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UNIVERSITY OF WALES INSTITUTE
CARDIFF
AN INVESTIGATION OF THE

STRESS PROCESS WITHIN ELITE

HORSE RIDERS
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the competitive stress process as a whole with relation to performance outcomes. In order to address this, a qualitative research design was applied, using semi-structured interviews to provide insight and understanding of the participant’s thoughts and emotions. Five elite athletes were used; their interviews were recorded which later transcribed, yielded 46 pages of text. Significant quotes were taken from the transcripts and illustrated in a way which highlighted the stress process. The results demonstrate how individual athletes managed to reappraise situations to view negative emotions as facilitative towards performance. The findings are discussed with relevance to the literature examining the stress process by considering demands, emotions, further appraisal and how this affects performance. Practical implications of the findings are presented, as are future recommendations.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will introduce competition stress and anxiety, areas within sport psychology that have received considerable attention over the past twenty years (Neil, Fletcher, Hanton and Mellalieu, 2007). In order to portray the importance of these areas, quotations from other studies will be incorporated as well as the author’s personal experience.

1.2 SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

Sport psychology is a relatively new discipline which looks at the principles of psychology applied in a sporting setting (Cox, 1994). There is an enhanced importance of sport within everyday life reflecting the rise in the significance of sport psychology. Increases in aspects such as sponsorship, media coverage and audience levels have resulted in interventions from the sciences in an attempt to enhance performance. Many sporting disciplines have incorporated assistance to improve an athlete physiologically (e.g., physical fitness) and biomechanically (e.g., technique), but have neglected psychological help. Situations have now become increasingly more pressured with some individuals being able to deal with this stress and some not; consequentially increasing the psychological consultancy in sport. Sport psychology is now recognised as an essential component for sporting success particularly with high level athletes and viewed as equally as important as training, recovery and nutrition. As a player looks towards greater achievements, as will their mind play a more important role within the performance. Sports psychologists are now increasing their levels of understanding of the mental factors that define an exceptional performance, as well as those factors that can undermine it.

Sport psychologists have spent a vast amount of time in helping athletes to better cope with stress and anxiety. This can again be linked to the increased pressure to prepare and perform well (Jones, 1995). This has, therefore, resulted in stress and anxiety becoming an increasingly popular area for research in sport psychology.
1.2.1 PERSONAL ANECDOTE

Stress and anxiety have been major determinants of the author’s experiences when performing. On numerous occasions prior to and during important show jumping competitions I have suffered from stress and anxiety due to the importance of the round, the height of the fences and the size of the crowd watching. On one particular occasion I found myself participating in a team event for which I had been selected out of hundreds of other competitors. The competition consisted of three rounds and after the second round the height of the fences increased drastically. Only one member of the team was to be chosen to compete in this final round. I was worried that my performance would be poor, I felt highly anxious and very tense at the thought of being picked. A group decision was made and one of the others were selected. They went in and performed an incredible round resulting in us winning the Amateur Nations Cup. I asked my team mate ‘how did you stay so calm under so much pressure?’ and she replied ‘it’s easy. Just deal with the pressure, forget about everything else around you and concentrate on your own performance’. Personally, I find it fascinating how one individual has the ability to face immense stress and pressure, whereas others back down when the demands increase.

1.3 STRESS AND ANXIETY

Orlick (1986) demonstrated a quote by Jack Donohue, a basketball coach, which stated that; ‘it’s not a case of getting rid of butterflies; it’s a question of getting them to fly in formation’ (p.112), indicating that an athlete can direct their own thoughts and feelings towards what they must do in order to improve their sporting performance (Hanton and Jones, 1995). Although increased stress and anxiety levels have previously been shown in sport psychology literature as detrimental to performance, this conflicts with the research in other areas of psychology that have linked high anxiety to positive consequences (e.g. Albert and Haber, 1960). Marhoney and Avener (1977) were the first to highlight that anxiety could be a positive stimulant; however it was not until much later that competitive anxiety was seen as not necessarily debilitating towards performance (Jones, Hanton and Swain, 1994).
There have been a number of studies that have advanced our understanding of competitive anxiety, however it is now being considered within the broader area of competition stress; a fairly recent advancement. This is due to athletic competitions now becoming more challenging with more intense demands for the performers to face. These arise from both performance-related sources (Mellalieu, Hanton and Fletcher, 2006) and organizational-related sources (Fletcher, Hanton and Mellalieu, 2006). The area of stress acknowledges Lazarus (1990, 1991a; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) transactional perspective and has led research to an appealing notion that individuals can benefit from stress, as by altering interventions, previously viewed negative emotions can be observed as positive and consequently facilitate performance (e.g. Hanton, Neil and Mellalieu, 2008).

1.4 MAIN AIM OF THE STUDY

The general aim of the study reported here was to investigate the stress process as a whole, in relation to performance outcomes.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY
3.1 INTRODUCTION

The fundamental principle of qualitative interviewing is to provide a framework within which respondents can express their own understandings in their own terms. Qualitative methods are highly personal as well as interpersonal and will take the researcher into the person’s mind (Patton, 1990). A qualitative research design can be used to give greater insight into performer’s experiences, thus producing a deeper understanding of knowledge from the perspective of the participants. It has been referred to as ‘interpretive-descriptive research’ and will rely on people’s words as the data for analysis (Belenky, 1992).

An interview can be seen as just a conversation between two people, however in this case the interviewer is seeking a response for a particular purpose. Within a study, if small numbers of people are involved, people are easily accessible, most of the questions are open, and require an extended response; the interview is recognized as an appropriate way to gather information (Gillham, 2005). Not merely statistics, it takes into account ‘real’ people and how they personally portray a situation. This is suitable for this particular investigation as it has a research aim and mainly requires insight and understanding into the participant’s thoughts and emotions.

Research into sport psychology has traditionally used the semi-structured interview as the chosen form of enquiry (for example; Gould et al, 1993; Hanton et al, 2005). This has now become the most commonly used qualitative method with certain studies demonstrating semi-structured interviews as an effective tool for obtaining rich and in-depth information about experiences of sports performers (Nicholls, Holt, Polman and James, 2005).

Therefore to address the purpose of this study a qualitative research design was incorporated. The following chapter describes the participants involved in the study, the instrumentation utilised and the procedures undertaken.
3.2 PARTICIPANTS

The participants in the present investigation consisted of five adults: two males and three females. They were aged between 18 and 45 (M = 27.8, SD = 10.35) and competed at national level and above. All subjects had been involved actively within their chosen sports for at least ten years. The performers were contacted via telephone where they were provided with a brief overview of the investigation, and an invitation to take part in the study. It was made clear that this was a voluntary investigation and would be strictly confidential. The participants were told that the interviews would be held in person at a time agreeable to the participant and the interviewer. This was then followed by the interviewer visiting them at an appropriate place and time, to conduct the interview. The participants were also required to complete a consent form.

3.3 DESIGN

Following the recommendations set by Patton (1990), who suggested the use of a standardized open-ended interview in conjunction with the interview guide, a basic list of questions were written out in advance. This will permit the interviewer with flexibility in probing and determining when it is appropriate to explore certain areas. The fundamental principle of qualitative interviewing is to provide a framework within which respondents can express their own understandings in their own terms.

Each structured interview was comprised to determine the way the participant generates emotion within environments in relation to the stress process. The interviews were completed within a period of 20-35 minutes and were conducted in a quiet room.

3.4 INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The interviews were tape recorded and later, with the permission of the athlete, transcribed. This approach allowed for the identification of components of
the stress process and a more in-depth description of how performers coped with the demands and/or emotions experienced. This procedure was similar to that used by Goyen and Anshel (1998).

3.5 INTERVIEW GUIDE

The study consisted of five segments (see Appendix C). Part one was used to familiarize the athletes with the interview process, providing an overview of the study. The participants were reminded that all their answers would remain confidential and that there was no right or wrong response. This was an introductory period and was used to learn more about the participant as a rider and the levels that they have achieved.

The second section focused on the demands, appraisals, and further appraisals when competing at a lower level on a young horse. The purpose was to attempt to understand how these facets of the stress process affected subsequent behaviour (i.e. performance). Some of the questions used were time frame recall questions, designed to stimulate associations between the competition and the stressors experienced (Roth and Cohen, 1986). Participants were requested to provide a specific personal example of a stressful situation that they had experienced on a young horse. As Sorensen (1993) suggested, reports of a stress-coping variable are more accurate when the stress and coping process actually occurred rather than basing it on hypothetical events. As proposed by Scalan, Stein and Ravizza (1991), clarification probes (‘what do you mean?’) were used to encourage the participant to clarify and explain their answer. Each participant was asked the same sequence of questions however there was some variance between each interview as certain questions were dependant on the previous answer.

Once the participant had identified a specific event on the young horse they were then asked how they felt about the unique demands that they identified within the competition, which was based on Lazarus and Folkman’s (1984) appraisal model (see Fletcher et al, 2006). They were asked to describe what they felt immediately following each source of stress. The next section addressed the emotions
experienced, subsequent interpretation with respect to upcoming performance, and actual affect of such factors on behaviour (both participant and horse).

Section three repeated this process, but concentrated on the demands felt when performing on the older horse. Again this was viewed in conjunction with the performance outcome.

Section four went on to compare the two situations and identify where the performer felt most confident or effective at managing their own emotions. This section will identify in which performance they felt they made the greatest impact and whether the importance of the competition effected their emotions in anyway.

Finally section five was an evaluation of the interview.

3.6 PILOT INTERVIEW

Prior to the investigation, an initial format was tested on two participants, male and female, both at a similar level to those participants taking part in the actual study. The purpose of this was to find information about the clarity, ease of comprehension and phrasing of the questions. It was more concerned with getting the questions correct rather than the interview right (Gillham, 2000). The pilot interviews were completed in a similar way, with participants looking back over previous experiences (see Appendix B). The feedback from the pilot test resulted in a review of some of the questions being asked. The clarity of the questions needed to be better defined as well as some changes to the wording. For instance, in some areas there were two questions effectively asked at once which meant the reply was not accurate and so these questions had to be split into two (Gillham 2005).

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The tapes from the interviews were transcribed yielding 46 pages of text (see Appendix D). The transcribed interviews were read to ensure familiarity and then formatted into tables, clearly highlighting the stress process that had been described.
Specifically identifying the demand, appraisal, emotion, further appraisal, direction and then finally the behaviour of both the horse and the rider.

### 3.8 VERIFICATION AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Kirk and Miller (1986) define reliability as ‘the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances of the research’ (p.20). The reliability of the research is expressing, if the research was done again, would the findings be the same. The most superior reliability can be seen with face-to-face interviews as reactions to the questions by the body and face can also be recorded. Thomas and Nelson (1996) highlighted one of the strongest pieces of support for qualitative research is the presence of the researcher during the data collection.

The quality of the tapes and transcripts has important implications for the reliability of conversation analytic research. Working with a tape recorder will increase the accuracy of the investigation and provide highly detailed and accessible work which will offer publicly accessible representations of social interaction. This will be supported by accurate and adequate transcripts.

In order to verify the statements, the scripts were given to the performers for them to read and confirm that the content was correct.

The natural setting was used as it is here where we are most likely to discover the participant’s honest views. By maintaining a consistent interviewing environment through a standardized interview schedule, it can be seen to provide another reliability of this research project. This will be achieved by asking similar questions but to different participants. Although the respondents are different, they will come from a similar background showing comparable fields of profession (Gillham, 2005).

By including a pilot study this can be seen to establish a specific feel to the process of interviewing and will also encourage it to run smoothly and install confidence into the researcher (Gillham, 2005).
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS
4.1 INTRODUCTION

The following narrative summarizes the findings which will be reported largely in the form of ‘thick descriptive’ quotes, this will help to facilitate both understanding and empathy for the reader (Creswell, 1998; McKenna and Mutrie, 2003; Pattorn, 2002). Due to the large number of examples that were given by each performer, a selection of the described processes has been demonstrated (see Appendix E). The presented networks give details of: the stressors encountered by the performer within certain situations: the initial appraisal: the subsequent feeling state/ emotion: an explanation for this feeling state (further appraisal): an explanation as to why the emotion was interpreted as good or bad: and the behavioural outcome.

4.2 PERFORMANCE STRESSORS

Each performer identified a number of stressors which were perceived to have had either a positive or negative behavioural response. It can be seen that the initial feelings, reported by the participants, were predominantly negative and it was the ‘perceived underlying mechanism’ that explained whether the performer interpreted his or her feelings as facilitative or debilitating in relation to the performance.
FIGURE 4.1: An example of a single case process.

Where the feelings were identified as worry, in relation to the performance, this was then interpreted as facilitative or debilitative. For example in relation to the cognition of the horse running out at fences (Participant E, see Appendix E). Although this participant interpreted this feeling as debilitative towards performance on the younger horse, the same was not reported on the older horse. Indeed even though the same feelings were described, the participant, on the older horse, managed to change these emotions by focusing on positive thoughts about the performance.

The majority of the performance stressors were experienced immediately prior to or during the competition. Only one participant (Participant A), reported experiencing a stressor in the weeks leading up to the competition. The majority of the stressors were also mainly caused by the horse. It was only participant ‘A’ who
reported that it was their bad judgement at a fence that caused a severe demand to the horse and rider.

The performer, who identified the height of the course as a stressor, stated that their nerves were a result of hoping that people would appraise their performance positively. This nervousness was interpreted as facilitative in relation to upcoming performance due to an increase in motivation and, subsequently, effort during the task (Participant D).

4.3 YOUNG HORSE

Figure 4.2 shows the responses that the participants had on the younger horse. It highlights the stress process and demonstrates the demand, appraisal, emotion, orientation, behaviour and coping.

Many of the participants reported their appraisal as negative with a similar emotion being felt. However participant ‘A’ spoke of confidence when the horse stopped at a fence. The participant said that they ‘were completely prepared for it because I knew it was likely to spook again’. This meant that they then felt confident within themselves to rectify the problem, therefore viewing their own emotions as facilitative. Due to the confidence felt, the horse also had a positive behaviour which maintained throughout; ‘I can’t say it affected him’. Similarly participant ‘B’ said ‘you couldn’t get nervous on this one, if you did it would ruin the whole thing’. This participant suggested in order to succeed in show jumping it is important to be relaxed and confident as the horse will easily pick up on the feelings of the rider; ‘I think if there is ever any negative, I can’t believe you can go and win’. Even initially, she described when she first sat on the horse and rode it too a cross pole that you ‘...had a feeling like you would not believe’. By maintaining this self-belief and effectively coping with the situation the rider noted the benefit to the horse’s performance as ‘she eventually stopped whipping round and really started to enjoy it’. Again this participant showed that by maintaining their confidence it meant no nerves were ever portrayed to the horse and so their behaviour never changed, remaining positive throughout.
The predominant emotion mentioned was that of nervousness and worry. Many of the stressors that were mentioned were unexpected and it was those that led to a negative appraisal. As shown by two of the participants it was worry and anger of their own performance and not the performance of the horse e.g. ‘I don’t think it makes you scared I think it makes you cross with yourself because you may have scared them’ (participant ‘C’; figure 4.2, example 2). This performer initially had a feeling of annoyance, but they were able to still ride positively stating ‘even if you have made a mistake you really have to tell them off (the horse) so they know they have done something wrong. You can’t allow them to think too much’. This helped to prevent the horse’s behaviour from changing. This athlete changed their direction from negative to positive creating a facilitative effect on their own performance. Although their initial emotion was that of annoyance, by analyzing what went wrong they managed to cope successfully with the situation stating she rode ‘…back in with confidence’.

It was only participant ‘E’ that reported a negative direction on the younger horse. They stated ‘my confidence reduced in the horse because I knew I couldn’t trust him but also in myself because I felt I wasn’t achieving anything and I wasn’t good enough to be able to combat his problems’. They began with an initial lack of confidence and worry which reflected on the horse’s behaviour where the performer described she ‘…made him nervous about what we were going to do.’ They went on to say the horse’s bad behaviour continued and it began ‘…running out even more’, showing that a negative further appraisal meant the horse’s behaviour stayed the same. Similarly to their own performance these feelings can again be seen to be detrimental ‘…I got to the stage when I knew I couldn’t correct him so I almost let him’. However this participant was the only one to highlight the negative direction of emotions. This participant was not capable of coping with the situation, but it must be noted that this participant was the youngest in the study, together with the least experienced.

Many of the participants reported a positive further appraisal which then benefited their performance outcome. Supported by participant ‘D’ who showed you ‘must stay relaxed and think about what the horse is doing and not about you as a
rider. If you get tense and nervous then for sure the horse will get tense and nervous’. Their initial emotion was of confidence which reflected on the horses behaviour where they identified ‘…its one less thing for it (the horse) to worry about, and I can get it to focus on what I want it to do’. They managed to use an effective coping mechanism to deal with the situation, which is reflected in the horses performance which continued to be positive, as after their reappraisal they believe it jumped ‘…to the best of its ability’. 
FIGURE 4.2: RESPONSE TO PERFORMANCE STRESSORS ON THE YOUNG HORSE

EXAMPLE 1

PERFORMANCE STRESSOR
The horse spooking

APPRaisal
‘I was slightly worried’
‘I was cross with myself for letting my guard down’

FEELING STATE/EMOTION
Nervous

FURTHER APPRAISAL
‘…right I’ve got to now get right on the ball and not let it spook again…’

ORIENTATION
Positive

BEHAVIOUR- HORSE
‘…the horse jumped absolutely superbly’

BEHAVIOUR- PERFORMER
‘I was probably slightly more accurate’

EXAMPLE 2

PERFORMANCE STRESSOR
Bringing the horse back down to a lower height

APPRaisal
‘I don’t think it makes me scared I think it makes you cross with yourself because you may have scared them’

FEELING STATE/EMOTION
Annoyance

FURTHER APPRAISAL
‘…ride back in thinking right we’ve done our homework and we’re back with confidence’

ORIENTATION
Positive

BEHAVIOUR- HORSE
They will sense it and back off. What ever you do you have to say get in there …you can’t allow them to think that much’

BEHAVIOUR- PERFORMER
‘…ride positively and forget what happened’
4.4 OLDER HORSE

Similarly with the older horse we can see the participants progressing through the stress model to try and benefit their performance (figure 4.3). From the initial appraisal to the orientation of these feeling states, in all the participants we can see a change from slightly negative to positive. In all the cases this had an effect on the behaviour of both the horse and the rider. On the older horse although nervousness and worry were felt, this time they all changed this to create a positive outcome.

Participant ‘D’ for saw a potential problem and therefore corrected it before it could occur; ‘I made sure I was very forward with my movements and my actions’ (figure 4.3, example 2). So even during the initial response, there were no negative feelings which carried on throughout the performance. This meant the behaviour of the horse remained constant throughout and they described; ‘the horse did it so easily’. This participant talked of great confidence, consequently showing that not all the demands were met with an initial negative response. However they were the only one to identify a positive response to a demand.

Looking at participant ‘A’; ‘I messed up the stride, my confidence levels went from one hundred out of one hundred down to two out of one hundred’ (figure 4.3, example 1). After this initial appraisal it led to a negative behaviour from the horse as; ‘it had to work a lot harder to jump the fence’. Although to begin with a nervous emotion was reported, with a positive further appraisal, ‘I just thought I’ve got to pull myself together’, this led to them very easily coping with the situation and therefore producing an exceptional performance from both horse and rider. As described by the participant the horses behaviour changed as; ‘…the horse jumped superbly’.

Viewing their own emotions as facilitative seemed to be consistent with all the athletes. Participant ‘C’ had a horse that went for four strides in a five stride distance. They talked of increased stress levels and described the horses behaviour as; ‘I’m saying wait and she’s (the horse) saying no and going’ showing the stress
had a negative effect on the performance of the horse. The performer believed that because it was a high level competition they felt ‘you want everything to be so much better because everyone there is so much better’. This created an effective way of coping leading to a facilitative effect on their performance. They quoted they jumped a ‘…clear round that is fantastic because it is such a tough track’. They spoke of the horse’s behaviour improving and becoming ‘more in tuned’ and balanced in the rider’s hand.

The notion that the environment created a positive further appraisal continued as participant ‘E’ described increased nerves as the horse was becoming tired. When in the warm up the performer described ‘she (the horse) wasn’t jumping very well’. However the performer went on to say ‘when I got in the ring it made me more determined to get her round because it was such an important competition’ making ‘…my performance much better’. This led to the horse being ‘… more positive when we got in the ring and almost forgot about how tired she was’. Through the riders positive further appraisal, not only did this benefit the athletes own performance, but also the performance of the horse.
EXAMPLE 1

PERFORMANCE STRESSOR
Bad stride at fence five

APPRAISAL
‘But on the fifth fence when I hit this vertical fence and I messed up the stride my confidence levels went from one hundred out of one hundred down to two out of one hundred’ ‘I was thinking, ‘I may have messed this up’

FEELING STATE/ EMOTION
Nervous

FURTHER APPRAISAL
‘I thought I had let him down, but I got over it and thought from now on, come on’

ORIENTATION
Positive

BEHAVIOUR- HORSE
‘…I knew then he had to pull something special out of the bag….but to be fair to him he did, he did’

BEHAVIOUR- PERFORMER
‘It did effect me positively as it did make me switch on more and made me more in my zone and at one with the horse, ready to tackle the next seven fences’

EXAMPLE 2

PERFORMANCE STRESSOR
Didn’t have enough stride in doubles

APPRAISAL
‘I made sure that I was very forward with my movements and my actions’

FEELING STATE/ EMOTION
Confident

FURTHER APPRAISAL
‘…focus on my basics and what I should do as a rider’

ORIENTATION
Positive

BEHAVIOUR- HORSE
‘…the horse did it so easily’

BEHAVIOUR- PERFORMER
‘I was riding very strongly’

FIGURE 4.3: RESPONSE TO PERFORMANCE STRESSORS ON THE OLDER HORSE
4.5 A COMPARISON OF THE YOUNGER TO OLDER HORSE

A close study of the results revealed that no matter which horse that they were riding, or the competition in which they were taking part, they managed to alter their feelings in a way that could positively affect their performance outcome. Although participant ‘E’ did feel a greater stress level on the younger horse, this did not reflect her results on the older horse. They stated ‘on the older horse I was more confident and I knew there was a chance whereas on the younger horse because he was more inexperienced I didn’t have as much confidence in him, to succeed’. A sense of anxiety was highlighted on both horses; however once in the ring they could only combat these feelings on the older horse.

All the interviews emphasized that on both horses their own aims were the same; to perform to the best of their ability and to get the best out of the horse. They did show that although the competition level on the younger horse was decidedly lower, the intention was totally different to the higher level on the older horse. With the younger horse it was used as a ‘schooling round’ to improve the horse’s performance and introduce them to competition, whereas on the older horse their sights were set on winning. This then progressed to the performers identifying the lower level competition as less pressured and so increasing their confidence. Although their self-belief is high if they have qualified for an important final on the older horse, this was also shown to have a greater disappointment if it did go wrong.

4.6 THE ENVIRONMENT

There can be seen to be a big difference in the environment when comparing the two horses. Participant ‘B’ suggested that the change did not alter her performance; ‘…a big show makes no difference at all, I don’t really change at all’. Similarly participant ‘D’ showed that being at a big occasion made them focus more and so bettered their performance.
Although this confidence on the older horse was seen in all the interviews, they did suggest that being in a less pressured environment, on the younger horse, did help them to relax. ‘I think you’re just more relaxed with the youngster because you have to be more relaxed’ (participant ‘C’).

Looking at the sport of show jumping in general, the results showed that no matter what the surroundings, it is the horse that you are on and the reactions that it has that will determine the feeling state of the rider. All the participants mentioned that in order to achieve in show jumping you must stay calm and relaxed, otherwise the horse will pick up on any negative feelings and react accordingly. Therefore, no matter how the rider felt themselves, they must try to overcome the feelings of worry or doubt and turn them into a positive emotion. Otherwise the horse will pick up on this lack of confidence and lose faith in their rider, which will then have a detrimental effect on the performance outcome.


APPENDICES
APPENDIX

A
Interview consent

My name is Rachel Watling and I am a student at the University of Wales institute Cardiff. I am currently in my third year of my undergraduate degree, Sport and Physical Education. Thank you for agreeing to take part in my study. I have chosen to interview sport performers, specifically show jumpers, to discuss the way in which altering stress levels can affect your performance. This will be done by discussing past performances and looking at both the highest level of competition on an experienced horse, and a lower level competition on a younger, less experienced horse. The information that I will obtain will be used as a part of my undergraduate dissertation.

I would like to highlight that all the information gained within the interview will be completely confidential as only I will see your responses. If I did use a quote, made by you in my work, your identity will still remain protected. During the interview I will be using a tape recorder in order to let it run more fluently. It will also allow me to make sure that the data I collect is accurate and will let me clarify and check my results at a later date.

As a participant in this study, you have several rights. It is voluntary for you to take part and you may withdraw at any point. You can also decline to answer any question within the interview. This interview will help me to understand how, you as a competitor, are affected by varied stress levels. Therefore there is no right or wrong answer, and I ask that you answer all the questions with an honest and truthful answer. If however, there is a questions that you feel is not appropriate to answer, please decline rather than use an answer that you think should be the response. If this is the case then merely answer with ‘no comment’ and I will then progress to the next question. If at any time you feel I have not fully explained what I am asking for, please feel free to ask me in order to make the question clear.

This interview will be asking you about your thoughts and feelings of your own past experiences. Therefore you will be recalling on experiences from a previous event. If you can not immediately remember something then take your time, there is no rush. If you still can not think of the information then please do not guess. Just let me know. Do you have any questions so far??
Participant number:
Name:
Age:
Sex:
Address:
Telephone number:
Years of participation in sport:
Current performance level:
Highest performance level:
Any major achievements:
Interview date:
Start time:
Finish time:
Duration:

Signature for consent

.................................................................
APPENDIX

B
PILOT INTERVIEW

THOUGHTS – DEMAND – EMOTION – FURTHER APPRAISAL – BEHAVIOUR

1. What is your show jumping background? Both on international and young horses?

2. What demands do you feel and face when competing on the younger horse?

3. Specifically, looking at one of those demands, when did this occur and under what circumstances?

4. What were you thinking and why? How did you feel emotionally? (stressed-anxious)

5. Did these feelings affect your performance in a positive or negative way? And why do you think it had this affect?

6. How did the emotions that you felt affect the horse? Positive or negative? How do you know if it was positive or negative, what reactions did it give?

7. Now looking at some of the other demands you have mentioned- did they have similar consequences? Did some of the demands work in combination? How did this make you feel and did it have a positive or negative effect?

8. Looking back at the older, more experienced horse. What demands do you feel when in competition? Were they very different to that of the younger horse?

9. Specifically, looking at one of the demands, when did this occur and under what circumstances? Were they very different to that of the younger horse?
10. What were you thinking and why? How did you feel emotionally?

11. Did these feelings affect your performance in a positive or negative way? Was this different to the younger horse (comparison)? Why did it have this affect?

12. Did these emotions affect the horse? Positive or negative? Why did you use this method on this horse? Is it more effective on the older horse?

13. Looking at other demands you mentioned- did they have similar consequences? Did they differ to those you mentioned on the younger horse?

14. Comparing the younger and the older horse how do your feelings differ? In which situation do you personally feel more confident? In which situation do you feel you made the greatest impact to better your performance?
APPENDIX

C
Interview

Demand – thoughts – emotions – further appraisal – how this influenced behaviour.

Part one: Introduction questions

To start I would like to learn more about you, as a rider, and the levels that you have achieved in your show jumping career.

1.1 How long have you been competing for?
1.2 Have you competed on both young, inexperienced horse and older experienced horses?
1.3 What is the current level that you compete?
1.4 Is this that highest level that you have ever competed?

Part two: The demands of the young horse

This section will focus on the demands and emotions felt when competing at a lower level, on the young, less experienced horse. I would also like to understand how these feelings affected the outcome of your performance.

2.1 I would like you to focus upon a specific time when you were competing on a young horse, in a low level competition. What demands did you feel that you had to face during the competition?
2.2 You identified specifically that you have to deal with (demand), what were the circumstances that this occurred under? When did it happen in the competition, at the beginning, the end, the middle, etc?
2.3 When this demand took place what went through your mind? What were you thinking?
2.4 How did this then make you feel emotionally?
2.5 Do you think that these feelings affected your performance in any way? If you thought they did, was it in a positive or negative way?

2.6 Why do you think it affected it in this way?

2.7 Bearing in mind the emotions that you just stated, do you think that they influenced the horse in anyway?

2.8 Was it a positive or negative reaction? (How did you know what reaction it was) Why do you think this reaction occurred?

2.9 Referring back to the other demands that you mentioned, did they have similar consequences to the one we have previously discussed?

2.10 Do any of these demands work in combination?

2.11 How does this make you feel?

**Part three: The demands of the older horse**

Now I would like to look at the demands that you feel on the older horse. We will be comparing these against those of the young horse to see whether your emotions and feelings differ between the two. I would also like to see, if different or the same, do they affect the performance outcome.

3.1 I will ask you first to identify one of your performances, on the more experienced horse, at the highest level that you have competed?

3.2 Now I would like you to remember the demands you faced on this particular horse, particularly those that differ to that of the younger horse?

3.3 Were there any that you could relate to the younger horse as well?

3.4 You highlighted, (demand), as being one of the demands you faced. Could you elaborate on that, explaining to me when this occurred? (Is it the same as the younger horse)?

3.5 During this, what were you thinking?

3.6 How did you feel emotionally?

3.7 How different or similar was it to the feelings and emotions felt on the younger horse?

3.8 Why do you think this is the case?

3.9 Did this affect your performance in a positive or negative way?
3.10 The emotions that you felt, did they have an effect on the horse? *(Positive or negative?)*
3.11 Do you feel that the method you used on this horse would be as effective if you were on the other horse?
3.12 Looking back at the other demands you mentioned *(pick two)*, did they have similar consequences?
3.13 Are they different or similar to that of the younger horse?

**Part four: A comparison**

The following section will look to compare the two situations and identify where you, as the rider, felt most confident or effective in managing your emotions.

4.1 Comparing the two horses how did your feelings in both situations differ?
4.2 How were they similar?
4.3 In which situation did you feel more confident to deal with what you were faced with?
4.4 Evaluating both situations, in which did you feel you made the greatest impact to better your performance?
4.5 The importance of the competition varied drastically between the two horses. Did the importance of the competition on the older horse alter the way you felt?
4.6 Did knowing that the importance of the competition on the younger horse was a lot lower, change the way you felt about the situation?
4.7 Focusing on the environment, did that make a difference to your performance on either horse?
4.8 Did it affect one more than the other?

**Part five: Conclusion**

5.1 Is there anything else you would like to add to this interview that you feel would benefit the study?
5.2 How do you think the interview went?
5.3 Did you feel you could tell fully, of your emotions and experiences?
5.4 Did I influence you in anyway?
5.5 Have you got any comments/ suggestions regarding the interview?

Thank you for helping me with my study.
APPENDIX

D
AN EXAMPLE OF A TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW

Section one

First of all I would just like to start off with part one, the introduction. This is where I would like to learn more about you as a rider, and the levels you have achieved in your show jumping career.

So overall how long do you think you’ve been competing for?

Er, I think it has been about 13 years.

And have you competed on both young inexperienced horses and older experienced horses?

Yes

What would you say the current level is that you compete?

About national 1.20m.

Is that the highest level that you have ever competed?

No I competed at one stage at about international 1.30m level, on my more experienced horses.

What would you say your greatest achievements were?

I rode in the Great British amateur winning team twice.

Section two

Right, now we will move onto part two which is the demands of the younger horse. This section will focus on demands and emotions felt when competing at a
lower level on the younger horse. I would also like to understand how these feelings affect the outcome of your performance. So first I would just like you to focus upon a specific time when you were competing on a young horse at a low level and I would just like you to tell me what demands you feel you have to face during the competition. Were there any issues you had on the younger horse, specifically?

Well, my younger horse used to take hold of the bit and then run out of the fences. It was difficult to keep him straight because he would take the bit and he was very strong so I couldn’t keep him into the fences.

**Ok then. Was there a specific time in the competition that this would happen?**

Closer to the beginning, when he wasn’t in a rhythm. Around up to the fourth fence in the course. And once he had done it once he would get it in his mind and do it again.

**Ok, so say you were coming to a fence and he did take the bit, and run out, what went through your mind when he was doing that?**

Um, at the beginning I wanted to try and keep him straight and think about all the things that I should do to correct him but after a while, I got to the stage when I knew I couldn’t correct him so I almost let him.

**So how did that make you feel emotionally? I mean did that did that bring your self-esteem down? Knock your confidence?**

It made me feel less confident because going into competitions I didn’t have a chance and that would be the outcome before I had even started.

**Then did you feel more anxious before the competition began?**

It made me more anxious before I went in the ring, before competing him or jumping him generally.
Do you think that feeling that you had of being anxious before you went in, do you think that affected your performance?

Yeah, because those feelings went on to him and he ended up running out even more because it made him nervous about what we were going to do and when we came to the first fence he wasn’t as confident and it was harder to get him into a rhythm making him more likely to do it.

So your saying that the lack of confidence that you had in yourself almost had a negative effect on your performance on that particular horse?

Yeah

Ok and what way do you think that negative feeling you had effected your horse?

It made him nervous, lacking in confidence, and when we ended up in a tricky situation he would not know what to do and get worried about it.

Then your saying that then had a negative effect on the horse as well?

Yeas, yes.

You say you sort of got nervous and anxious and you felt like your confidence was dropping, was that confidence dropping in your own ability and yourself, or did your confidence go in the horse?

My confidence reduced in the horse because I knew I couldn’t trust him but also in myself because I felt I wasn’t achieving anything and I wasn’t good enough to be able to combat his problems.

You said this running out was one of the problems you had was there any thing that you felt you had to deal with on him?
Well because he used to take the bit, in distances he used to run towards the second fence and then he would get there too quickly and get too close. Then he wasn’t quick enough at picking up so he would take poles down. Usually at the second part of combinations, doubles.

**Did that make you more worried and nervous about the doubles as well?**

Yeah, those particular fences would stand out when I get nervous because once you got over the first one; he would just take off over the second one. So I would have to try and combat that, but he was too strong.

**And do you then think that the nerves that you had then made your performance deteriorate?**

Yeah because my nerves went on to him and that made him rush even more because he was nervous. So then he would run towards the fences even more and that would have a negative effect on how he was performing.

**Section three**

Ok, now we will move on to part three. This is looking at the demands of the older horse. I would like to look at the demands on the older horse and we will be comparing these to the younger horse to see if your emotions and feelings differ between the two. I would also like to see, if different or the same, do they affect the performance outcome?

So first of all I would first like you to identify an experience on the older horse at the higher level?

I competed for my school at Hickstead in the main arena.

**Is that in the National Schools Final?**
Yes.

And now I would just like you to think, were there any demands you felt you had to face on this particular horse that would be different to that on the younger horse?

Um, when I got further on in the competition, because she was doing lots of rounds she got more tired and then I had to try and keep her energy levels up and keep her motivated on what we were doing so that we could make it round the course.

Would you say there was any demand that you had to face on the older horse that you could relate to the younger horse as well?

She used to rush at the second part of fences sometimes too, but she was easier to control so I could easily sit up and slow her down and I didn’t get as nervous when she did it because I knew I could sort it out. And she was experienced enough to help herself when she got to close to the fences.

So you said that by the end of the competition she was getting a bit tired and you had to try and keep her up, her energy levels up. During this time when you went in the ring you did feel her being really tired and lacking motivation, what went through your mind?

When I was going into the last rounds and I felt her getting tired I would, it made me feel more nervous because I didn’t know if she was going to have enough energy to make it round the course to the end. So before I went in the ring it made me more anxious. But then when I got in the ring it made me more determined to get her round because it was such an important competition.

So to begin with, before you went in you were nervous but when you got in the ring you would turn this into confidence and determination…..

That I could make her do it.
Why do you think you did have that change? Why do you think you went from being nervous to being so confident from literally just going in the ring?

Because I knew it was very important, there was a big crowd and she helps me out as well so once I got in the ring and stop thinking about it so much, I had to focus to get her round the course and then it would be successful.

So before you went in you were nervous, and you also said on the younger horse you were nervous before you went in. Would you say these feelings and emotions were similar or different?

Slightly different because on my younger horse I had a, it was very negative because when I got nervous I knew I couldn’t make it better. Whereas on the older horse I was nervous but I did know that I could be successful and I did stand a chance when I went in the ring which made me more confident when I was in the ring.

So when you say you did go in the ring and obviously your confidence increased on the older horse, do you think that had a positive effect on your performance?

Yes because it kept her motivation and confidence up and she was more positive when we got in the ring and almost forgot about how tired she was.

And when you said you went from being nervous to confident, sort of anxious and worried to being determined. Do you think that change in emotion had an effect on the horse?

Yeah, because when I was in the warm-up arena she wasn’t jumping very well because I was nervous about what was going to happen when I was in the arena. But once I had got in and was more confident then so was she and her performance was much better.

And do you thin that the method that you used on this horse would be as effective if you had used it on the younger horse?
No, because they were completely different my older horse was much more confident in general and she was more experienced and knew what she was doing. Whereas if I used the same methods on the younger horse then he wasn’t able to help me out as much and when he got into trouble he relied on me to help him. Which I didn’t have to do on the older horse.

So you think it was the confidence that the older horse had gave you the confidence?

Yes

Now do you think as a rider the confidence that you have effects the confidence on the horse that your on?

Yeah, definitely because it makes them feel like they can do it when your more positive and your riding style is better when your more confident because your not worrying about things. Which makes you focus on your job rather than being nervous.

**Section four**

Part four, this is the comparison. The following section will look to compare the two situations and look to identify where you as a rider felt most confident or effective in managing your emotions.

Comparing the two horses how do you think your feelings in both situations differed?

On the older horse I was more confident and I knew there was a chance whereas on the younger horse because he was more inexperienced I didn’t have as much confidence in him, to succeed.

So it was the lack of confidence that you had in him made you feel less confident in yourself?
Yeah and I had less trust in him so when things did go wrong he relied on me and I didn’t trust him to be able to get me out of the situation, whereas on the older horse if either of us made a mistake she would do everything she could to make it better.

And do you think comparing the two there were any feelings that were similar?

Um, when I was slightly anxious before I went in the ring and in the practice arena. That was similar. But once I was in the ring it was completely different.

You saying it was a similar sort of anxious, would you say that on the both of them you were worrying about the same thing or different things?

No it was different things I was concerned about but I was still anxious on both of them.

And in which situation did you feel more confident to deal with what you were faced with?

Erm, on my older horse because I had more trust in her. We had a must better relationship and we knew each other better and I knew what problems, if we did have any that I would face. I knew that I could combat these to make our performance successful.

With that in mind, that then made you more confident and forward thinking as a rider?

Yes.

Evaluating both the situations, in which do you feel you made a greater impact to better your performance?

On the older horse because the competition that we were in was quite important. There was quite a lot of pressure form the outside for me to succeed, as well as a big
crowd. And this made me more determined and made my outcome better than it had ever been on that particular horse.

So you felt like it was through that outcome that your performance actually bettered (yes) and you felt like you achieved more yourself (yes) because of the importance and the fact that you did succeed on that occasion?

Yes.

Ok, so the importance of the competition varied drastically between the two horses. Did the importance of the competition on the older horse alter the way you felt?

Yes, because of the pressure and the demands that we were facing, it made me more determined because I knew my performance wasn’t only affecting me, but my team mates as well. So I knew that I wanted to succeed and that I could succeed. This made me more motivated.

Therefore are you saying the importance of it improved your performance and made you more positive?

Yes.

Looking at the younger horse, did knowing that the importance of the competition was a lot lower change the way you felt about the situation?

Yes, because I knew that the outcome wasn’t going to affect any other people. It was only myself and the horse. Because getting closer to the end of the competitions I lacked in motivation because I didn’t feel we could succeed. So then it was good that the competition wasn’t that important.

Looking at the environment you were in on the two of them, did that make a difference to your performance on either horse?
Yes

Meaning obviously being at Hickstead there was a crowd, a massive ring, flowers everywhere, people watching. Whereas obviously on the younger horse you were at a low key show, no one really there, no decorations.

Yes, when I got in the ring at Hickstead, there was such an atmosphere there that it just made everything more exciting and made me ride so much better. And because the horse wasn’t affected by the flowers and everyone watching and clapping then it didn’t have a negative effect. It had a positive effect on me which then had a positive effect on the horse. Whereas on the younger horse if he had been put in a similar situation, that would have made his performance worse as it would have effected/distracted him away from what he was doing.

So with the environment being more quiet on the younger horse, did that have an effect?

It benefited him and me because there wasn’t the distractions from the fences that he was meant to be jumping because the younger horse got distracted very easily when anyone moved he would look at it and this would alter his focus. But having a quieter environment meant he could focus on his job.

So that helped you then and made you a bit more confident.

Yeah because I knew there wasn’t any of the distractions that would make him worse.

So do you think the actual environments that you were in on both of them, did that effect one more than the other? Or do you not think it really affected either of them?

Um, I don’t think it really affected either of them because the situations suited the horses and that was a good thing.
Section five

This is the conclusion.
Is there anything else you would like to add to the interview that you feel would benefit the study?

Just that the relationship between the horse and rider affects each other in both ways and how I felt effected by how he felt and vice versa.

Ok. How do you think the interview went?

Well.

And did you think you could tell fully of your emotions and experiences?

Yes.

Did I influence you in anyway?

No.

Have you got any comments or suggestions regarding the interview?

No.

Thank you for taking part in the study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Demand</th>
<th>Appraisal</th>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Further Appraisal</th>
<th>Direction</th>
<th>Behaviour- horse</th>
<th>Behaviour-rider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Performance Stressor The horse spooking</td>
<td>‘I was slightly worried’</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>‘I just thought right I’ve got to now get right on the ball and not let it spook again in the ring’</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>‘The horse jumped absolutely superbly’</td>
<td>‘I don’t think I completely tensed up I just think I was a bit more cautious or anxious about what the horse was going to do. Therefore I was probably slightly more accurate on it’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Performance Stressor Horse stopped dead about a stride away from the fence</td>
<td>‘I was completely prepared for it because I knew it was likely to spook again’</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>‘I was frustrated purely because the horse had done so well’</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>‘now I mean he did superbly so I cant say it effected him’</td>
<td>‘I just went with the horse and as I did that we relaxed a bit more and went round and jumped the final two fences and completed the round’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Performance Stressor Bad stride at fence five</td>
<td>‘But on the fifth fence when I hit this vertical fence and I messed up the stride my confidence levels went form one hundred out of one hundred down to two out of one hundred’</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>‘I thought I had let him down, but I got over it and thought from now on ‘come on’’</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>‘The horse had to work a lot harder to jump it’</td>
<td>‘so I think after that it did effect me positively as it did make me switch on more and made me more in my zone and at one with the horse, ready to tackle the next seven fences. So I think it affect me positively rather than negatively’</td>
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<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Performance Stressor ill for seven prior to competition</td>
<td>‘well it’s a worry when you let someone else ride your horse’</td>
<td>Worry</td>
<td>‘I think riding it late afternoon the previous day, the day before that competition, I think that helped massively’</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>‘I think riding it the night before had a great effect on performance… Very positive effect on the performance’</td>
<td>‘…I was never in a negative frame of mind, prior to the competition’</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Performance Stressor Horse whipping round before she</td>
<td>‘you couldn’t get nervous on this one, if you did you would ruin the’</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>‘I think if there is ever any</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>‘she eventually stopped whipping round and really</td>
<td>‘because I could stay on her you could ride through it’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Stressor</td>
<td>Fear / Worry</td>
<td>Annoyance</td>
<td>Positive</td>
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<td>went in the ring whole thing’</td>
<td>‘it was confidence’ ‘Oh…. and stay on’. negative, I can’t believe you can go and win’</td>
<td>‘once I’m in the ring I don’t ever think about anything but competing and getting round and doing well’ ‘I’m as good as anyone to win’</td>
<td>‘Katie rises a bit because she loves that ring…. she really love it’ ‘I think I am a very confident person with my horses… I still believed that I was going to go clear’</td>
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<td>B Performance Stressor</td>
<td>The course was very big ‘….Nervous, I get butterflies, I always get lots of butterflies in my stomach’</td>
<td>‘don’t think it makes me loose my confidence’ ‘I don’t think it makes me scared I think it makes you cross with yourself because you may have scared them’</td>
<td>‘I think what you feel does and they sense it, im sure they sense it. And they will sense it if you back off. What ever you do you have to say get in there and even if you have made a mistake you really have to tell them off so they know they have done something wrong. You cant allow them to think too much’ ‘….ride positively and forget whatever else has happened’</td>
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<td>C Performance Stressor</td>
<td>Having a scare at a bigger height then having to bring them back down. ‘feel not sure’ ‘I think you have to trust then, I think if you ever started worrying that they are not going to do it then you should turn a circle’</td>
<td>‘you have to ride forwards with the same token you don’t want to loose the jump so it is a vicious combination’ ‘…on a youngster sometimes you have too forget the competition and think I am on a youngster so do I want to wreck her by charging at a fence that will scare the living daylights out of them’</td>
<td>‘she is waking up and she is starting to realise and her jump is so much nicer’ ‘…to think more positively and think I’m not going to make that mistake again and because you are letting them down’ ‘….think well its just another fence’ ‘got to get on with it’</td>
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<tr>
<td>C Performance Stressor</td>
<td>Doesn’t make the distance ‘i don’t think you worry more, I just think it’s a greater stress level’ ‘….a certain amount of anxiety, a certain amount of stress factor’</td>
<td>‘you have to ride forwards with the same token you don’t want to loose the jump so it is a vicious combination’ ‘…on a youngster sometimes you have too forget the competition and think I am on a youngster so do I want to wreck her by charging at a fence that will scare the living daylights out of them’</td>
<td>‘takes me to the fence’ ‘clear round that is fantastic because it is such a tough track’</td>
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<tr>
<td>C Performance Stressor</td>
<td>The horse going for four strides in a five stride distance ‘….i don’t think you worry more, I just think it’s a greater stress level’</td>
<td>‘you want everything to be so much better because everyone there is so much better’</td>
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<td><strong>Performance Stressor</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comment</strong></td>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong></td>
<td><strong>Positive</strong></td>
<td><strong>Negative</strong></td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>A spook due to the environment</td>
<td>‘…must stay relaxed and think about what the horse is doing’</td>
<td>Relaxed/ confident</td>
<td>‘…the best thing I can do is give it support and the right piece of mind that it is confident in what it is doing’</td>
<td>‘…if I’m relaxed the horse isn’t worrying about me and I’m not adding an extra element in that horses worry. Its one less thing for it to worry about, and i can get it too focus on what you what it to do and then it will perform the job to the best of it’s ability’</td>
<td>‘…more relaxed you are, you can end up then being relaxed, more positive and focused on your job and that then ends up being more positive on performance’</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>The horse didn’t have enough stride in between doubles.</td>
<td>‘I made sure that I was very forward with my movements and my actions’</td>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>‘…focus on my basics and what I should do as a rider’</td>
<td>‘the horse did it so easily’</td>
<td>‘I was riding very strongly, I rode a lot stronger at the doubles and I try not to let my emotions or feelings inside have a negative action on the horse’</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>The horse took hold of the bit and ran out at the fence.</td>
<td>‘…made me feel less confident because going into competitions I didn’t have a chance and that would be the outcome before I had even started’</td>
<td>Lack of confidence/ Worry</td>
<td>‘My confidence reduced in the horse because I knew I couldn’t trust him but also in myself because I felt I wasn’t achieving anything and I wasn’t good enough to be able to combat his problems’</td>
<td>‘…he ended up running out even more because it made him nervous about what we were going to do and when we came to the first fence he wasn’t as confident’</td>
<td>‘…at the beginning I wanted to try and keep him straight and think about all the things that I should do to correct him but after a while, I got to the stage when I knew I couldn’t correct him so I almost let him’</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>In distances, running towards the second fence</td>
<td>‘I get nervous because once you got over the first one, he would just take off over the second one’</td>
<td>Nervous / Worry</td>
<td>‘So I would have to try and combat that, but he was too strong’</td>
<td>‘…because my nerves went on to him and that made him rush even more because he was nervous’</td>
<td>‘It was difficult to keep him straight’</td>
<td>‘he was very strong so I couldn’t keep him into the fences’</td>
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</table>
The horse was tired from doing so many rounds

‘it made me feel more nervous’

‘So before I went in the ring it made me more anxious’

Performance Stressor

Nervous

‘But then when I got in the ring it made me more determined to get her round because it was such an important competition’

‘I knew it was very important, there was a big crowd and she helps me out as well so once I got in the ring and stop thinking about it so much, I had to focus to get her round the course and then it would be successful’

Positive

‘…kept her motivation and confidence up and she was more positive when we got in the ring and almost forgot about how tired she was’

‘But once I had got in and was more confident then my performance was much better’

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<th>Performance Stressor</th>
<th>Negative effect on how he was performing</th>
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<td></td>
<td>The horse was tired from doing so many rounds</td>
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<td>‘it made me feel more nervous’</td>
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