WHICH ANXIETY DIMENSION DO PARTICIPANTS IN TEAM SPORTS PERCEIVE AS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL UPON PREPARATION AND PERFORMANCE?
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ABSTRACT

Competitive anxiety has been a popular topic within sports psychology research. However, previous research has failed to identify the influence of all three anxiety dimensions upon performance. Therefore, the aim of the present study was to investigate how influential performers perceived the intensity, frequency and direction of anxiety upon their preparation and performance. Participants were female footballers [n=7] currently competing in the British University Premier division. Participants gave their consent to take part in the study, which involved a series of semi-structured interviews. Before the interview process could occur, all participants were asked to complete ‘thoughts and feeling diaries. The diaries were administered once during the early preparation phase, and again during the late preparation phase. These were then used to aid recall during the interviews. Causal networks were then produced for the three main phases of the anxiety response; early preparation, late preparation and competition. The main findings indicated that performers’ perceived direction as the most influential upon their preparation. Participants felt that if their symptoms were facilitative then the intensity and frequency of their anxiety was insignificant. Participants identified the combination of frequency and direction as the most influential component during competition. These findings provide support for research criticising the intensity-alone approach. Subsequently, the findings highlight the importance of direction and frequency dimensions, and provide an interesting avenue for future research.

Key words: Anxiety, intensity, frequency, direction, performance.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION
1.0 Introduction

“Sports men and women are required to produce optimal performances in anxiety producing situations” (Hanton & Connaughton, 2002, p.87). Therefore, the ability to control these anxious thoughts and feelings can greatly influence the level of success that an individual may achieve. It is not surprising then, that sports psychologists invest a great deal of time into helping athletes cope with the stress and anxiety that affects their preparation and performance (Jones, 1995). However, it is vital that the work of sports psychologists is based upon sufficient knowledge and theory. Consequently, the link between competitive anxiety and performance has proved a popular topic of enquiry within sport psychology (Hanton, Mellalieu & Hall, 2004).

The most popular theory utilised in sports psychology research has been the Multidimensional Anxiety Theory (MAT). This was largely developed due to the work of Martens (1990), and the establishment of the Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2). MAT split the global term of anxiety into cognitive, somatic and self-confidence sub-components. However, the MAT was criticised for having an ‘intensity-alone approach’, and therefore being limited in its view of the anxiety concept (Jones, 1991). Based on the work of Mahoney and Avener (1977), who concluded that anxiety was not always negative, three main dimensions of anxiety emerged with the literature; intensity, direction and frequency (Jones, 1991; Swain & Jones, 1993; Jones, 1995).

In order to highlight the weaknesses of the ‘intensity-alone’ approach, and to further advance the understanding of competitive anxiety, many studies have focused upon the link between direction and performance. One of the first studies to incorporate a direction scale in the CSAI-2 was that of Jones and Swain (1992). Their findings indicated no differences in the intensity of anxiety between high and low competitive groups. However, the high competitive group perceived their symptoms as more facilitative toward performance in comparison to the low competitive group. These results are significant in demonstrating the weaknesses of the intensity-alone approach, as without the direction scale no differences would have been found between subjects. The findings from this study initiated further research into the
direction dimension, the majority of which provided support for its inclusion within anxiety research (Swain & Jones, 1996; Hanton & Jones, 1997; Hanton, Jones & Mullen, 2000).

Support for the direction dimension includes investigations into the relationship between intensity, direction and performance variance. Several studies have discovered that direction is a better predictor of performance variance than intensity (Swain & Jones, 1996; Chamberlain & Hale, 2007). In contrast to the vast amount of research investigating both intensity and direction of anxiety, no study has formally tested the link between frequency and performance. This is particularly remarkable as researchers have highlighted the need to consider frequency when analysing an individuals’ response to anxiety (Burton, 1988; Jones, 1991; Jones, 1995; Thomas, Maynard & Hanton, 2004). Likewise, it has been suggested that individuals may be more likely to effectively recall the frequency of their symptoms in comparison to intensity (Mellalieu et al., 2006). The absence of research investigating the link between all three dimensions with performance means that the understanding of the anxiety concept within the literature is not complete. Similarly, research investigating the temporal responses of all three dimensions of anxiety is sparse; with the majority of temporal research focusing upon intensity and direction. Although, Hanton et al., (2004b) suggested that frequency is more sensitive to changes in time than intensity or direction.

The majority of research has been limited due to its use of the CSAI-2, which provides no reasons ‘how’ or ‘why’ the differences between the dimensions exist. Recently, several studies within the anxiety literature have adopted qualitative studies, in order to discover more detailed information regarding the individual dimensions, temporal patterning and psychological skill usage (Hanton & Jones, 1999b; Hanton et al., 2002; Hanton et al., 2004b; Thomas et al., 2007). However, despite the opportunity to attain more detailed information, none of these qualitative studies have investigated the link between the individual dimensions and performance.

Although recent research has focused upon both the individual dimensions of anxiety and the temporal patterning of the anxiety response, few studies have considered the
influence of all three dimensions (intensity, direction and frequency) upon preparation and performance. Specifically, although research has considered how the individual dimensions can influence performance variance, frequency has often been neglected within these studies (Jones, Swain & Hardy, 1993; Swain & Jones, 1996; Chamberlain & Hale, 2007). Similarly, rather than considering the athletes perceptions of the influence of each component of anxiety, quantitative measures of performance have been used. These studies provide no reasons why the individual dimensions cause the variance in performance. However, no qualitative study has considered these concepts.

Therefore, the main aim of this study was to use qualitative methods in order to investigate which of the three dimensions of anxiety are perceived by performers as the most influential. Secondary objectives were to identify how the three dimensions changed throughout the build-up to competition, and the underlying factors that may have affected this. The aims of this study were based upon the knowledge that a greater understanding of the individual dimensions, combined with the temporal responses, will enable the development of more effective intervention strategies. This may help athletes manipulate their anxiety in order to consistently produce optimal performance (Hanton & Jones, 1999a; Cerin, Szabo, Hunt & Williams, 2000).
CHAPTER III
METHOD
3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction
The purpose of the present study was to investigate how the three subcomponents of competitive anxiety (intensity, frequency and direction) are perceived to influence performance by competitors in women’s football. A secondary aim was to evaluate the underlying factors that may affect these three constructs in both preparation and competition. In order to explore these concepts, the researcher conducted a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with women footballers.

3.2 Justification of method
A variety of methodologies could have been used to explore the research question. For example, a modified version of the CSAI-2 (Martens, 1990; Swain & Jones, 1993) could have been administered at numerous stages in the preparation phase and post-competition. However, this method would not have provided any reasons as to ‘how’ or ‘why’ the performer perceived a particular dimension as most influential. Cerin et al., (2000) suggested that investigation into the temporal patterning of anxiety required different methodologies than the traditional quantitative techniques. The interaction of all three components of anxiety is a complex concept, which requires more fine-grained procedures. Therefore, in-line with recent research into competitive anxiety, a qualitative approach was adopted in order to gain more detailed information (Hanton & Jones, 1999a; Hanton & Connaughton, 2002; Hanton et al., 2002; Thomas et al., 2007).

3.3 Participants
Eight female footballers were chosen to participate in the study. The main considerations when selecting participants for the interview process were that they all competed at the same level, in the same sport and were of the same gender. This is in response to research highlighting the differential anxiety responses between elite and non-elite (Jones et al., 1994, 1995; Hanton & Connaughton, 2002), individual and team-sports (Hanton, Jones & Mullen, 2000) and finally, males and females (Jones, Swain & Cale, 1991; Perry & Williams, 1998). Therefore, all
participants were present members of a British University (BUSA) Women’s football 1st team, currently competing in the BUSA women’s premier league south. Kvale (1996) suggested that high numbers of participants in qualitative research can cause a reduction in the quality of the data collected; hence the number of subjects was kept relatively low. This was in-line with recent qualitative anxiety research (Hanton et al., 2002; Hanton et al., 2004a; Thomas et al., 2007a). Participants ranged in age from 19-23 [M =21, S.D. ± 2], playing position, highest level played and years competing. All athletes agreed to participate, and completed written informed consent forms (See appendix A), in order to confirm their willingness to take part. Participants were also made aware that anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained throughout the study.

3.4 Instrumentation

3.41 The Experience Sampling Method (ESM)

In order to limit problems with recall during the interview process, participants were asked to complete a ‘thoughts and feelings diary’ at two separate points in the preparation period (Appendix B). This was based on the ESM process utilised by Thomas and colleagues (2007a). Researchers have used ESM data to underpin the probes used in interviews, and aid recall (Voelkl & Nicholson, 1992). In-line with Thomas et al., (2007a) participants were asked to record any thoughts or feelings they were experiencing about their upcoming match. Next, participants were instructed to report the level, frequency and direction of these symptoms (see Appendix B). Participants were also instructed to record any techniques or strategies they used to control the frequency and/or level of their symptoms. Subjects were asked to complete the diary five days before competition (early preparation phase), then again the night before the game (late preparation phase).

3.42 Semi-structured interview

Interviews are a useful technique to examine variables that cannot be measured directly, such as thoughts, feelings and intentions (Patton, 2002). Although, early papers within sport psychology adopted mainly quantitative methods, recently researchers have highlighted the benefits of a qualitative approach. Specifically the ability to retrieve deep, detailed information (Biddle, Markland, Gilbourne, Chatzisarantis & Sparkes, 2001; Patton, 2002). Consequently, semi-structured
interviews consisting of a series of open-ended questions were the main method of enquiry. Semi-structured interviews consist of a set of pre-determined questions and probes, although these can be adapted dependant on the individual interview (Patton, 2002). They allow more flexibility than structured interviews, and the opportunity to expand on any key points that may emerge.

Heiman (1999) suggested that when designing an interview, the researcher should first search the existing literature in order to inform their choice of questions. Therefore, the interview guide consisted of a series of questions based on the existing studies within this topic, in particular Thomas and Colleagues (2004; 2007). The interview guide consisted of four main sections. Firstly, it was necessary to ensure that all subjects were aware of the distinction between the three subcomponents of anxiety. Therefore the interview began by clarifying the terms that would be used throughout, confirming the participants’ understanding. This also helped to develop rapport between the interviewer and interviewee, and to focus the participant upon the present topic.

In-line with the work of Thomas et al (2007a; 2007b), the preparation period was split into an early phase (7-2 days before competition), and a late phase (2days-immediately before). The main body of the interview was then further divided into relevant sections: 1. **Intensity of symptoms**, a) in the early phase, b) in the late phase and c) in competition. 2. **Frequency of symptoms**, a) in the early phase, b) in the late phase and c) in competition. Throughout the interview a series of elaboration probes were used in order to develop a complete and in depth understanding of the dimensions participants’ perceived as most influential. For the full interview guide please see appendix C.

### 3.43 Pilot Study

“Pilot studies are extremely valuable when developing questionnaires and interviews” (Heiman, 1999, p.273). A pilot study was conducted with a participating member of a BUSA women’s football 1st team. The two main objectives of the pilot study were to allow the researcher to practice their interview technique, and secondly to ensure that all questions asked were relevant to the research question and that the correct probes were being used. Due to the quality of the pilot study, it was
concluded that the data should be included in the final results. This increased the subject number of the overall study to 7.

3.5 Procedures
Before the interviews took place participants were given their thought and feeling sheets and instructed to complete these at the necessary time periods. The researcher contacted the participants at the relevant times via text message in order to remind them to complete their diaries. All interviews were conducted in quiet surroundings, familiar to the participant (Patton, 2002). The author was responsible for completing all interviews ensuring that all questions were asked in a similar manner. However, guidance during the interview process was provided by the project supervisor-an experienced researcher. Subjects were informed to use the thoughts and feelings diaries throughout the interviews in order to aid their recall, they were also asked not to guess at anything they could not remember. Similarly, all participants were asked to try and focus on the particular section and informed to tell the researcher if they did not understand any of the questions. All interviews were recorded using a digital recorder, and ranged from 25 to 60 minutes. Interviews were then transcribed verbatim, producing over 85 pages of typed transcript.

3.6 Reliability and Validity
Throughout the interview process it was vital to ensure that all data was reliable. “Reliability is a measure of consistency of the data” (Vincent, 1995, p. 3). In an attempt to ensure that the data collected was both reliable and accurate, the data collection process followed that outlined by Sparkes (2002), specifically each interview was transcribed before the next interview took place. All interviews were recorded and transcribed to guarantee that all data was complete. “Validity refers to the soundness or appropriateness of the questionnaire in measuring what it is designed to measure” (Vincent, 1995, p.2). In order to achieve this, questions were based upon existing literature and a pilot study was conducted.

3.7 Data analysis
In-line with procedures conducted by Miles and Huberman (1994), data collected from the interviews was analysed using causal networks. Causal networks are a visual representation of the key variables within a study (Hanton & Connaughton,
Following methods utilised by Hanton and Connaughton (2002), data analysis consisted of six main stages: 1) Transcripts were studied by the researcher in order to gain familiarity, 2) Causal streams were then identified inductively from the transcripts in the form of raw quotations, 3) deductive networks were then developed, and the frequency of each stream calculated, 4) deductive analysis was then conducted to confirm the presence of all themes, 5) the causal networks were then examined by the research supervisors in order to limit bias, 6) the causal networks were then presented to all participants who agreed that they were fair representation of their anxiety response. During this process, analysis was conducted both inductively (allowing themes to emerge from the text), and deductively (using pre-determined themes to search for quotations). (Scanlan et al., 1989). This follows the suggestion that qualitative analysis consists of both inductive and deductive methods (Biddle et al., 2001).
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION
5.0 Conclusion

Although previous research has considered the relationship between the intensity and direction dimensions and performance, frequency of anxiety has often been neglected within these studies (Swain & Jones, 1996; Chamberlain & Hale, 2007). Likewise, no previous studies have investigated how the performer perceives the anxiety dimensions. Therefore, using a qualitative method, the current study aimed to address these issues. Consequently, the main objective of the study was to discover which dimension of anxiety performer’s perceived to be the most influential upon their preparation and performance.

The findings from the present study indicated that frequency, intensity and direction of anxiety had both individual and shared triggers. This has implications for interventions focusing upon manipulating one, or all of the anxiety dimensions. In support of previous research, the intensity and frequency of the participants’ symptoms increased as competition neared (Hanton et al., 2004b; Thomas et al., 2004). However, in opposition to previous literature surrounding this topic, participants’ thoughts and feelings remained facilitative throughout preparation (Hanton et al., 2002; Thomas et al., 2004). The majority of participants within the study (73%) perceived direction of anxiety as the most influential upon their preparation. The main reasons for this were participants felt negative thoughts during their preparation would cause them to go into competition with a ‘negative frame of mind’. Participants also commented that if the direction of their symptoms was facilitative, then the intensity and frequency of their symptoms was not important.

In reference to competition; a combination of frequency and direction, or direction alone, were perceived to be the most influential upon an athletes’ performance. Performers suggested that experiencing negative thoughts very often during the game would be the greatest distraction. Due to the lack of research investigating this topic, it is not possible to support these findings with previous studies. However, the results from the present study add support for research criticising the intensity-alone approach (Jones, 1991; 1995; Jones et al., 1993). Subsequently, the findings provide
support for the inclusion of both direction and frequency dimensions of anxiety (Jones, 1995; Swain & Jones, 1996; Hanton & Jones, 1997; Thomas et al., 2004). Findings from the study provide incentive for future research to consider the effects of all three dimensions of anxiety upon performance, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Likewise, further investigation into coping strategies and temporal responses is required in relation to the individual dimensions. This will help to develop the understanding of this topic.
References


APPENDICES
I am Hayley O’Brien, from the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study.

The information gained from this study will be used in my 3rd year dissertation. I can assure you that any information you give will remain strictly confidential, and although I may use quotes from your interview at no point will your identity be revealed. During the interview I will be using a Dictaphone, this is to ensure accuracy and so that I can later produce a typed transcript.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and if at any point you would like to withdraw from the study, or refrain from answering a particular question then you are free to do so. Please be honest throughout the study as there are no right or wrong answers as I am trying to gain an understanding on your personal responses to anxiety in preparation and competition itself. You are free to answer ‘no comment’ to any questions asked throughout the interview. Finally, if you do not understand a question please just let me know.

Please could you sign below to confirm your participation within the study:-
Name:
Signature:
Date:

Thank you once again for your willingness to participate in the study.
APPENDIX B
**THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS FORM - Early phase**
*To be filled in once during the early phase of preparation*

Please answer as honestly as possible as there are no right or wrong answers. All information will remain confidential and used in the study to gain an understanding about your personal thoughts and feelings in preparation for competition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thought/Feeling</th>
<th>+ve or –ve?</th>
<th>Frequency of thoughts/feelings (percentage time experienced)</th>
<th>How influential is this upon your upcoming performance?</th>
<th>Level of thoughts/feelings experienced</th>
<th>How influential is this upon your upcoming performance?</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0% = low; 100% = high</td>
<td>1 = not very; 5 = very</td>
<td>1 = very low; 5 = very high</td>
<td>1 = not very; 5 = very</td>
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</table>
1) Please list the thoughts and feelings you are experiencing right now in relation to your upcoming competition/match

2) Do you regard these thoughts/feelings as positive (+ve) or negative (-ve) towards your performance?

3) Please rate the percentage time you have experienced these feelings since you last competed, with 0%=low and 100%= high.

4) Please state how influential you feel this frequency/Percentage time will be upon your upcoming performance, with 1= not very and 5= very influential.

5) Please rate the level of thoughts and feelings you have experienced since you last competed, with 1= very low and 5= very high

6) Finally, please state how influential you feel this level of thoughts/feelings will be upon your upcoming performance, with 1= not very and 5= very influential.

Thank-you for your time and Co-operation in this part of the study.
THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS FORM- Late phase  
*To be filled in twice during the late phase preparation phase*

Please answer as honestly as possible as there are no right or wrong answers. All information will remain confidential and used in the study to gain an understanding about your personal thoughts and feelings in preparation for competition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thought/Feeling</th>
<th>+ve or –ve?</th>
<th>Frequency of thoughts/feelings (percentage time experienced)</th>
<th>How influential is this upon your upcoming performance?</th>
<th>Level of thoughts/feelings experienced</th>
<th>How influential is this upon your upcoming performance?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0%= low; 100%= high</td>
<td>1 = not very; 5 = very</td>
<td>1 = very low; 5 = very high</td>
<td>1 = not very; 5 = very</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1) Please list the thoughts and feelings you are experiencing right now in relation to your upcoming competition/match

2) Do you regard these thoughts/feelings as positive (+ve) or negative (-ve) towards your performance?

3) Please rate the percentage time you have experienced these feelings since the last time you completed this form, with 0%=low and 100%= high.

4) Please state how influential you feel this frequency/Percentage time will be upon your upcoming performance, with 1= not very and 5= very influential.

5) Please rate the level of thoughts and feelings you have experienced since you last completed this form, with 1= very low and 5= very high

6) Finally, please state how influential you feel this level of thoughts/feelings will be upon your upcoming performance, with 1= not very and 5= very influential.

Thank-you for your time and Co-operation in this part of the study
**General Information**

Subject no: 

Name: 

Age: 

Level of participation: 

Playing position: 

Date: 

Start time: 

Finish time:

**Section 1a-Introduction (not recorded)**

Hello, my name is Hayley O’Brien and I am a 3rd Year student at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff where I am studying Sport and Exercise Science. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview study and also thank you for completing the thoughts and feelings diary prior to this. The thoughts and feelings diary will be used to gain an understanding of your pre-competition thoughts and feelings. It will also be used to aid you answers throughout the interview and improve recall.

Through both stages of this study I am looking to develop my understanding of different components of anxiety (i.e. intensity, frequency and direction) and how these are perceived by the athlete to affect preparation and competition. I am interviewing women footballers all of whom compete at university level.
The results from this study will be used in my undergraduate dissertation. Although, there is a possibility that this information will be used by sports scientists and published in scientific journals. However, I can assure you that any information you provide is strictly confidential. I may use quotes from your interview to illustrate key points in my study, however these will remain anonymous and at no point will your identity be revealed. Throughout the interview I will be using a tape recorder this is to ensure a completely accurate account of the interview and will also allow me to produce a typed transcript for future reference.

Please remember that you do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. If at any time during this interview you feel uncomfortable then you are free to withdraw from the study. Similarly, you do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to. If you choose not to answer a particular question then just say ‘no comment’ and no more questions on that topic will be asked.

Throughout this interview I will be looking to gain an insight into your perceptions of anxiety, therefore there are no right or wrong answers. Please answer openly and honestly, I would rather you declined to comment than to give an answer that you thought I would like to hear.

During the interview I will be using terms such as level or frequency in order to differentiate between the components of anxiety. It is imperative that you understand these terms so that it is clear which component you are discussing. Therefore, if at any point you do not understand a particular term or question then just let me know rather than guessing.
The questions in this interview will be asking you to recall certain thoughts and feelings. The thoughts and feelings diary will aid your recall, however there is a chance you will not remember some of thoughts and feelings you have experienced. Again, please do not try and guess as I would prefer if you did not answer the question.

The interview has been split into three sections, designed to help the interview flow and also to aid your understanding. Section one will discuss the different terms that may be used throughout the interview. If at any point you need any further clarification then please do not hesitate to ask. Section two will look at the intensity of your thoughts and feelings during preparation (early and late phases) and during competition. Thank you once again for you participation in the study. Do you have any questions? Ok, then let’s begin….

**Section 1b- Clarification of Terms**

Ok, before we begin the actual interview it is important that we clarify some of the terms that will be used. If at any point you need me to expand on some of the definitions then please just ask.

1. Intensity is defined as the level of symptoms (Thomas et al, in press).

2. Frequency is defined as “the amount of time an athlete spent attending to the symptoms experienced concerning competition” (Thomas et al, 2004, p.173). I.e. how often do your thoughts and
feelings occur?

3 Direction is whether the athlete perceives their symptoms of anxiety as facilitative or debilitative to performance (Melalieu et al, 2003). I.e. do you perceive your symptoms as positive or negative?

It is also equally important that we clarify what is meant by the different time phases that will be addressed in the study. Firstly, the preparation phase is split into two main phases (Thomas et al, in press). Phase I will be called the early phase and is 7 days-2 days before competition. Phase II will be called the late phase and is 2 days-immediately before competition. The final phase that this study looks at is competition- this is during the actual performance period.

Do you have any questions about what we have talked about so far? Please try and think about what we have discussed in this section during the interview, and do not be afraid to ask if you would look to go over the terms again later in the study.

**Section Two- Intensity**

2.1) In the early preparation phase (7-2 days) before performance, what levels of thoughts and feelings do you usually experience?

- Thoughts and feelings from sheet
- High level/low level
- Do you interpret these thoughts/feelings as positive or negative?

- How/When/Why/ what causes this to change throughout the early phase

- Does the ratio of +ve/-ve thoughts change?

**2.2) Would an abnormal intensity/level of these thoughts/feelings interfere with your preparation for performance in the early phase?**

- Early phase (7-2 days before competing)

- Intensity increased, or decreased

- If feelings became +ve or –ve

- How would this change affect you?

- Why is this?

**2.3) During the late preparation phase (2 days-immediately before), how does the level of thoughts and feelings you are experiencing change from that of the early phase?**

- Thoughts/ feelings sheet

- From 1 week before to night before

- From morning before to immediately before competing

- Is this change positive or negative?

- How does this change affect you? Why?

- Does this change always occur?

  - if yes….would you be concerned if your change in thoughts/feelings did not follow its usual routine?

  - if no…..what affects this? How does this differ?
2.4) How important do you think the level/intensity of thoughts and feelings you experience are upon your preparation for performance?

- Early phase – How?
  - Why?
  - Differences between +ve and –ve

- Late phase- How?
  - Why?
  - Differences between +ve and –ve

2.5) Are there any strategies/techniques you use during preparation for performance to control the level of thoughts/feelings you experience?

- If yes…- What?
  - When? Early or late phase?
  - Why?
  - How does this help?

- If no…- Why not?
  - Would you consider using any techniques in the future?
2.6) During competition does the level of thoughts/feelings change?

-From the preparation phase? Throughout the game?
-What events throughout the game cause this to occur?
-How does it change?
-Why?
-Is there a change in how you view these thoughts/feelings? (I.e. positive or negative?)

2.7) How does the level of thoughts/feelings impact upon your actual performance during competition?

-Significantly/ not aware of any changes
+ve or –ve?
-Why is this?

2.8) Which do you feel has the greatest impact upon your performance; the level of your thoughts and feelings or the direction of these thoughts/feelings (so whether you view these as positive or negative)?

-Why?
-Can you give an example of this?

2.9) Are there any strategies/techniques you use during competition for performance to control the level of thoughts/feelings you experience?
-If yes…-What?
  -When?
  -Why?
  -How does this help?
-If no…-Why not?
  -Would you consider using any techniques in the future?

Section Three-Frequency

3.1) In the early preparation phase (7-2 days) how often do you experience thoughts/feelings related to the upcoming competition?

- Thoughts and feelings from sheet (time?)
- Do you view this as positive or negative?
- How/When/Why/ what causes this to change throughout the early phase
- Does the ratio of time spent experiencing +ve/-ve thoughts change?

3.2) Would an abnormal amount of time spent experiencing these thoughts/feelings interfere with your preparation for performance in the early phase?

- Early phase (7-2 days before competing)
- Increase/decrease in time spent experiencing these thoughts
- If feelings became +ve or –ve
-How would this change affect you?
-Why is this?

3.3) Which do you feel would interfere with your performance the most; a change in the frequency of your thoughts and feelings (how often) or a change in the level of your thoughts and feelings?

-Or no difference between the two?
-Why?

3.4) During the late preparation phase (2 days-immediately before), how does the amount of time spent experiencing these thoughts and feelings change from that of the early phase?

-Thoughts/feelings sheet
-From 1 week before to night before
-From morning before to immediately before competing
-How does this change affect you? why?

-Does this change always occur?
   -if yes….would you be concerned if your change in thoughts/feelings did not follow its usual routine?
   -if no…..what affects this? How does this differ?
3.4) Which would interfere most with your preparation; a change in the frequency of thoughts/feelings you usually experience, or a change in the level (intensity) of thoughts/feelings you usually experience?

- Any change in your normal routine?
- Why?
- How would it interfere?
- How greatly would this worry you?

3.5) How important do you think the amount of time you experience these thoughts and feelings is upon your preparation for performance?

- Just a summary
- Early phase – How?
  - Why?
  - Differences between +ve and –ve
- Late phase- How?
  - Why?
  - Differences between +ve and –ve

3.6) Are there any strategies/techniques you use during preparation for performance to control the amount of time you spend experiencing these thoughts and feelings?
-If yes…-What?
   -When? Early or late phase?
   -Why?
   -How does this help?

-If no…-Why not?
   -Would you consider using any techniques in the future?

3.7) During competition does amount of time you spend experiencing these thoughts/feelings change from that in preparation?

-What events throughout the game cause this to occur?
-How does it change?
-Why?

3.8) How does the amount of time spent experiencing these thoughts and feelings impact upon your actual performance during competition?

-Actual skill level/ basic techniques?
-Significantly/ not aware of any changes
+-ve or –ve?
-Why is this?
3.9) Are there any strategies/techniques you use during competition for performance to control the amount of time you experience these thoughts and feelings?

-If yes…-What?
  -When?
  -Why?
  -How does this help?
-If no…-Why not?
  -Would you consider using any techniques in the future?

3.10) Which do you feel has the greatest impact on your preperation for performance; intensity (the level), frequency (the amount of time) or the direction (do you have positive or negative interpretations) of your thoughts/feelings?

-Why?
-If direction...then which one has the greatest impact between intensity and frequency?

3.11) Which do you feel has the greatest impact on your actual performance during competition; intensity (the level), frequency (the amount of time) or the direction (do you have positive or negative interpretations) of your thoughts/feelings?

-Why?
-If direction...then which one has the greatest impact between intensity and frequency?
**Conclusion**

Ok we are coming to the end of the interview, but before we finish I would like to ask you some questions regarding the interview itself.

1) How do you feel the interview went?
2) Do you feel that you were able to openly express your thoughts on the topic?
3) Do you have any suggestions as to how the interview could be improved?

That is the end of the interview; I would just like to thank you for the time you have given to complete this study. I will now produce a typed transcript of the interview, and will send you a copy if requested? Thank you for your participation.