



WELSH ATHLETICS  
ATHLETAU CYMRU

*LISTEN  
ENGAGE  
REPRESENT*

Supporting Athlete Development through  
Competition

Liz Davies

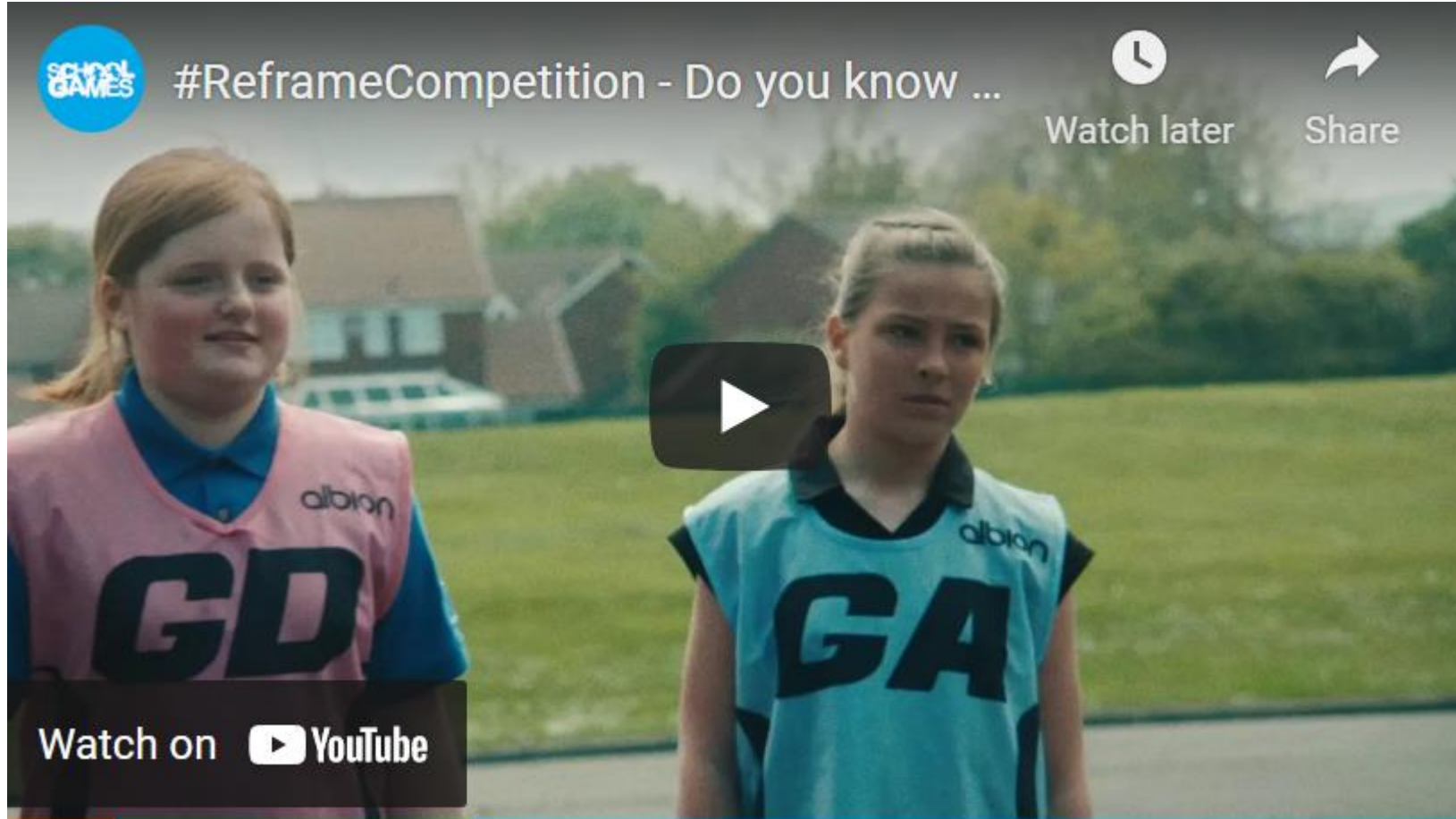


WELSH ATHLETICS  
ATHLETAU CYMRU

# SESSION OVERVIEW

- **Group discussion** - The benefits and challenges of competition
- The role of competition in athlete development
- To explore the types of competition and progression of competition
- **Group Discussion** - The role of International Competition
- Managing the competition calendar
- Framing competition experience – **Case studies**





<https://youtu.be/YYQDUXcC-7A>

# **GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

**Question 1:** Why is competition important for young athletes?

**Question 2:** What are the possible negative sides of competition for developing athletes?



# WHY IS COMPETITION IMPORTANT?

- Reason young athletes come into the sport
- Character building
- Essential learning experience for performance
- **Social** environment for young athletes



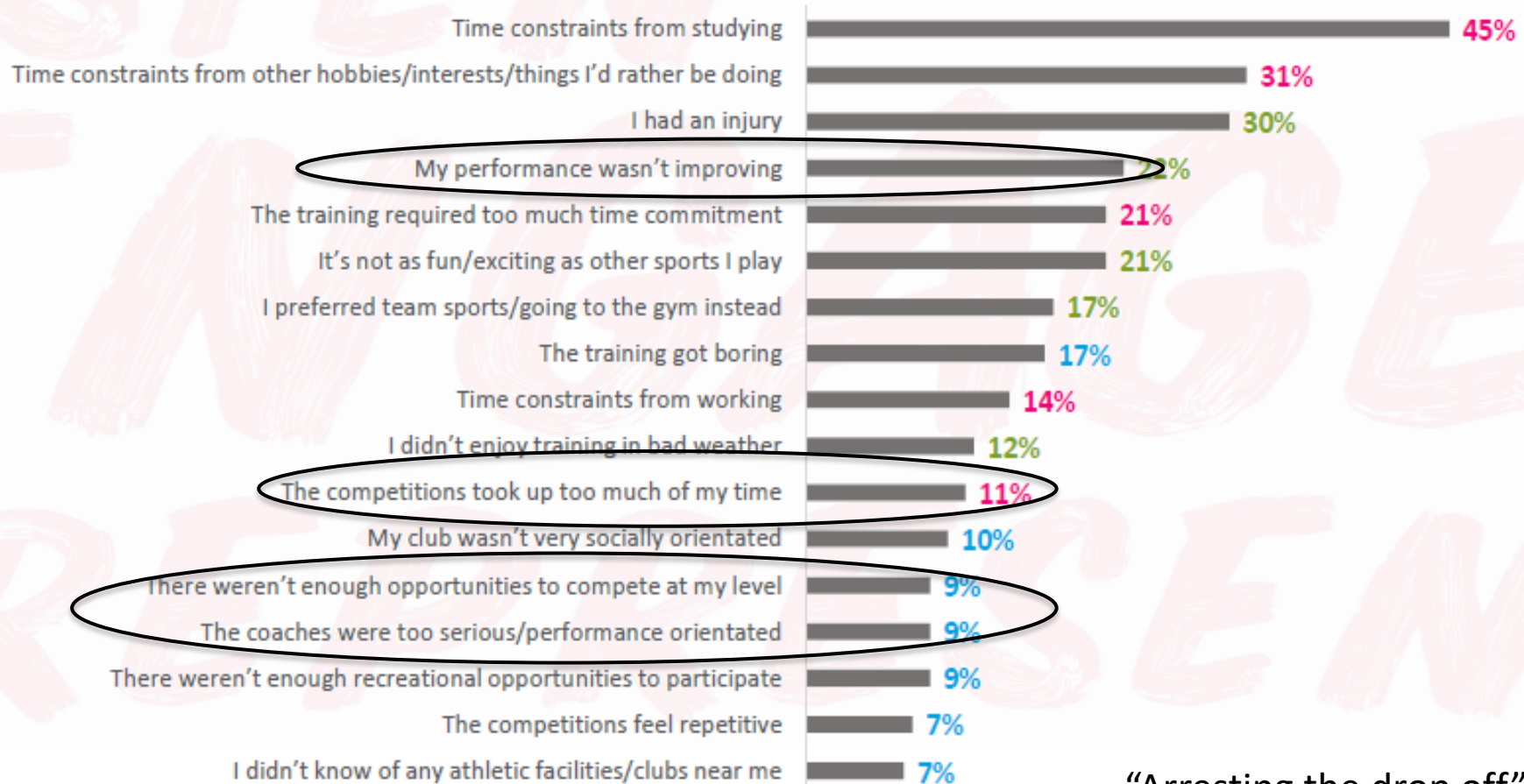


# ***POSSIBLE NEGATIVE SIDES OF COMPETITION...***

- High Expectations – parents/coaches/athletes/NGBs!
- Too much focus on outcome
- Packed competition calendar
- Early specialisation
- Fear of failure

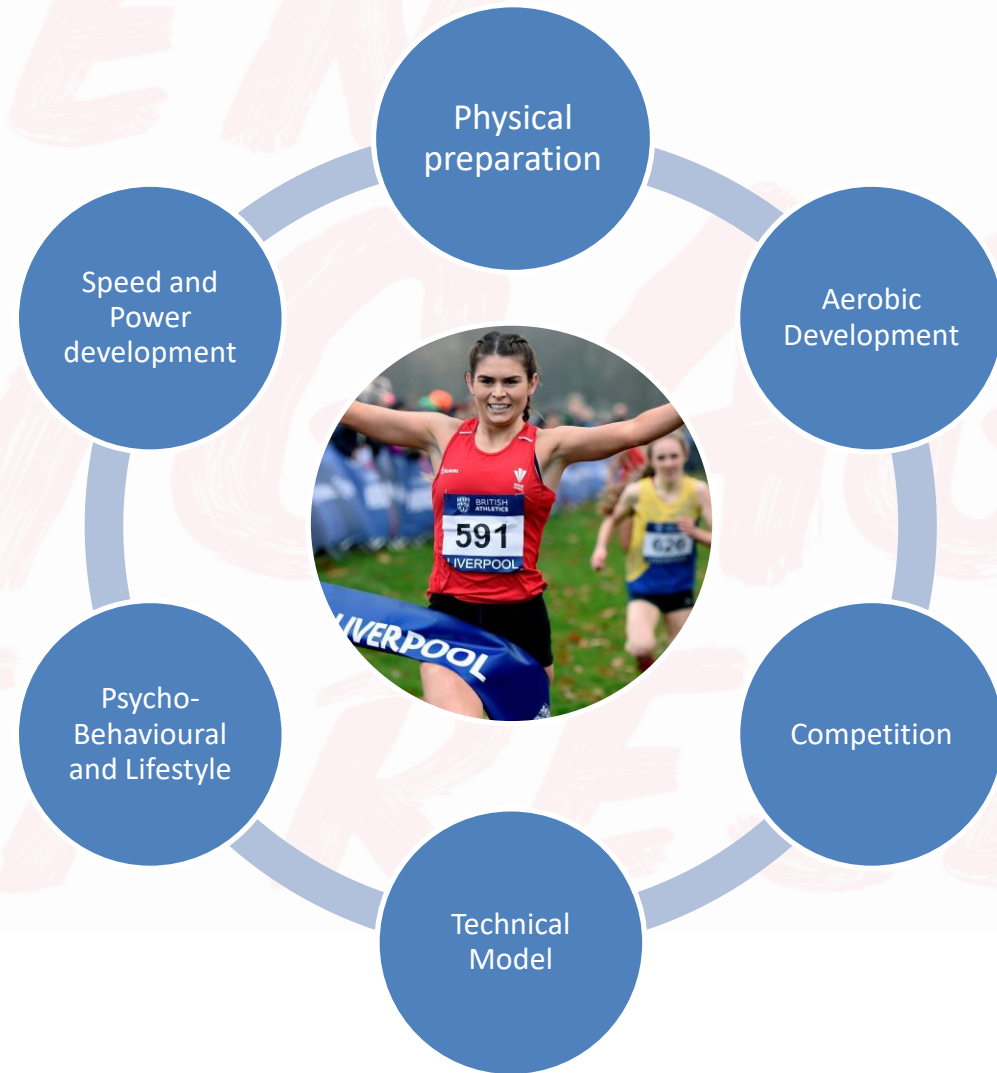


# WHY THEY DISENGAGE?



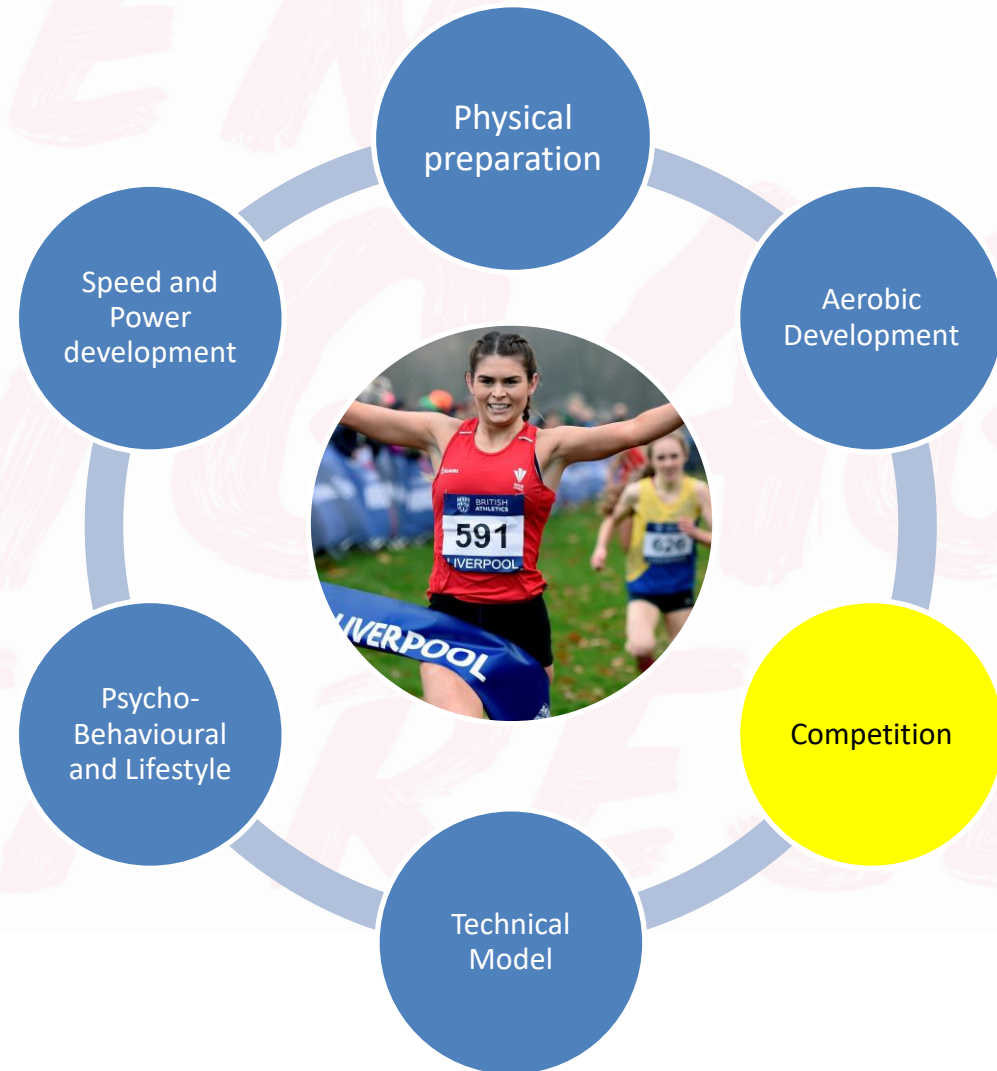
“Arresting the drop off” –  
England Athletics

# JUNIOR ENDURANCE DEVELOPMENT - COMPETITION IS PART OF THE PROCESS





# **JUNIOR ENDURANCE DEVELOPMENT - COMPETITION IS PART OF THE PROCESS**



# WHAT RACES ARE AVAILABLE TO ENDURANCE ATHLETES?

## Discipline

- Track and Field  
Indoor/Outdoor
- Road inc road relays
- XC
- Mountain
- Parkruns??

## Organiser

Club

School

NGBs

Independent race organiser



# Event Progression and Specialisation



# Endurance Athlete Development Model (V1.2)

		Developmental Age +/-																	
Chrono. Age		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26+
Stage of Development		Pre-Puberty			Puberty			Post-Puberty					Adulthood						
Sports Focus		Multi-Sport					Multi-Event		Endurance			MD, LD, STEEPLECHASE							
Comp. Focus	MD								200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, CC			(200m), 400m, 800m, 1500m, (2k), CC		400m, 800m, 1500m, 3k, (CC)					
	LD	100m*, 150m*, Hurdles*, 600m*, 800m*, 1200m*					100m*, 200m* Long Hurdles*, 800m*		800m, 1500m, 3k, CC			(800m), 1500m, 3k, 5k, 10k track & road, CC		(800m), 1500m, 3k, 5k, 10k track & road, Mar, CC					
	SC	1500m, CC*					1500m*, 3k, CC*		800m, 1500m, 3k, CC, SC			(800m), 1500m, 3k, 5k, CC, SC		1500m, 3k, 5k, (10k), CC, SC					

Development Focus	Alactic Speed & Aerobic Capacity			Alactic Speed, Aerobic & Lactic Capacity		Event Specific Endurance		
	Running Mechanics & General Physical Preparation			Running Mechanics, General Preparation & Tactics		Running Mechanics, Specific Strength, Tactics		
CE	N/A			Broad range of Specific Endurance work spread across MD, LD, SC		Specific Endurance work dedicated to a specific event focus		
SDE	Alactic Speed Aerobic Development		Alactic Speed Aerobic Dev Long Term Anaerobic Dev		Development of full anaerobic system		All Methods inc. Altitude Training	
SPE	Athletics 365	Core Work	Gen. & Anc. Strength Core Work		Strength Endurance, General Strength, Ancillary Strength, all endurance based Extremity Conditioning, Core Work etc.			
GPE	Covered by other event groups & Athletics 365			Special Strength (inc. MJs & MTs)		Max Strength, Special Strength, all alactic generic work including Mobility & Extremity Conditioning etc		
Running Drills	As part of Athletics 365			Learning technique		Perfection of technique		

\* = Preferred competition distances given current physical attributes

Note: These diagrams are for illustration purposes only. They can only be fully interpreted after reading the accompanying notes and audio presentations.

# EVENT SPECIALISATION

YOUTH PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT (YPD) MODEL FOR MALES																				
CHRONOLOGICAL AGE (YEARS)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21+
AGE PERIODS	EARLY CHILDHOOD			MIDDLE CHILDHOOD						ADOLESCENCE						ADULTHOOD				
GROWTH RATE	RAPID GROWTH ↔			STEADY GROWTH ↔						ADOLESCENT SPURT ↔			DECLINE IN GROWTH RATE							
MATURATIONAL STATUS	YEARS PRE-PHV ←										PHV			→ YEARS POST-PHV						
TRAINING ADAPTATION	PREDOMINANTLY NEURAL (AGE-RELATED) ↔										COMBINATION OF NEURAL AND HORMONAL (MATURITY-RELATED)									
PHYSICAL QUALITIES	FMS			FMS						FMS										
	SSS			SSS						SSS										
	Mobility			Mobility						Mobility										
	Agility			Agility						Agility			Agility							
	Speed			Speed						Speed			Speed							
	Power			Power						Power			Power							
	Strength			Strength						Strength			Strength							
	Hypertrophy										Hypertrophy			Hypertrophy						
	Endurance & MC			Endurance & MC						Endurance & MC			Endurance & MC							
TRAINING STRUCTURE	UNSTRUCTURED			LOW STRUCTURE						MODERATE STRUCTURE			HIGH STRUCTURE			VERY HIGH STRUCTURE				

Lloyd and Oliver 2012



# ***EVENT SPECIALISATION***

- Broad range of events especially at early EG stage
- **Speed and power development** supported by competition
- Allow your athlete to experience a wide range of disciplines



# TIMES V TACTICS

- Learning your craft
- Not all about times
- Teach athletes how to championship race (Welsh and England age group)  
e.g. navigate the rounds
- Learn to finish quick



# **INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION - GROUP DISCUSSION**

- Does it keep young athletes in the Sport?
- At what age should we have international competition?
- How do we make international competition a positive experience?



# COMPETITION LEVEL PROGRESSION

## U13-U15

Regional and club level  
Limited UK wide comps  
Encourage Multi Event  
Welsh Age group  
champs – U15

## U17

Increase participation in UK  
wide competition  
BMC/Paced race  
? Age group championships  
England

## U20

More focus on making  
international teams



# MANAGING THE COMPETITION CALENDAR.....

	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Monday	Athletics Training	Athletics Training	Athletics Training	Athletics Training	Athletics
Tuesday		Run and conditioning	Run and conditioning		Run and conditioning
Wednesday					
Thursday	Athletics Training	Athletics Training	Athletics Training	Athletics training	Athletics Training
Friday					
Saturday	Local XC – Gwent League or NW league	British Cross Challenge			Welsh inter-regional championships
Sunday	Run	Run	Run	Run	Run



# MANAGING THE COMPETITION CALENDAR.....

	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Monday	Athletics Training	Athletics Training	Athletics Training	Athletics Training	Athletics
Tuesday	School's race	Run and conditioning	Run and conditioning	School's race	Run and conditioning
Wednesday	Rugby – game after school	Rest	Rugby game - school	Rest	Rugby game
Thursday	Athletics Training	Football PE Athletics Training	Football PE Athletics Training	Athletics training	Athletics Training
Friday	Football in PE	PE - XC	PE XC	PE – Football	Football
Saturday	Local XC – Gwent League or NW league	British Cross Challenge	Park run	Park run	Welsh inter-regional championships
Sunday	Run	Run	Run	Run	Run



# **MANAGING THE COMPETITION CALENDAR**

- Races plentiful – Year round!
- Other Activities – know your athlete
- Where do you fit in training?
- Burnout and fatigue
- Outcome focused
- Need to be Goal orientated (aligned to competency development of athlete)



# *FRAMING COMPETITION EXPERIENCE*

## **When things go well.....**

- PB or win/higher placing
- Confidence building
- Discuss what went well to bank positive experience
- Manage expectations on future success



# FRAMING COMPETITION EXPERIENCE

When it doesn't go so well.....

- Not achieving set target/outcome (placing or PB)
- Look for positives
- Learn from the experience
- Don't focus on the "uncontrollables"
- Move on to the next one...



# CASE STUDIES

- 3 Athletes
- What are your observations about the competition experiences of the athletes
- Consider how you would manage the competition requirements of these athletes





# CASE STUDY 1

Jess is a 16 years old. She competes for her club and has also gained a **Welsh** international vest at the SIAB T&F championships in the previous season.

Jess feels that her performances on the track have not improved this year and she has not been able to set any personal bests.

In her last race Jess was beaten by 2 of her close rivals who she was comfortably beating last season.

Jess has mentioned to you as a coach that she isn't enjoying competition anymore and is struggling to find motivation to compete.



# CASE STUDY 2



Jack is a 14 years old

He is currently ranked number 2 in the UK on power of 10 for both 800m and 1500m. He has recently won the Welsh Cross Country Championships.

Jack and his Father approach you with a competition plan which includes numerous BMC races and paced events. He wants to be ranked number 1 in the UK on power of 10.

## CASE STUDY 3



Carys is 16 years old and has just started athletics training.

She likes longer distance running events following some recent success at her schools cross country and she runs park run every Saturday.

Carys approaches you with a goal of running a fast 5K on the road. She dislikes track competition as she feels she isn't "fast enough".

