinson et al, 2005).

An individual expresses varying motivational types and intensities, which are considered complex and unique (Deponte, 2004). These motivational profiles may be used to identify an individual, his/her level of involvement in an activity (Vlachopoulos et al, 2000) and are aligned with global motivation. These affect contextual and then situational motivation hierarchically (Vallerand, in Roberts, 2001), suggesting that an athlete’s motivational decision may be influenced by certain personality traits.

Participants comprised first year university sports students (n=239). An adapted version of Eysenck’s Personality Inventory (Sanderson, 1988) and the Sports Motivation Scale (Pelletier et al, 1995) were administered.

Preliminary findings support current theory in relation to extraversion and stimulus seeking. However, the need to seek out stimulation may be twofold depending on the individual’s orientation (Newburg et al, 2002). Additional literature suggests that intrinsic motivation leaves individuals feeling good, enhancing the hedonic element, whereas, extrinsic motivation can lead to an individual feeling undesirable effects (Frederick and Morrison, 1999).


