Progression to elite performer

Athletics – Javelin

**C1 Javelin – Progression to Elite**

In order to reach a high standard then I have to progress through the sports development continuum and in order to reach the elite few in the excellence stage in the sports development continuum then I have to require necessary financial, technical and psychological support. The four stage of this continuum are foundation, participation, performance and excellence. Foundation stage involves early development of physical competence and recreational play of which I have already passed. The participation stage involves commitment of time to an activity and my event being done primarily as a recreational activity. Performance stage (My current level) is where there is a significant move towards organized sport, club or county level, regular training and coaching as well as me having a desire to win. The excellence stage is the elite standard at national or international levels.

When progression to a higher level begins there are many financial issue as without financial support while developing through the first 2 stages, then I would not have been able to get to the standard I am currently achieving. I also need more financial support now to create proper training schedules to enhance the potential as well as a high level coach to maintain motivation levels as well as high standard training. Due to javelin being an expensive sporting event due to equipment and athletics track costs, I am required to afford this as well as being in close proximity to a track and if not have affordable and reliable transport to get to each training session (Without training I am unlikely to see improvements).

In order to progress further then it is likely that I will require more training than I have been participating in up to this point. Lack of leisure time is the main cause of my limited training along with lack of available time on the athletics track and which I have access to a javelin throwing area. This may require me having to give up other activities in order to create more leisure time for training. This is more difficult as many of my companions do not take part in sport so me choosing to train over other social events of which my companions are participating could lead to me becoming isolated leading to possible depression and demotivated which could also limit my progression hugely.

Racial discrimination could also limit my progression as javelin is a powerful event so is more likely to be aimed towards people of a Caribbean and African origin. Due to stereotyping it could be perceived that they will be better at the event or have a better potential due to there being a need for speed and strength which require fast twitch muscle fibres and a higher muscle ratio, more associated with these races. This could cause my coach to think I do not have the potential to achieve international standard and attempt to change the event of which I compete in. This could also pressurise me into believing I cannot compete at the same standard as I do not have a ‘natural’ advantage, causing me to no longer improve.

Due to me attending a state school there is less opportunity in comparison to if I attended a private school. This is due to lack of proper facilities within the school as we only have a temporary grass athletics track limiting when I could train as well as the level I could train at. There are also limited amounts of athletics competition as athletics is not a main focus with the curriculum or the school in comparison to the sports mainly focused on, including football and rugby. There are no specialist athletics coaches either meaning that I could not receive ‘proper’ training sessions or develop my technique beyond a basic level.

In order to progress I will need a development structure which enables me to move through the stages. This requires me to be able to have higher level opportunities in the for of structured layers of competitions such as athletics leagues or competitions allowing me to compete against elite performers. I also need to be recognised at higher standards such as at a regional level allowing me to get more structured competitions and training. As I have not gone through a talent identification programme I have no chance to train with elite performers allowing me to achieve my potential.

This is all-important to improve so it must be addressed otherwise my improvement will be halted and potential wasted.

**C2 Javelin – Allowing Progression**

In order to improve my javelin throw I will be in need to further training and dedication to the event. Otherwise it could result in my performance plateauing and becoming unmotivated, so dedication and training could prevent this. However this may require me to give up other leisure activities in order to allow greater training time, which could include any other activities such as swimming or a night out with your friends. This relates to the ‘Long term athlete Development model’ that suggests that many different sports become more specialised at different stage of a life. For example gymnastics is becomes specialised at a very young age meaning that it is the only sport you would participate in and a lot more time goes into it. Athletics is a late specialisation so to reach the elite there is more time required to progress further through the 6 stages of the late specialisation model (FUNdamentals stage, learning to train, training to train, training to compete, training to win and retirement/Retainment).

I could plan my training programme with a coach in the form of periodisation. It is a way of setting goals. They are broken down into 3 stages, which are microcycles, mesocycles and macrocycles. A microcycle usually lasts between 3 to 7 days and is usually a plan of training sessions such as weight training on Mondays, power training on Tuesday, arms on Wednesday and technique on Thursdays and so on throughout the week. This will allow me to improve by focusing on certain aspects of each skill instead of developing everything all at once, which is near impossible (No way you can build muscle mass and cardiovascular fitness all at once). A mesocycle usually lasts between 4 and 12 weeks, and is a block of training with a certain goal such as improving my plant foot, which could include the technique of the plant, the position of the plant, increasing muscle mass of the leg to make the transfer of speed into power much more efficient as well as visualisation of the event. A macrocycle is an aim over a longer period of time (Usually 10 to 12 months) and it’s made of several mesocycles. This could be an aim to reach a national standard or a certain distance such as 60 metres. There is further macrocycles which could be made of several smaller macrocycles such as reaching an international standard could be made of reaching regional standard and national standards before.

My coach could use role models to motivate me into performing. These role models shouldn’t be out of my ability and should be achievable to avoid me becoming demotivated. Lack of facilities is a large disadvantage of mine living in a rural area with very few facilities and coaches limiting my performance. Achieving high academically could assist me within my javelin career as being given the opportunity to go further in education have allowed me to go to a large city with much better facilities and training, allowing me to progress further. This will allow me both training and training programmes to excel my ability beyond what I have currently achieved and to my overall potential. Having a more experienced coach could also act as a role model motivating me to achieve to reach the standards they have and to experience the things they have done within their life.

To prevent racial discrimination it is important that I believe in my own ability so I can express this. This could be achieved through self-talk. While performing self-talk it is vital that it remains positive and focuses on self-motivational content. Positive self-talk will make me more aware of my thoughts during training and competition. This over time will condition my brain to notice more positive things to do with my technique and throw and will also become a habit increasing my self-esteem and belief in my performance.

To achieve a greater standard within athletics I need to achieve certain standards in order to compete in higher leveled competitions. This starts with reaching a level to compete at a county standard and then following this, regional standard. This filters out the poorer standard athletes allowing the more successful to continue. This also will increase my opportunity to gain a coach or increased experience to allow me to develop further. The next stage up is to be able to compete nationally, meaning that I could compete at the top level within England before having to achieve a certain standard to compete at international competitions. If I compete at an international standard then I am likely to develop contacts and coaches of which will develop training programmes developed to improve my performance and tailored to my specific needs, allowing me to progress further and probably quicker.