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Influence of stress and anxiety on highly qualified athletes

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***Abstract*---**This article examines the impact of stress and anxiety on highly qualified athletes, especially in the field of their specific manifestation in sports, both in training and in competition. The characteristics of activity in many sports perfectly support the state of threat, which attracts people thirsting for these acute threatening experiences into these sports, for example, parachuting, freestyle, auto racing, etc. in the above sports, can eliminate their sense of threat. Thus, in this article, we have tried to convince readers that training in stress management is not only possible, but also necessary, that it is necessary to develop a procedure for such training and that systematic training should be organized. Sports activities require the athlete to be able to control their conditions.

***Keywords*---**stress, anxiety, emotional excitability, unwanted consequences, vegetative manifestations, stress management.

Introduction

Research into the role of stress and anxiety has a long history and is one of the few issues to which general psychology has made a definite contribution. Modern

sport, and especially sports of the highest achievements, is inconceivable without the maximum volume and intensity of loads, intense wrestling, intense rivalry, constant experiences of success or failure, that is, everything that makes up the concepts of "stress" and "anxiety". The problems of mental stress and anxiety occupy a special place in the practice of training, education and upbringing of highly qualified athletes. How and why does an athlete experience excessive emotional arousal long before the start or just before it? What determines the resistance or instability of an athlete to various stressors? When are stress and anxiety good, when are they bad, and for whom? How do you measure them? What are the consequences of acute and chronic stress in training and competition settings? Can stress be managed and what determines successful adaptation to it? This is not a complete list of questions that are of equal interest to athletes, coaches, sports doctors, teachers, psychologists, leaders of the sports movement and parents.

Despite the fact that the number of publications on the problems of sports psychology is steadily increasing, the practice of sports training continues to experience an urgent need for new ideas and methods. This has other problems as well. First, the expansion of the psychological foothold in sports is due, rather, to the internal laws of the formation of a new scientific discipline, than to the urgent needs of practice. Secondly, to date, not all work is performed at a high level. And, finally, thirdly, sport does not stand still - achievements are growing and new questions are being born, new problems, primarily psychological. In any case, it is safe to say that sports practitioners and psychologists are currently experiencing quite stable mutual interest. An attempt by the efforts of psychologists from different countries (different both in psychological traditions and in the level of development of sports) should be considered an undoubted success to reveal one of the most complex and topical problems of modern big sport from the most significant sides. Indeed, today in the field of studying stress and anxiety, especially in the field of their specific manifestation in sports - both in training (tension) and in competition (responsibility) - much more questions have been formulated than found suitable for all specific answers and methods. cope with the unwanted effects of stress.

Purpose of the study

To study and scientifically substantiate how stress and anxiety affect highly qualified athletes.

Materials and Research Methods

The materials for this study are literary sources and methodological documents on this topic. In the course of this study, the following methods were used: bibliographic and retrospective analysis, theoretical generalization and comparison, systemic and integrated approach. The main research method was a comparative analysis of information sources on this topic.

Results and Discussion

Based on the results of our research, we will briefly discuss the theoretical concepts of stress and anxiety in the study of states of anxiety and stress. The word "stress" in translation from English means "stress". In sports, the traditional approach is widespread: the state of an athlete - his feelings, well-being, etc. - analyzed from the point of view of threats attributed and experienced by athletes. Among sports theorists, the thesis that anxiety hinders the activity of an athlete, reduces his achievements, is extremely popular, but in reality everything is often the other way around. It is the state of anxiety that mobilizes the athlete for outstanding sporting achievements. The founder of the theory of stress is the Canadian scientist G. Selye. He considered stress as a state of nonspecific tension in a living organism, caused by any external damaging factor, regardless of its nature. The organism responds to the effects of various kinds not only with a local protective reaction, but also with a general reaction of the physiological mechanism, regardless of what kind of stimulus acts on the body at this moment. The action of the stressor increases the activity of a number of endocrine glands. The struggle of defenses against pathogenic agents causes tension in the body, which mobilizes its forces and makes it look for ways to adapt to danger. This is the main biological significance of stress.

Selye identified three stages of stress manifestation: anxiety, resistance, and exhaustion. The onset of stress is seen as a signal for mobilization. This is the shock stage. Its main symptoms are a decrease in muscle tone and temperature. The second stage is characterized by the mobilization of the body's defenses and their resistance to harmful effects. At this stage, one should expect a general or selective growth of a wide variety of indicators. If the effect of the stressor continues, then the third stage begins - exhaustion and loss of strength intensify, the body loses its ability to adapt to the conditions of existence. Selye also identified the characteristic specific changes that occur in the body under stress. He attributed the most important role in the manifestation of stress to hormones.

When examining athletes, both similar and opposite phenomena were recorded. In a number of cases, there was a sharp decrease in sports results on a psychogenic basis in qualified handball players, boxers, athletes, but it was not possible to identify physiological reactions as indirect indicators of stress. At the same time, another picture was observed. In one of the studies, psychological testing and evaluation of technical results were carried out in the process of training sessions for biathletes and marathon runners. Training for 10 days was very stressful and, against the background of an increase in technical results, caused significant physiological reactions in the subjects, indirectly indicating the development of stress. By the end of the training camp, the majority of the surveyed biathletes had deteriorated indicators of working memory by 15%, and at the same time, indicators of motor memory, accuracy of movements, proportionality of efforts improved, that is, indicators included in the structure of the performed activity. Of particular interest is the fact that the results of other indifferent tests decreased. Such a redistribution at the level of both psychological and physiological indicators was observed in athletes many times.

This allows us to express the opinion that in stress the stage of increased resistance should, in turn, be divided into two relatively independent phases. In the phase of cross-resistance, a general mobilization of functional reserves occurs, and in the phase of cross-sensitization, their redistribution. We call this phenomenon "minimization". It should be considered quite expedient, purposeful expenditure of the limited reserves of the body. This phenomenon as a special redistribution of the functional reserves of the body and the mental capabilities of the athlete's personality in order to achieve the highest performance result indicates the presence of not only sports stress, but also sports form. It is important for a coach to catch the “peak” of this state, characterized by the highest growth of the most important components of the structure of the sports activity being performed, and not to be afraid of a decrease in other, insignificant components.

Failure to understand the mechanisms of minimization, violation of the regularity of the redistribution of functional reserves lead to a decrease in sports results. So, a very promising master of sports in swimming was involved in wrestling training. I had to "pump up" the muscles of the arms, neck, attend sectional classes of wrestlers for more than a month. Soon, the athlete completed the second category in wrestling, but never showed promising results in swimming competitions again. There are more than enough examples like this. In institutes and faculties of physical culture, students are engaged in versatile training, which is very useful for general physical development, but highly qualified athletes may lose their prospects for sports improvement.

For a long time it was believed that stress is always negative, that only negative factors cause it. However, numerous studies of the last decade have shown that the stress mechanism can come into action not only under the influence of harmful factors. Therefore, in the modern formulation, stress is defined as a non-specific reaction of the body to any impact exerted on it. Depending on the nature of the effect on the body, stress is subdivided into distress and eustress. Stress was understood as a set of many physiological reactions that perform an adaptive function and characterize the integral physiological state of the body. As the concept of stress was introduced into psychological research, it took on an increasingly analytical character. Stress began to be understood as a condition caused by someone psychological factor.

In our time, stress is understood as a holistic integral state of the personality that arises in a difficult situation and is associated with a highly active attitude to the activity being performed. This condition is characterized by a person's conscious responsibility and is accompanied by nonspecific autonomic and emotional changes. They are expressed in both positive and negative shifts in activity, the dynamics of which is due to the properties of the general type of the nervous system and temperament, as well as the nature of the functional relationship between the properties of the latter. It has been established that the state of mental stress arising in athletes in connection with participation in sports competitions is a complex psychophysiological state of the individual, determined by several systems of conditions at various hierarchical levels. The nature and degree of influence of this stress on an athlete's activity is determined by the relationship of his various individual properties: socio-psychological, personal,

psychological, psychodynamic, physiological, i.e., the entire system of their interconnections.

It is generally accepted that the dependence of the level of an athlete's achievement in competition on the degree of stress has a curvilinear character and can be expressed graphically in the form of an inverted U-shaped curve. In other words, under low to medium stress, athletes' performance is relatively high, and under high stress levels, they may be worse than the results shown in training conditions. Experts are unanimous in that each athlete has his own individual stress threshold, that is, only a certain proportion of stress, a certain level of it is optimal and allows the athlete to show the best result. Stress levels above or below optimal are not conducive to achieving high results. Numerous studies of mental stress caused by participation in sports competitions, carried out by B.A. the type of nervous system and temperament largely determine the genesis and dynamics of stress, and its influence on the success of an athlete in competition.

With a relatively low level of stress, athletes with both strong and weak nervous systems show results close to those of training. With a relatively high level of stress, athletes of the strong type of the nervous system reduce their results slightly, and athletes of the weak type worsen them even more compared to training. A longitudinal study of the activity of the same athletes has shown that athletes with strong and weak nervous systems show their best results at different levels of stress. Athletes with a weak type of nervous system show their best results with a relatively low level of stress, and athletes with a strong type - with an average or even high. Therefore, low stress is optimal for the former, while high stress is optimal for the latter. The influence of competitive stress was studied in connection with individual differences in such properties of temperament as anxiety, impulsivity, emotional excitability.

The results of the study showed that only with low motive activity and, therefore, with a low level of stress, anxious, emotionally excitable and impulsive individuals show sufficiently high results in competitions. High emotional excitability and impulsivity at a high level of stress negatively affect the level of achievements of female athletes, among whom this study was conducted. Comparison of the results of these athletes in competitions with their own results in training showed that the deterioration or improvement of training results in competitions at the same stress level is due to individual differences in these properties of temperament. Athletes who are anxious, emotionally excitable and non-impulsive in competition worsen the results shown in training, and athletes with opposite temperament properties do not worsen these results. Apparently, these properties of temperament determine the optimum and pessimum of mental stress caused by participation in highly responsible competitions. It is under these conditions that anxious, emotionally excitable and impulsive athletes most clearly manifest the negative properties of temperament, which cause excessive nervousness, anxiety, excessive responsibility and activity, indecision, discoordination of movements, violation of musical rhythmic feeling, etc.

All this ultimately leads to a decrease in the result. It is known that one of the conditions for achieving high results in sports competitions is the optimal level of

stress. This level, as has been shown, is largely due to the properties of the nervous system and temperament. It is on such properties as the strength of the excitation process, the balance of nervous processes in strength, anxiety, emotional excitability, impulsivity that determine the optimum and pessimum of mental stress arising in athletes in connection with participation in competitions. This, first of all, probably explains the fact that with the same amount of stress, some athletes worsen their training results in competition conditions, while others, on the contrary, improve them. The first, as a rule, include persons with a weak and unbalanced nervous system, anxious, emotionally excitable, highly impulsive, inactive; to the second - mainly persons with a strong and balanced nervous system, a little anxious, emotionally inexcusable, highly active.

Despite the increasing popularity of various methods of regulating the mental state of athletes in competitions, especially autogenous training, in practice, attention should be paid to the issue of regulating the level of stress, taking into account the properties of the nervous system and temperament of athletes. Observations and special studies have shown that the basis of high resistance to competitive stress in athletes with different properties of the nervous system and temperament are individually unique and stable methods of mental self-regulation of activity. For example, athletes with a weak nervous system (highly anxious, significantly emotionally excitable) are characterized by continuous detailed planning of the upcoming activity, increased control over it, a fixed daily routine, and an underestimated level of aspirations. These athletes have difficulty making decisions quickly and independently under stress.

In this regard, they constantly seek help from their coach and teammates. Athletes with a strong type of nervous system, a little anxious, emotionally stable, impulsive, non-rigid, are characterized by a constantly high level of goals, desires, and the prevalence of executive activity over orientational activity. Such athletes are more self-stimulating and achieve high results when they have very high levels of stress. They make decisions easily and quickly, differ in relative independence and do not feel a constant need for the help of a coach and partners. Athletes with different properties of the nervous system and temperament can achieve high results in competitions only under appropriate conditions and, above all, with a certain level of stress. For athletes of different temperaments, for example, variants of autogenous training, different in content, are equally effective. So, for people with a strong nervous system, a little anxious, emotionally unexcited in competition conditions, the greatest effect is given by the methods of mobilization and stimulation. For persons with a weak nervous system, highly anxious and emotionally excitable, the greatest positive effect is given by options for calming down, reducing the level of stress, instilling self-confidence, and algorithmic behavior at the start.

It has already been noted that the outcome of activities performed under stress is far from always favorable, that is, it is characterized by a state of distress. The symptomatology of this state as a type of emotional tension in athletes is characterized by emotional-sensory, emotional-motor, emotional-associative disorders. Emotional-sensory disorders are characterized by a decrease in attention, accuracy of perception, and muscle feeling. In a state of tension, the scope of attention is narrowed, its distribution and switching become difficult. In

this case, they speak of "sticky" attention, when the athlete can hardly transfer it to another object. This state is characterized by a drop in tactile feeling, which predetermines a sharp decrease in coordination and accuracy of movements. In case of emotional-motor disorders, the existing coordination skills are destroyed, involuntary muscle tension, stiffness develop, therefore, “extra” muscles begin to participate in the motor act. If you strain all the muscles of the arm and try to draw some simple shape, it will not work.

Muscles that should not participate in a motor act will interfere with those who work, and the effect of their total strength will distort the planned structure of movements. But in a state of tension, all the main muscle groups are involuntarily tense, because in connection with experiences from the focus of excitation associated with emotions, irradiation waves move into the motor zone of the cerebral hemispheres of the brain, excite this zone, and centrifugal impulses are sent to many muscles. Stiffness also predetermines the rapid development of fatigue, since a lot of "extra" muscles are working. When a constrained athlete runs, he not only moves his body in space, but also, spending tremendous efforts, overcomes the resistance of his own antagonistic muscles, which must be relaxed at the appropriate moment of the motor act. When a highly qualified athlete runs in a state of optimal excitement, he does it easily, beautifully, as if he is flying over a treadmill.

A boxer in a state of stiffness by the end of the first round barely moves around the ring without receiving strong blows from an opponent, and an experienced boxer, who overcame stiffness, tension, and at the end of the fight performs all movements very freely, despite natural fatigue after several rounds of the fight. Emotional-associative disorders are accompanied by a decrease in the criticality of assessing their actions, difficulty in mental operations, in particular, associative thinking. In a state of tension, an athlete is prone to inadequate decisions, primitive mental acts. In some cases, he can make decisions that are directly opposite to those that are most expedient at the moment, and these are not random, but logical errors explained by the development of a special, "paradoxical" stage of the state of the central nervous system.

The fact is that, in connection with excessive emotions, a powerful focus of excitation arises in the nervous system - a dominant, which, according to the biological law of negative induction, temporarily extinguishes the surrounding competitive centers of excitation. If we turn to psychological terms, then in this we can see the elements of the struggle of motives. But this is an unequal struggle, since all opposing motives are extinguished by those of them, which is based on a dominant, supported by an emotional factor. This motive becomes a strong psychological attitude from which the incoming information is evaluated. The assessment may be erroneous, since arguments reflecting knowledge, past experience do not participate in the analysis of information, everything is considered biased, inadequate actions and mistakes are made.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that the dominant is of low vulnerability. As A. A. Ukhtomsky revealed, it intensifies regardless of whether positive or negative influences are directed at it. In the language of psychology, this means that convincing arguments are sometimes rejected, and an inadequate

erroneous motive triumphs. It is characteristic that when the state of tension passes, a person realizes his mistakes, sees the inadequacy of previously made decisions, bitterly regrets the rudeness made, his unnecessary stubbornness and cannot understand how he did not accept obvious arguments. This means that the dominant has weakened, that it no longer extinguishes other foci of arousal. Both the stressful situation of the competition and the training loads in the preparatory and pre-competition periods can cause mental stress and fatigue in athletes. In psychology, there are three stages of mental overstrain, which have common and specific signs for each of them.

General signs: fatigue, decreased performance, sleep disturbance, lack of feeling of freshness and vigor after sleep, episodic headaches. Specific signs: nervousness - moodiness, instability of mood, internal irritability, the occurrence of unpleasant sensations, as well as strong sthenism and asthenia. At first, these signs appear infrequently and are not pronounced.

- Capriciousness: the athlete remains disciplined, organized, as usual, fulfills the coach's task with high quality, but periodically expresses dissatisfaction with the communication, task, conditions, etc. This is manifested in facial expressions, gestures, tone of speech. Such a reaction can be regarded as a kind of adaptation to increasing neuropsychic stress. But you cannot ignore them.
- Mood instability: manifests itself in the rapid change and inadequacy of emotional reactions. An insignificant success causes violent joy, which can quickly be replaced by dissatisfaction with everything that surrounds.
- Internal irritability: most often expressed in facial expressions and pantomime, in behavioral acts is not manifested.
- Unpleasant feelings: to a certain extent, they are an excuse for an athlete in cases when he refuses to perform any tasks or unsuccessfully performs in competitions. Such moods must be gently but steadily suppressed. Complaints are most often painful, but they usually go away quickly.
- Growing, unrestrained irritability is expressed in the fact that the athlete loses his composure, directing his anger at his comrades, the coach, completely random people; for some time he still tries to explain the reasons for his anger, then he loses self-criticism, and is less and less prone to remorse; becomes intolerant of the shortcomings of the people around.
- Emotional instability, ie instability of mood, leads to sharp fluctuations in performance.
- Internal anxiety, that is, a tense expectation of trouble, which is expressed in the fact that the athlete perceives as a deviation from the norm that which previously seemed natural to him, for granted.
- The general depressive mood background is depression, depression, lethargy, lack of vigor, which reduce the motivation of activity.
- Anxiety is a violation of internal mental comfort, anxiety or fear in situations previously relatively indifferent to the athlete.
- Uncertainty in their abilities arises in an athlete due to the emergence of the idea that their capabilities do not match the achievement of the goal. In extreme cases, it leads him to abandon the goal and leave the sport.

- High vulnerability, sensitivity - properties of the psyche, leading to the fact that the athlete is very sensitive to the slightest ill-will in relationships, to changes in the regime of training sessions or competition objectives.

In athletes, in addition to states of mental stress, it is customary to distinguish the state of fatigue and distinguish between its stages. Fatigue is a pathological condition that develops in a person due to chronic physical or psychological stress, the clinical picture of which is determined by functional disorders in the central nervous system. The endocrine system and, first of all, the pituitary gland and adrenal cortex are essential in the origin of this condition. So, according to G. Selye, under the action of a strong stimulus, an adaptation syndrome, or stress, develops in the body, during which the activity of the anterior lobe of the pituitary gland and the adrenal cortex increases. These changes in the endocrine system largely determine the development of adaptive reactions in the body to intense physical or psychological activity. However, chronic overstrain can lead to depletion of the adrenal cortex and thereby to disruption in the body of previously developed adaptive reactions.

Overwork is directly caused by a violation of the processes of cortical neurodynamics, similar to how it occurs in neuroses. Stage I. It is characterized by the absence of complaints, or occasionally the athlete complains of sleep disturbance, expressed in poor falling asleep and frequent awakenings. Quite often, there is a lack of a sense of rest after sleep, a decrease in appetite, concentration of attention and, less often, a decrease in working capacity. The objective signs of the condition are the deterioration of the organism's adaptability to psychological stress and the violation of the finest motor coordination. Stage II. It is characterized by numerous complaints, functional disorders in many organs and systems of the body, and decreased physical performance. Thus, athletes complain of apathy, lethargy, drowsiness, increased irritability, and decreased appetite. Many complain of easy fatigue, discomfort and pain in the heart area, and a delay in being drawn into any work. In some cases, they complain of a loss of muscle acuity, the appearance of inadequate responses to physical activity. Sleep disorder progresses, falling asleep time lengthens, sleep becomes superficial, restless, with frequent dreams, often of a nightmarish nature. Sleep usually does not provide the necessary rest and recuperation.

In the cardiovascular system, functional disorders are manifested in an inadequately large response to psychological stress, in a slowdown in the recovery period after them and in disturbances in the rhythm of cardiac activity, and in a deterioration in the adaptability of cardiac activity to stress. The body weight of a person in a state of overwork decreases. This is due to the increased breakdown of body proteins. Stage III. It is characterized by the development of neurasthenia of a hypersthenic or hyposthenic form and a sharp deterioration in the general condition. The first form is a consequence of a weakening of the inhibitory process, and the second is an overstrain of the excitatory process in the cerebral cortex. The clinic of the hypersthenic form of neurasthenia is characterized by increased nervous excitability, a feeling of fatigue, fatigue, general weakness and insomnia. The clinic of the hyposthenic form of neurasthenia is characterized by general weakness, exhaustion, fatigue, apathy and drowsiness during the day.

With overfatigue of stage I, the psychological stress should be reduced and the daily regimen should be changed by 2-4 weeks, namely, to reduce the total volume of the load, to exclude long and intense exercises. The main attention in the daily regimen should be paid to general physical training, which is carried out with a small load. In the process of improving the general condition, the regime gradually expands, and after 2-4 weeks. it returns to its previous volume. In case of fatigue of the II stage of the lesson for 1-2 weeks. are replaced by active rest. Then within 1-2 months. a gradual inclusion in the usual regimen is carried out, as described in the treatment of stage I of fatigue. All this time, it is prohibited to violate the regime of work and rest.

In stage III of fatigue, the first 15 days are allotted for complete rest and treatment, which should be carried out in a clinical setting. After that, active rest is assigned. Gradual inclusion in the normal routine of the day is carried out for another 2-3 months. All this time, great psychological or physical stress is prohibited. Overwork in stage I is eliminated without any harmful consequences. Overfatigue of the II and especially the III stage can lead to a long-term decrease in performance. To study the body's reaction to fatigue, psychological tests are widely used - the Luscher color test, SMOL, SAN, the Spielberger, Eysenck test and others, which are quite easy to analyze and are carried out using a personal computer.

The better the reaction and the faster the recovery, the higher the level of adaptation, and, consequently, the restoration of the normal state of a person. However, from consideration of the results of studies and observations of the activities of athletes, it follows that:

- simulated states exist along with actual alarm states;
- those athletes whose condition is defined as unpleasant, uncomfortable, that is, anxiety state, can also act successfully;
- the level of mental tension in individual athletes is not a constant value, it is influenced by the situation;
- athletes with different levels of anxiety can act optimally;
- research findings are often contradictory;
- more in-depth reflections lead to the assumption of a rather strong relationship between a person's emotionality and the effectiveness of his activities;
- the state of anxiety in sports is also a subjectively desirable state, and this, in our opinion, is one of the most interesting moments.

All of the above makes many people think about it. aspects of the problem of anxiety in sports. One gets the impression that in the search for the relationship between the state of anxiety and the success of the athletes' actions (competitive result), a certain role is played by the "concept" that tension has the function of an "independent energy source", that is, the widespread opinion that mental tension there is a kind of only source of motivation, motivation, activation of the athlete. It seems to us that in sports we should talk about several "energy sources" that determine the success of athletes. We mean all those diverse actions, thanks to which an athlete goes to extreme loads and his body comes to a state of readiness for effort. Here we also include the specifics of motor actions

in sports. Reliable activity of an athlete is possible only with a certain dynamics and maximization of effort, primarily in offensive, and not in defensive-defensive actions. It requires a certain degree of motivation, and it creates certain motives for achieving success.

A well-trained athlete is before the task as if in a state of "before an explosion of energy." They say that the anxious athlete "burns out before the fight starts." The start is expected with impatience, and this state is subjectively desired by the majority of athletes, but only the inexperienced and with a weak nervous system "burn out" in the pre-start fever. From the point of view of the pre-start experiences of athletes with a strong nervous system, it can be argued with a great approximation that tension and stress for them are associated with a feeling of “comfort of psychological functioning”. The conditions of this "comfort" create a mechanism for conscious control of their anxiety. In sports activities, external influences and management are extremely strong.

The "harsh climate" of sport requires the pressure of strong signals rather than "a free climate, independence, benevolence." Such a climate, according to Rogers, favors the creativity of people with strong-willed character traits. External regulation concerns several areas of management: from simple training to complex individual solutions. Functioning in sports is interpreted not only as a personal activity of an athlete, but also as a group, team, social activity. The motivation for achieving success in sports is focused on public recognition of the athlete's personality and the personality of his coach. There are no Robinsons Crusoe in sports, because sport is a world, not an uninhabited island. The problem of conscious localization of anxiety control in athletes is just beginning to be developed in the psychology of sports. Several interesting facts can be distinguished. The readiness to succumb to manipulation and the expectation of athletes on the part of their rivals constitute a certain phenomenon in sport in connection with the basic features of sport - the freedom and independence of the competing personality. The submission of an athlete to external leadership, for example, a coach in a team, creates only the appearance of "comfort of psychological functioning", which should also reduce the strength of the influence of situations that cause tension and anxiety, that is, they serve as neutralization in the perception of the threat and are the factors through which we let's try to define the state of stress. In sports, we observe the following practical cases of perceiving threats and difficulties in activities. It follows from this that two "worlds" coexist in sports activities:

1. A realistic world: a situation, a task, a coded program of actions, adequate to the behavior of athletes;
2. Unrealistic world: "the world of subjectively created anxiety."

An athlete, with his mind and thinking, builds a threat situation himself, which depends on the characteristics of his perception of real situations - one sees it as a threat, the other does not. In connection with the thesis about "building a threat situation" hypotheses concerning the “layers of experience” may appear, because the “subjectively constructed threat” may have different duration and significance for the athlete. Omitting a lot of statements about stress in sports and its effect on performance here, let us think about the nature of stress using an

unconventional approach. A holistic characterization of stress in sports can be given through: 1) a description of the phenomenon based on the chosen general theory; 2) a description of the process of behavior of athletes based on the essential elements contained in the chosen concept of stress.

Taking the second of these methods, consider: 1) normal behavior and the genesis of violations; 2) the occurrence and place of the threat in the situation; 3) the problem of overcoming stress and the "psychological cost" of violations. Under natural conditions, the athlete is included in the system of interactions that prepare him for the task. At the same time, the action oriented towards the fulfillment of the task dominates. This is elimination of interference, resumption of attempts. It is also an increase in the intensity of reaction, improvement of orientation processes, modification of the mode of action, etc. This type of behavior (in the concept of psychologist J. Reikovsky - mobilization) is the basis of successful sports activity.

Along with the behavior specific to sports action, states and reactions arise that are not directly related to the implementation of the task or the goal of the competition. These are, first of all, intensified processes of anticipation, attributing a threatening influence to various situations that create anxiety and emotional tension. Behavior similar to defensive reactions is also manifested, which worsens the athlete's well-being. The actuation of defense mechanisms by the type of repression or suppression of anxiety is characterized by two different "regulatory planes" or "levels of regulation". One of them makes it difficult to complete the task, the other makes it easier to withstand the situation, helps to get started, despite the difficulties. In general, it can be argued that defense reactions (to a certain degree of their intensity) act only as "accompanying phenomena." They "only accompany" until a state of "real threat" arises in the sphere of activity.

We assume that the threshold of perceptual stability means the proportion between the saturation of the image of the situation: 1) factors relating to the achievement of an actual task (well-chosen), and 2) factors relating to other states and objects (different types of assessments, foreseeing consequences, attributing characteristics to rivals, etc..). The predominance in the image of the task of elements "outside the task" or the lack of elements of the task creates a situation of lack of concentration on the task or its minimum size. The threat is described as a loss of security, some deformation, that is, as circumstances that foreshadow unwanted influences or deprivation of something. In other words, the concept of a threat is a signal of possible trouble. How about this to determine the state of stress arising in connection with the perception of success, or the state of stress arising in connection with efforts to avoid a stressful situation? For sports, such situations are very typical. Without describing in detail the preparation of the athlete for the start, we note that in connection with the indicated categories of actions and signs of the situation in the successive stages of preparation for the start, a picture of the future task and its general situation is formed. This picture develops or shrinks as information and expectations are received. The actualization of this picture is associated with motor activity. This abbreviated mental image signals that a “wave-like sense of threat” is possible. More precisely, regardless of the athlete, there is a “wave-like sense of threat”.

We noted that in all types of sports competitions, differing in the structure of motor actions (assessment criterion - maximizing the effort of an athlete in the process of implementing the entire action program), a common point is the "suspension" of threat perception or its "wear and tear" subject to the automation of activity. If, under these conditions, an automatically performed action is disturbed by consciousness, there is a reason to look for the causes of this disturbance in the athlete's psyche. Let's move on to the last of the issues under consideration, namely, the problem of coping with stress. Let us recall the usefulness of biological stress in sports, the intentional action for it to arise. It is also necessary to remind athletes of the desire of athletes to take risks, to overcome the boundaries of the body's strength, to compete with the best, etc.

In the opinion of J. Reikovsky, overcoming stress is a specific reaction in activity oriented to the performance of tasks and modified by the reality of stress. It is expressed in eliminating the obstacle, overcoming it, resuming attempts, modifying actions and other ways of behavior. In sports, we are dealing, first, with the constant manifestation of quite definite types and forms of behavior of athletes, generalized by the psychologist J. Reikovsky in the category of “overcoming reaction”; secondly, with defensive forms of behavior, which in the overwhelming majority do not serve as a reason for refusing to carry out the task; thirdly, with the desire for a situation of emotional stress, risk, extreme stress, the experience of anxiety states when a threat is perceived. All this gives rise to many theoretically still unresolved questions. So, according to one concept, an athlete must deal with stress in order to complete a task, while another argues that if he only defends himself, he will not complete the task.

In sports psychology, there is something in common between studies of the "pre-start state", "state of tension", "stress". In fact, different names are given to the same phenomenon. However, the name changes are not followed by a more substantial theoretical analysis that would give us new theoretically useful methodological and practical value. An athlete is looking for difficulties, looking for situations that are always threatening at the level of elite sports, which are a source of threat to the values recognized by him, in order to protect and defend them with his success in competitions. Related to the issue of overcoming difficulties is the question of the "psychological cost" of behavior. R. Laza-rus applied this definition in his theory of stress. Depending on the assessment of the magnitude of the threat (the assessment of this value is influenced by both individual and situational factors), the person makes a joke of the lowest psychological costs or minimizes the so-called secondary threat (according to R. stress based on the perception of secondary threats).

From the analysis of sports practice, it follows that the choice of techniques of "dealing with stress" is always a choice in a situation of struggle of motives: on the one hand, a strong desire to participate in activities, on the other hand, a strong desire to get rid of the state of discomfort. The athlete's desire to participate in competitive activities is so strong that refusal to start will not remove the mental load - on the contrary, it increases - and the athlete in this case will incur more significant "psychological costs". The results of our study showed that, within the framework of modern concepts of behavior modification, a number of approaches are proposed for managing stress in the cognitive sphere,

which emphasize the role of attitudes towards self-belief, self-command, analysis of stress factors, and the use of cognitive statements inducing adaptive responses. We believe that it is necessary to combine the theories of stress and anxiety in accordance with practical measures for stress management. There is some general stress management program as a basis for tailor-made programs that will vary with each athlete. Some of these rules can be represented as follows:

- Definition of "individual stress profile" - pictures of specific reactions to stress, which indicate the beginning of the influence of stress factors. Based on the data obtained, we are convinced that some athletes notice the onset of the influence of stress on changes in autonomic functions, others on changes in behavior, and others on changes in the cognitive sphere. Moreover, there are different signs by which athletes recognize the onset of the effects of stress, even in the same area. For example, in the vegetative sphere, one athlete may experience an increase in heart rate, another a slight tremor, and a third may feel his legs or arms become cold. The ability to know oneself to the point of being able to interpret information about changes can be very useful for early prevention, and therefore, for further control of stressful conditions.
- Learning relaxation skills is beneficial because relaxation is the foundation of other stress management techniques. And since relaxation to a certain extent affects motor coordination, in sports, quickly evoked relaxation is important, that is, relaxation that occurs when a certain stimulus is presented. For example, based on the data obtained, one skater uses a color stimulus to stimulate relaxation, and this stimulus is directly included in the skating process by introducing the names of the required color codes into the words of the song, to the music of which the athlete performs his program. There are many different relaxation techniques, from transcendental meditation and yoga to hypnosis. Therefore, we prioritize deep muscle relaxation exercises.
- Teaching other methods of actively dealing with stress. Relaxation is a disconnection from a stressful situation by means of "isolation" (like an athlete who disconnects his consciousness for a certain moment from the stadium and the course of the competition). However, the question of stress relief comes up again when the athlete "returns" his consciousness to a competitive situation. And then other methods will be effective. Indeed, relaxation has certain benefits, but other methods must nevertheless be applied. One of them is to eliminate stressors. In this case, first of all, it is necessary to determine these factors for each athlete.

Another way is to play adaptive behaviors that precede stressful events. For example, based on our data, ideomotor training, which includes the presentation of unexpected situations that may arise during a ski race. Perhaps the most important rule is that the athlete must be trained to cope with stress in the same environment as his or her activities. It is nonsense to simply think that the decision will come naturally during the competition. The athlete does not believe that good results can be achieved without training, similarly, no one will believe that stress can be managed without prior preparation. 4. A programmed approach to stress management should be part of the overall preparation for a specific competition. Just as an athlete warms up to prepare himself for the next activity,

he should also carry out a preliminary procedure related to stress management. The athlete and coach must understand that such stress preparation leads to improved self-control of performance.

It would be helpful to provide some examples of different approaches to stress management. So, one young football player lost control of himself during the game and, as a result, did not score goals. During the survey, it turned out that the conditions in which the athlete ceased to control himself were stressful. This happened in the last seconds of the match, the audience was furious and noisy, the referee whistled shrilly. Ideomotor training was used to simulate similar conditions: in a situation of all kinds of interference and noise, the athlete relaxed and represented hitting the ball; by the end of the season, this footballer scored the largest number of goals in the university championship. The results of our research showed that a high-class swimmer swam distances of 50 and 200 m without difficulty, but the distance of 100 m was much worse. At this distance, it seemed to her that she could hit the wall of the pool, bump into the track and lose coordination. Describing the situation, she recalled that at the start her body was, as it were, separated from her head, and after a few swings, a stressful state arose. She noted that she was afraid to use the usual flip twist due to a previous neck injury. The trainer conducted an ideomotor training with her, one of the tasks of which was to represent the movement of the "somersault" turn. Now this athlete is applying such a twist. Over the past years, she has improved her results several times.

Ideomotor movement training is especially important in risky sports (diving, gymnastics), where learning new movements presents a certain danger. First, you need to train these movements in performance. The representation of movement, among other things, directly affects the physical and muscular activity of the body. This is confirmed by our research. This article would be incomplete if we did not consider the factors influencing the performance of the athlete. We must clearly understand that activity is a function of the interaction of abilities and acquired skills. Abilities, of course, are genetically determined, acquired skills are determined by the content of a particular sport. The formation of a skill, in turn, can be considered in three aspects: necessary, contributing to the improvement of the activity of reactions; inhibition of unnecessary, interfering reactions; transfer of skill from training conditions to competitive ones.

Analyzing sports motor skills, we can say that the category of reactions that contribute to the activity includes direct motor reactions (for example, extension of the shoulder muscles when lifting weights) or preliminary adjusting reactions (expectations of expected success), adaptive reactions in competitive conditions (adaptation to a specific opponent), binding reactions, which create a sequence of movements (a sequence of reactions in a gymnastic exercise), and finally, cognitive reactions (such as narrowing the area of attention). The formation of a skill, and hence the possible end result, is not only the result of the formation of necessary and accurate reactions, but also the result of the removal of unnecessary, interfering reactions. These can include reactions that cause negative emotional states (distress, anxiety), and negative cognitive reactions (negative thoughts, experiences, etc.). If stress is a factor affecting performance, then it becomes clear that the overriding issue is to identify the general factors

that affect performance. On the one hand, stress can be an obstacle in the formation of a skill, an obstacle to the formation of necessary reactions, on the other hand, stress can be classified as unnecessary, interfering reactions. Destructive stress conditions can include changes in autonomic, behavioral, and cognitive functions. Destructive stress states can interfere with the formation of the necessary reactions by inhibiting motor reactions or change the sequence of binding reactions.

As for the transfer, its success is determined by modeling competitive conditions in the training activity. If the athlete in training does not take into account the stress factors that are present in the competition, then the transfer of skill will be less successful. A program would not be complete without a holistic approach to stress management. This means that deterioration in performance can be associated with many social and personal factors. For example, for a world-class athlete, the question of what will happen to him after the Olympics can be a prime example of a stressor, and the decision of four years of hard training and sacrifice leading to an Olympic title could be replaced by a decision on a professional and educational career.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we will give the following consideration: if we argue that stress makes it easier to complete a task, that in sports it is necessary for achievements on the brink of human capabilities, it becomes necessary to induce or support it in certain types of actions. Maintaining psychological stress (in the sense of maintaining the state of threat at an optimal level) in order to obtain high results is ultimately applied in the practice of sports. The characteristics of activity in many sports perfectly support the state of threat, which attracts people thirsting for these acute threatening experiences into these sports, for example, parachuting, freestyle, auto racing, etc. in the above sports, can eliminate their sense of threat. Thus, in this article, we have tried to convince readers that training in stress management is not only possible, but also necessary, that it is necessary to develop a procedure for such training and that systematic training should be organized. Sports activities require the athlete to be able to control their conditions. For too long and too much attention has been paid only to teaching motor actions. Psychological preparation should now be included in the training process as part of the athlete's overall training.

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