NAME: ROBERT DAVID HUGHES

STUDENT NUMBER: 06002446

CARDIFF SCHOOL OF SPORT

SPORT PSYCHOLOGY
TRANSITONAL EXPERIENCES OF ELITE PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLERS
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledgements</th>
<th>i</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CHAPTER ONE
**INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Introduction to the Study 1

### CHAPTER TWO
**LITERATURE REVIEW**

2.1 Conceptual Frameworks 4

2.1.1 Models of Adaptation 4

2.2 Theories of Transition 6

2.2.1 Social Thanatology 6

2.2.2 Social Gerontology 7

2.3 Transition in Sport 9

2.4 Adaptation to Athletic Retirement 10

2.5 Factors related to Athletic Retirement 13

2.5.1 Athletic Identity 13

2.5.2 Social Support 15

2.6 Repercussions of Transitions 17

2.7 Rationale 19
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction 20
3.2 Rationale 20
3.3 Participants 21
3.4 Instrumentation 22
3.4.1 Interview Guide and Questions 22
3.4.2 Pilot Interview 22
3.5 Procedures 23
3.6 Data Analysis 26

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS and DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction 28
4.2 Comparative Transitional Period 28
4.3 Athletic Identity 34
4.4 Social Support 37
4.5 Practical Implications 40
4.6 Methodological Considerations 41
4.7 Future Directions 41
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Main Findings 43

LIST OF REFERENCES 44

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Interview Guide

APPENDIX B – Informed Consent

APPENDIX C – Exemplar Data Analysis

APPENDIX D – Cross Case Comparison

APPENDIX E – Further Participant Information
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Extended gratitude to Ian Mitchell for his guidance in producing this piece of work.

Many thanks to the participants of this study.
Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to comprehend the transition experiences of elite level professional football players, focusing on the role of athletic identity and social support. Participants \((n=5)\) had competed in their sports at levels ranging from the English premier league \((n = 2)\), to league two \((n = 3)\) with participants having received international recognition at either under eighteen \((n = 5)\), under twenty one \((n = 3)\), ‘B’ level \((n = 3)\) or as full international \((n = 1)\). In-depth semi structured interviews were used to obtain in depth, reliable data, in an attempt to gain the athletes perspective on the situation they had or were currently experiencing. Interviews were inductively analysed using content analysis. The results highlighted the dynamic and complex nature of transition, emphasising the role of social support, a perceived loss of identity, while participants suggested no other life experience had compared, thus disputing previous research (Sinclair and Orlick, 1993). From the current research it would appear that the transitional experience varies for each individual, with the sub components (athletic identity, social support and the transition) having different implications. In the interests of the performer, it may be beneficial for applied practitioners to work collaboratively with both the football clubs and governing body (Professional Footballers Association). Subsequently, there may be opportunity to identify potential retirees at the earliest opportunity that could result in an attempt to enhance the support during transition should the athlete require it.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION
Giving up football... is giving up the heroes role. I worry about that.
I wonder how much I will miss being recognised, being congratulated,
being idolised...

(Jerry Kramer, 1973, p.362)

This quote from former footballer Jerry Kramer provides an insight into the potential difficulties associated with an athlete’s transition from sport. Psychology has, for many years, attempted to describe and analyse ways in which sports performers, sport psychologists and coaches can comprehend the process of transition. The current study will comprehend the transitional experience of professional footballers following retirement. Specific consideration should be given to the role of retirement, due to it potentially being the initiation of the transition. Connotations of the term retirement differ due to it being referred to as a “withdrawal from, or an end to an involvement” (Coakley, 1983, p.1). Kerr and Dacyshyn (2000) reinforced this sentiment, suggesting that retirement should be more accurately conceptualised as a transition through which a person disengages from a particular set of activities while developing or expanding on other activities and relationships. Retirement from sport should be considered as a transition from participation in competitive sport while adjusting to another activity (Young, Pearce, Kane and Pain, 2006). The transition itself should be considered as ‘an event or non event that results in a change in one’s assumption about one self” (Schlossberg, 1981, p.5). Early research looked outside of the athletic domain, specifically focusing on transitional models (McPherson, 1980; Schlossberg, 1981, 1984), derived from literature in the performing arts and mainstream psychology (Lerch, 1984).
Indeed, much of the early research centred on transitions from everyday life, suggesting human life is very much characterised by such occurrences or turning points (George, 1980; Schlossberg, 1984; Schlossberg, Lynch, and Chickering, 1989). Sinclair and Orlick, (1993) suggest a number of everyday experiences which constitute a transition (e.g., change in career, the death of a spouse, having children, moving to another town or city, or even getting married). Further, every transition has the potential to be considered a crisis, relief, or a combination of both; depending on the individual’s appraisal of the situation being experienced (Grove, Lavallee and Gordon, 1997).

Understandably, a significant amount of research has been dedicated to the area of transition within sport during the past decade (e.g., Chamalidis, 2000; Kerr and Dacyshyn, 2000; Lavallee, 2007; Lavelle, and Robinson, 2008); potentially due to the considerable increase in the number of athletes requiring the help of sport psychologists to assist in the transition out of elite sport (Murphy, 1995). This trend of investigation has probed into a vast array of factors associated with transition in particular upon the pursuit of identity (Lavallee and Robinson, 2008) identity and coping strategies (Grove, Lavallee and Gordon, 1997) the role of social support (Jowett and Lavallee, 2007: Bianco and Eklund, 2007) and crises in transition (Stambulova, 2000). Despite the advances in our knowledge, little appears known about the complexity of the transitional experience and the potential underpinning components. Although Ogilvie and Howe (1994) propose four common antecedents to retirement (e.g., age de-selection, free choice and injury) the attention of the present study revolves around the transitional experience following injury, which is suggested to be both challenging and stressful (Ogilvie and Taylor, 1993a; Lavallee, 2000).
Although previous research has contributed to the overall understanding of transition; transition appears an area that warrants further exploration, particularly in the field of applied psychology and coaching.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY
3.1 Introduction

Before embarking on this qualitative enquiry, it is necessary to provide a rationale for its use as research tool. Indeed, Black (1994) has unequivocally suggested that the very essence of qualitative research helps us to understand the nature, strengths and actions of a phenomenon, therefore taking a holistic approach “which preserves the complexities of human behaviour” (p. 425).

3.2 Rationale

There has been a significant increase in the amount of qualitative research in sport psychology over recent years; with the aim ‘to obtain rich, in-depth, and detailed information from an “insider’s” view - one that stresses the perspective of the participant and strives to understand the context or situation in which the experience takes place’ (Hardy, Jones and Gould 1996, p. 256). Patton (2002) suggests that responsible methodological choices need to be made in accordance with the purpose of the inquiry, the questions being researched, and the resources accessible. Specifically in the area of qualitative research, interviews are predominantly being adopted which aim to ‘yield direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge’ (Patton, 2002 p. 4). The current study adopted a qualitative approach, specifically in-depth semi structured interviews.

A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for a number of different reasons. Gratton and Jones (2004) suggest that semi-structured interviews may allow subjects to reveal an insight into their attitudes and behaviours that may otherwise not be readily
apparent. Additionally an interview permits participants to elaborate on areas of particular interest and importance while permitting the interviewee to interpret body language, facial expressions and projections in tone of voice (Miles and Huberman, 1994), which may suggest a complex and difficult transitional period. Previous research within the area of transition has suggested the use of a qualitative approach as a means of enabling athletes to give insight into their feelings and attitudes during the transitional period (Kerr and Dacyshan, 2000; Yannick et al., 2003; Stambulova, 2003; Torregrosa, Boixados, Valiente, and Criz, 2004; Yannick and Brewer 2007).

3.3 Participants

Participants were elite performers where ‘elite’ was participation in their sports at a professional level. Secondly they would have had to have been forced to retire from professional football through injury. Elite level performers have been purposely selected due to them able to provide the richest information and from which the most can be learned when addressing the research question (Quinn-Patton, 1990). This form of sampling is criterion-based as respondents are selected due to certain characteristics and roles they have (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984). The participants consisted of five elite male athletes all with a background in football at a professional level with ages ranging from twenty six to forty three ($m = 32.4$, $SD 6.78$). All participants had competed in their sports at levels ranging from the English premier league ($n = 2$), to league two ($n = 3$) with all of the participants having received international recognition at either under eighteen ($n = 5$), under twenty one ($n = 3$), ‘B’ level ($n = 3$) or as full international ($n = 1$). Further Demographic information of the participants can be found in appendix E
3.4 Instrumentation

3.4.1 Interview Guide and Questions

The interview guide (Appendix A) was devised by the author with the assistance of an accredited sport psychologist based upon the categories deemed appropriate and relevant to the Pearson and Petitpas (1990) framework, following an extensive review of the literature (Patton, 2002). In borrowing on previous qualitative research methods that successfully gained an insight into the participant’s interpretations (Yannick et al., 2003; Stambulova, 2003), a semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions was developed with the objective of completely examining the research question. In addition, predetermined probe questions were devised, in an attempt to minimise interviewer bias while also being suggested as a means of enhancing the depth of responses (Patton, 2002). The interview consisted of a number of sections beginning with demographic information in an attempt to develop a rapport with the participant prior to progressing through the following sections; identity strongly and exclusively based upon athletic performance; a significant gap between level of aspiration and level of ability; little experience with the same or similar transitions; behavioural or emotional deficits that limit the ability to adapt to change; limited in their ability to form or maintain supportive relationships; must deal with the transition in a context (social and/or physical) that lacks the emotional and financial materials that could be helpful.

3.4.2 Pilot Interview

A pilot study should be conceptually considered as a “trial process that assesses the research design with a sub sample of respondents with characteristics similar to those identified in the main sample” (Veal, 1997, p.118). The pilot study participant was
interviewed due to their experience of retirement and transition in professional sport in accordance with the interview plan and research criteria. The interview was tape recorded. The pilot study was carried out for two reasons; firstly to test the appropriateness of the interview plan and secondly it allowed the researcher to practice and hone his interview skills and techniques (Jansick, 1998). Following the pilot study the interview was transcribed verbatim and the data obtained was examined in relation to the question asked.

3.5 Procedures

The subjects, who were known to the researcher through past football experiences agreed to participate within the study via verbal consent during a telephone conversation. Additionally the participants were requested to identify a private location which was convenient to them; in an attempt to ensure the participant remained comfortable at all times (Gratton and Jones, 2002). Consequently the researcher took time out to travel to various geographical locations in an attempt to gain more rich in-depth data. Prior to the interview the participants were given a copy of the interview and an informed consent form (Appendix B) and were asked to reflect on the questions in preparation for the interview. Written consent was then given by the participant and the interview commenced. All interviews were undertaken by the same interviewer to ensure consistency across the study and were conducted face to face. A fixed protocol was used throughout all the interviews. Each participant was taken through an identical set of questions and each was asked in the same manner. Participants were asked to maintain perspective on the specific phase of the interview that was being discussed, thereby resulting in accurate thoughts and feelings at certain stages throughout their termination/transitional process. Every attempt was made to maximise recall of experiences from the participants. During
the interview if the participant could not recall an event they were asked to take their time and if they still had no recollection they were told to inform the interviewer rather than guess. Participants were also told to draw from any other experiences at the time of questioning outside of their respective sport’s in order to attempt to create an overall experience. The duration of the interviews ranged from 31 to 42 minutes and were recorded completely and subsequently transcribed verbatim yielding sixty two pages of single spaced transcript. Due to the current researcher’s background and experience within professional football, an ability to converse using specific terminologies and idiosyncrasies’ associated with professional football whilst facilitating greater empathy with the participants. In order to obtain methodological rigour in qualitative research Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that qualitative research should be judged to its “trustworthiness”. The criteria for trustworthiness included establishing credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability) and conceivability (objectivity).

Reliability, or dependability, concerns the ‘replication of a measure’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p.298). More specifically there is internal and external reliability. External reliability refers to content of the data and internal reliability refers to inter observer agreement (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). A number of factors were addressed in the current study in order to ensure reliability was maintained. Firstly a standardised interview guide was produced for all interviews, secondly an extensive pilot study was conducted allowing the researcher to become familiar with the dictaphone and conducting interviews. Thirdly to ensure consistency between interviews the same interviewer conducted all interviews. Additionally an accredited sport psychologist further examined
the methods and procedures used and the results obtained; finally from all the interviews, consistent patterns were noted across them.

Validity in qualitative research depends on careful instrument construction. In qualitative enquiry the researcher is the instrument (Patton, 2002). More specifically there is internal and external validity, which Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to as credibility and transferability, respectively. Internal validity concerns controlling factors so that the results obtained can be attributed to the treatment; whereas external validity concerns the ability to ‘which we infer that a presumed causal relationship can be generalised to and across the alternate measures of the cause and effect across different types of persons, settings and times’ (Cook and Campbell, 1979, p.37). Alternatively the more emphasis on external validity, will result in less control over the situation and key variables; therefore reducing internal validity (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Importantly internal validity was addressed through member checking within this study (Goetz & Le Compte, 1984).

A number of factors were addressed in the current study in order to ensure validity was maintained. A personal relationship was developed between the interviewer and participant, therefore enhancing honesty and decreasing obtrusiveness (Patton, 2002). In addition an accredited sports psychologist consulted with the current author regarding methodological rigour and data analysis during the course of the investigation. In an attempt to ensure personal bias was eliminated at the conclusion of each interview the participant was asked if their answers were influenced in anyway by the interviewer. Each interview was recorded fully and transcribed verbatim and are all available from the author. To enable the author to judge transferability a selection of quotes from the
participants are provided in the results section. Finally, confirm ability according to Marshall and Rossman (1995) is the concept of objectivity. Objectivity is often difficult to achieve in qualitative research because of its subjective nature; however Patton (1990) attempts to account for this by stating that the objectivity in qualitative research, has more to do with the truth of the data. The use of tape recorded interviews within this study helped to satisfy this criteria; as all the data would be verbatim and not influenced by the researcher’s subjectivity.

3.6 Data Analysis

From the raw data content analysis was conducted, with the essence of the analysis procedure being to return to the research question (Patton, 2002). The interviews having been recorded will be subsequently transcribed verbatim (Seale and Silverman, 1997; Easton, McComish, and Greenberg, 2000). Once the interviews were transcribed the interviewer read over them several times thus allowing the interviewer to become familiar and intimate with the raw data contained in the transcripts (Bell, 1999). All participants’ names will be changed to pseudonyms for reasons of confidentiality. Interview transcripts will be inductively analysed within a deductive framework, a process that initially involves constructing individual case profiles for each participant (Biddle, Markland, Gilbourne, Chatzisarantis and Sparkes 2001); subsequently identifying themes and categories that emerged from the transcripts (Scanlan, Ravizza, and Stein, 1989). Individual participant case profiles provide a “…wealth of contextual richness and person-specific information without which that case cannot be understood” (Ayres et al., 2003, p. 873). Each case profile will then be forwarded to the respective participant who will be asked to examine it for accuracy and provided with an opportunity
to comment on, or change any aspect that they felt did not reflect their transitional experience. This process of member checking has been acknowledged as a critical technique for establishing trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995).

Upon the completion of the case profiles, cross case summaries will be produced for the participants (Appendix D). The purpose of this stage of the analysis will be to compare within group experiences of all participants (Ayres et al., 2003). Subsequently the findings will be compared between all participants to deepen the understanding into the themes pertinent to the study. This process will involve critical reflection on and identification of themes that were found in the accounts of the multiple respondents (Swanson, Kauffman, and Schonwold, 1988).
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION
5.1 Main Findings

The present study gained an insight into the transitional experiences of elite professional footballers. Transition from sport should be considered as a complex, ever changing process, whereby an interaction of factors proceeds to impact upon the individual. The factors, which may be physical, psychological, social, educational, occupational or financial, may cause forms of distress when athletes are confronted with retirement depending on the individual’s appraisal of the situation. Each case within the present study emphasised both similarities and differences between participants. Indeed, the duration of the transitional experience varied greatly; suggesting that adaptation to a life beyond competitive professional football had different implications based upon a number of potential issues. The perceived loss of athletic identity, suggested for the most part there had been an association with the sport that had been performed from childhood with which they had derived early success thus identity. Further, the participant’s appraisal of social support during transition is of significant importance. A number of the participants appeared to demonstrate an inability to identify the importance of family during transition. The nomadic existence of professional footballers suggests that maybe fellow team mates should be considered as short term acquaintances; as opposed to genuine friends and as such should not be relied upon during transition for support. Finally the transition itself appeared to be a unique, dynamic and potentially debilitative experience that should not be compared to perceived everyday transitions.
LIST OF REFERENCES


Arviko, I. (1976) *Factors influencing the job and satisfaction of retired baseball players.*


http://qhr.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/14/1/113.pdf?ck=nck [Accessed on 03/01/08]


London: Sage


*The Counselling Psychologist*, 9, (2), pp. 2-18.


Hello, I’m David Hughes, a third year student, studying for a BSC (Hons) Sports coaching degree at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff. Previously I was a professional footballer who suffered the termination of a career through injury at the age of 24.

The purpose of this interview is to further research by examining the transition from one career to another, specifically focusing on the effects of enforced retirement following injury, in elite level professional footballers; additionally focusing on the interventions adopted in coming to terms with the end of a career. Retirement is said to be one of the most potentially traumatic experiences encountered by athletes.

As a participant in this study, you have several rights. First, your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary and you are free to decline to answer any question or stop the interview at any time. It is important that you know that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions. The purpose of the interview is to learn as much as possible from your transitional experience. Therefore I would appreciate it if you could take your time to answer each question and if you are uncertain about anything, please ask and I can attempt to clarify it. Also, if you do not feel comfortable in answering any questions, then you can decline to comment and I will move on to the next question. Please be as honest as you possibly can and avoid giving me answers that you may think I want you to give. The more information and detail you can provide the better.

Should at any point during the interview you feel the need to end the discussion you are free to do so. To ascertain absolute anonymity, at no point during this research project will your name be used. Every piece of information obtained from this interview will remain strictly confidential. However, I may select a number of quotes from this
interview in order to illustrate ideas, these will still remain anonymous. I will be using a Dictaphone to record and acquire accurate and complete information.

At the end of the interview there will be an opportunity for you to add anything that you felt was important and not covered within the questions asked.

Recorded

Do you have any questions so far with what we have spoken about? As you can see from the interview guide, the interview comprises of several sections. The first section is concerned with demographic information.

If you are happy to participate please sign below

Date……………………………………

Signature………………………………...
**Interview Guide**

**Demographic information**

1. Could you just begin by giving some details about your career as a professional footballer?
   
   *(Apprentice, Appearances, Honours, Level of performance, Clubs played for).*
   
   Probe: Could you expand on…………..

2. How long had you been involved in professional football?
   
   Probe: How many football league games did you play, over how long a period?

3. At what stage were you at during your career when you got injured?
   
   Probe: Could you give specific details i.e. Age, standing within the game?

4. Can you remember how the actual injury occurred?
   
   Probe: Could you expand upon the event itself? i.e. were you in control of your movement? Was anyone in particular to blame? Did somebody “Do You”

5. What is your understanding of retirement and transition?
   
   Give an understanding….

**Identity strongly and exclusively based on athletic performance**

1. What was the highlight of your career?
   
   Probe: Could you explain why that experience was such a high point?

2. How did you view yourself?
   
   Probe: As a footballer or feel that individuals viewed you through your profession?
   
   Probe: Could you describe how?

3. Following your retirement did you perceive that anyone saw you differently?
   
   Probe: Could you describe how that became apparent to you?

4. Could you describe how you felt both emotionally and physically during the process of retirement?
   
   Probe: Could you describe those feelings
A significant gap between level of aspiration and level of ability

1. What was the highest level that you played at?
2. Do you feel that you could have played higher?
   Probe: What makes you feel this way? Could you explain in detail?
3. Do you feel that you accomplished the goals that you set out to do during your career?
   Probe: Could you give me some specific examples?
4. Would you say you failed to achieve anything in your career that you wanted to in the beginning?
   Probe: Could you give details on what that is?

Little experience with the same or similar transitions

1. During your career did you ever transfer between clubs commanding a transfer fee?
   Probe: If you can remember, could you explain how you felt during that period?
2. Was the transfer to a club playing at a higher or lower level?
   Probe: Did this have an impact on your performance?
3. In comparison to retirement, have you undergone any similar experiences that you would say compare?
   Probe: If so could you explain the transition?...if not
4. Would you say that perhaps getting married, or transferring between clubs in any way compares to the transition from professional football?
   Probe: Could you expand on the reason why?
5. Could you describe the chain of events leading up to your retirement?
   Probe: Could you expand on the events?
6. Reflecting, would you say that upon retirement there was a significant point with which you felt something was lacking from your life?
   Probe: Could you explain how you felt during this time?
**Behavioural or emotional deficits that limit the ability to adapt to change**

1. Do you feel that your behaviour changed following retirement?
   
   Probe: Could you explain how?

2. What did you do to fill the void left following football?
   
   Probe: Did you feel the need to get your excitement from any other sources?

3. Could you identify any strategies you adopted during your transition?
   
   Probe: Did you undertake any activities that previously you had not considered?

4. Did you feel in control of your life and your environment when you retired?
   
   Probe: Could you describe how your situation had changed?

**Limited in their ability to form or maintain supportive relationships/ must deal with the transition in a context (social and/or physical) that lacks the emotional and financial materials that could be helpful**

1. Personally did the situation you were in have any effect on your relationship at the time, or at any point post retirement?
   
   Probe: Could you explain how this was the case?

2. Was there any financial implications resulting from retirement?
   
   Probe: How did this change post football?

3. Personally, did retirement have any significant effect socially on you?
   
   Probe: Could you explain how this was so?

4. At the time you were forced to retire, did you have any significant commitments?

5. Continuing with that theme when you were forced to retire were your family living with you, or were you living away?
   
   Probe: Were you travelling or living in accommodation provided for you at the time?
6. Did you receive any support from any external sources?
   Probe: Could you explain what sources you perceived as available?

Finally……….

1. How did you spend your time following the termination of your career?
   Probe: What did you do during what previous would have been training times?

2. Did you notice an adjustment over time to life without football?
   Probe: Was there a defining moment that you noticed a change?

3. Had you made any preparations for life after football?
   Probe: Could you describe what preparations you had made?

4. If you were giving advice to a player who is about to go through retirement, what advice would you give him?
   Probe: Could you explain what you would recommend?

5. Could you describe your current emotional response to retirement?
   Probe: Could you explain what has made you think this way?

6. Reflecting would you change anything that you did during the transition?
   Probe: Could you have done anything that would have made the transition easier?
APPENDIX C
Exemplar of Data Analysis
**Data Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Athletic Identity</th>
<th>Personal Identity</th>
<th>Loss of Identity</th>
<th>Remained Constant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“As a footballer, yes, as a footballer 99%. There are urrr only those people who are close to you or that you allow close to you that you know may know you as a normal person”.</td>
<td>“Urrr the real people stick by you and the others the other people don’t, so...urrr 99%...don’t...don’t think of you as a footballer any more they you know don’t think of you as anything no more they because, may be they just get to a stage where they just used you”.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Aspiration/Level of Ability</th>
<th>Achieved Success</th>
<th>Failed to Achieve</th>
<th>Could Have Played Higher/Sustained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Well I’d say my dreams were to play for Wales to play at the top level and to play at Wembley, never played at Wembley, played in two FA Cup semi finals, scored in one, scored in one but lost both. So the only thing i didn’t do was play at Wembley, I actually trained on Wembley once in 84 when Watford got to the final, we had a first team against the reserves and i played for 20 minutes on the Wembley turf, so other than that i actually fulfilled my dreams that i had when i was a little lad.”.</td>
<td>“The thing is then that when you’re in the professional world of football is that you want to win things and I didn’t do that”.</td>
<td>“Urrrm i think i could have sustained it if i had looked after my social life a little bit better. I think that’s you know........i don’t know how my how my injury would have coped if I’d have been you know maybe a normal person. But urrrm because of the way i lived my life maybe i didn’t give it the best possible chance to actually or maybe for me to possibly enhance you know the ability i had. But you never know that because you know because both my knees in the end it was both cruciates so maybe they would have stopped me playing anyway so i can’t look back and think you know because i don’t do that but what i do think is that urrrm people have not seen the best of me yet”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Little experience with same or similar transitions</th>
<th>Previous Experiences</th>
<th>From Playing to Retirement</th>
<th>Comparison with Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Well I didn’t even think about it at that time, obviously I hadn’t thought about it all my life because football was my life urrrm I moved away from Wales at 16, couldn’t speak English very well you know, moving into the area which was 280 miles away is not very easy for any 16 year old to do coming out of school”.</td>
<td>“ No, not at all, you know urrrm having the birth of my three children was fantastic for me but then that ritual urrrm the love don’t go away but you still you know your love don’t go away, your love for your children is everlasting. But losing football when it’s been your life for so long, making sacrifices, I can’t really describe, i just haven’t got the words to describe it. Because it’s a 24/7 thing because it’s so much love that i had for the game and then to have it taken away from me i had nothing else i had no one else. So it was a, it was”</td>
<td>“Well football was my life, you know, i mean bereavement, a bereavement you know you cope with it, and you deal with it and you get over it. Football is your life and it’s your day to day, urrrm day to day thing and you look for something to replace it, and you know when there is nothing there which gives you know the euphoria of the dressing room, you know the spirits of the dressing room the friendship the, everything about the”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural or emotional deficits that limit the ability to adapt to change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change in Behaviour</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“...when I urrrm first retired I went to hospital for urrrm, for urrrm it was for a urrrm drink problem I had, so I dried out for a month, when I left Newcastle and I came back worse than ever......because urrrm there was nothing else in my life really. I had to........by then two children and my wife but they couldn’t fill the gap that had you know that, that, that left me left me without that you know just the camaraderie shit call it whatever you want to call it. You know just missing doing something on a day to day basis where it was gone so...........that is where I was at that time”.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| “No, not at all, you know urrrm having the birth of my three children was fantastic for me but then that ritual urrrm the love don’t go away but you still you know your love don’t go away, your love for your children is everlasting. But losing football when it’s been your life for so long, making sacrifices, I can’t really describe, i just haven’t got the words to describe it. Because it’s a 24/7 thing because it’s so much love that i had for the game and then to have it taken away from me i had nothing else i had no one else. So it was a, it was a difficult, difficult time”.

So what i am saying is that I loved football and that when that was taken away and when I was told that you know even the surgeon said it in the end that he could do no more for my knee. It was urrrm more than a disaster not just to me personally............but........ yes obviously to me personally but more it was deeper than that. Urrrm you don’t really realise it until you are out of it. So all i had ever known all my life from a young man 16 until 29 when the surgeon said im not going in your knee no more, you know urrrm it took a little time to sink in but it was soul destroying.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited in their ability to form or maintain supportive relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Well it’s not an excuse but yes it definitely did, this is urrrm not something hereditary that I have got it’s something that you create and it’s an emotional disease where if you know you allow people to cause stress, pressure then you turn to something else. My stress and pressure was that I could not play football any longer. Urrrm and people don’t understand that stress unless they have played themselves so you know the disease I have is something I have created myself through you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colleagues</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| “Well i was a very social guy person at the time so i used to make loads of friends or so called associates if you like, urrrm you want........an example from me........urrrm from all my moves and my moves around the country playing for different clubs, I’d urrrm many associates well when i finished early through my career the phone never rang. So they showed me they were only associates and..... not good friends”.

“Every day from when I was told urrrm I was told 6 months prior we were 10 points clear of Manchester United at the top of the premier league in the 95-96 season and I asked Kevin Keegan if I could stay involved in the club in case they won the championship you know the premiership for the first time in 50 years you know at the top level. So you know he said yes and so I stayed there until the July I retired. I knew sort of five months prior six months prior that I was going to retire but it still wasn’t any consolation just working and watching |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lacking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“No never, nothing”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| dressing room you stick together as a football team and you’re a team”. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Negative Emotions/Loss</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Every day from when I was told urrrm I was told 6 months prior we were 10 points clear of Manchester United at the top of the premier league in the 95-96 season and I asked Kevin Keegan if I could stay involved in the club in case they won the championship you know the premiership for the first time in 50 years you know at the top level. So you know he said yes and so I stayed there until the July I retired. I knew sort of five months prior six months prior that I was going to retire but it still wasn’t any consolation just working and watching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There may be a misunderstanding or error in the transcription. The text appears to be cut off or incomplete, making it difficult to understand the context or topic. It seems to be a reflection on life choices and the impact of financial and emotional decisions. However, without clearer context or continuation, it's challenging to provide a coherent summary or conversion to plain text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Must deal with the transition in a context that lacks the emotional and financial materials that could be helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“and lost more than one house through bankruptcy and what I am saying is that you come to situations where people turn to you with the brush and then no one wants to know you. I have been very fortunate in that some people have stayed by me and you know they have been good to me but nothing comes across urrrm about how worse this has got”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional/Governing Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“But then when you are left alone and believe me you are left alone urrr it’s like a sickener. I always try to say to myself look at these 16, 17, 18 year olds who are released from clubs there is nothing there for them, and i was 29 and there was nothing there for me so i felt like they do, you know how many players leave the game when they are 18, 19 when they have nothing to fall back on? Because there is nothing there is no, so you have to try yourself to to build another, another life for yourself, because football was my life”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Commitments |
| “Well I had my wife and three children and obviously my parents back home. Other than that urrr not really. One commitment I did have you know is to maybe myself” |

| Preparation |
| “I had done my coaching badges because I was advised that urrrm I wanted to carry on with coaching because I believed that I had a lot to offer the youngsters so I got involved with a non league team urrrm which was very successful and which gave me some satisfaction in passing some experience back urrrm and then I moved all them schemes into Wales and they were all really successful as well and they are still going so but to fill in the gaps of not playing and not getting me that satisfaction and them highs urrrm it |

| Onset |
| “Within I think it was within about 18 months urrrm I had come back to Wales for the first time to urrrm to pursue a career in coaching then I was done drink driving for the second time I think it was then yes second time so.....urrrm I was only here for three months and went back to Watford then the marriage broke up you know a few years down the line from there so you know it gradually got worse and worse at that time but you know football is such an influence on your life people think you know it’s just a career it’s not” |

| Advice |
| “anyone else train and play urrrm and people talk about taking their, taking their careers home with their lifestyle, it’s very difficult because you are in it 24/7. I have yet to come across a footballer who can actually you know switch on and switch off from training or playing and then not take it home” |

| Retirement |
| “(Pause)........every day from when I was told urrrm I was told 6 months prior we were 10 points clear of Manchester United at the top
was very difficult”. of the premier league in the 95-96 season and I asked Kevin Keegan if I could stay involved in the club in case they won the championship you know the premiership for the first time in 50 years you know at the top level. So you know he said yes and so I stayed there until the July I retired. I knew sort of five months prior six months prior that I was going to retire but it still wasn’t any consolation just working and watching anyone else train and play and urrm and people talk about taking their, taking their careers home with their lifestyle, it’s very difficult because you are in it 24/7. I have yet to come across a footballer who can actually you know switch on and switch off from training or playing and then not take it home.
APPENDIX D
Cross Case Comparison
APPENDIX E
Further Participant Information

Participant 1: Pseudonym Richard
Current age: 26
Age at time of injury: 19 years old
Injury type: Knee (reoccurrence of previous injury)
How injury occurred: Training
Highest level played at: League one, Wales U18
Current job: Media researcher

Participant 2: Pseudonym Martin
Current age: 43
Age at time of injury: 29 years old
Injury type: Knee
How injury occurred: Comeback game from earlier injury
Highest level played at: Premier league, U21, ‘B’ and full international
Current job: Media presenter

Participant 3: Pseudonym Simon
Current age: 32
Age at time of injury: 28 years of age
Injury type: Back
How injury occurred: Training accident
Highest level played at: League 1, Welsh U18, U21 and ‘B’ international
Current job: Football community officer

Participant 4: Pseudonym Alvin
Current age: 28
Age at time of injury: 26 years of age
Injury type: Leg
How injury occurred: Tackle
Highest level played at: League one, Welsh U18
Current job: Anticipating return to academia
Participant 5: Pseudonym Nick
Current age: 36
Age at time of injury: 34 years of age
Injury type: Shoulder and groin
How injury occurred: Wear and tear from elongated career
Highest level played at: Premier league, England U21
Current job: Football youth team coach
APPENDIX F
Pearson and Petitpas (1990) Framework

Identity strongly and exclusively based upon athletic performance

A significant gap between level of aspiration and level of ability

Little experience with the same or similar transitions

Behavioural or emotional deficits that limit the ability to adapt to change

Limited in their ability to form or maintain supportive relationships

Must deal with the transition in a context (social and/or physical) that lacks the emotional and financial materials that could be helpful