

High Arousal and Athletic Performance

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Abstract : High arousal may lead to inhibited athletic performance, or high positive arousal may enhance performance is controversial. To evaluate and review this issue, 31 athletes (all male) were induced into high pre-determined goal arousal and high arousal without pre-determined goal motivational states and tested on a standard grip strength task. Paced breathing was used to change psychological and physiological arousal. It was noted that significant increases in grip strength performance occurred when arousal was high and experienced as delighted, happy, and pleasant excitement in those with no pre-determined goal motivational states. Blood pressure, heart rate, and other indicators of physiological activity were not found to mediate between psychological arousal and performance. In a situation where athletic performance necessitates maximal motor strength over a short period, performance benefits of high arousal may be enhanced by designing a specific motivational state.

Keywords : high arousal, athletic, performance, physiological

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