



BRITISHROWING

Checking In Webinar

Questions and Answer Sheet

TEAMWORK | OPEN TO ALL | COMMITMENT



Questions Unanswered on Webinar

We have various virtual sessions through the week and it seems the same athletes join these sessions each time. How would you go about engaging those who don't seem to join in, and ensure they remain part of the squad after lockdown?

Engage with them in a 1:1 check-in conversation. Find out where they are on the curve – what's happening currently in their lives and find out why they have been 'quiet'. Explore what needs to happen for them to join into those meetings. You might have to establish a meeting 'contract' that enables them all to participate and have their voice heard. You are the facilitator of that opportunity.

The Problem we are facing is not maintaining fitness it's maintain focus, particularly on high performance. As a coach should we focus on; 1) the next likely event or 2) perhaps no event at all? The risk is if we follow 1) we could face the same problem again and again!

Focus on **People First!** Make sure they are safe and follow government advice (NO events in the foreseeable future). Have all those 'Big Picture' conversations. Put it into context – this is not a Rowing problem – this is a massive Global Health issue. And on top of that, they can still do something for their body & mental health (i.e. a walk/day outside, body fitness workout, low intensity ergo, Yoga, learning a dance etc.)

Would you say that having a routine in lockdown is beneficial?

Yes, absolutely! The human race needs a routine – we need a purpose. Make sure you allow flexibility and athletes take ownership! Allow space to breathe, pause and reset.

I have found that exercise takes my mind off the depression phase is that a good thing?

Of course it is! Mix physical exercise with mental activities (i.e. visualisation, reflecting, learning). Declare it an opportunity.

If you are dealing with a large squad and athletes are moving through these 6 phases at different times how do you manage this?

Explore different group sizes for Check-In conversations. COVID19 means different things to different people. Some will hardly be affected by those changes while others will 'struggle' quite a bit. Your athletes will go through those changes at different speeds. Facilitate 1:1's, small groups, male, female etc. If you have several coaches at the club, then share the Check-In work load and compare notes to decide when large squad meetings are appropriate. You might not want to use them for large Check-In's.

Can you give advice on how to capture the dialogues we have with our athletes so it can be referred back to in the future?

Take notes for referencing later when meeting individual athletes/coaches again. Especially with large squads, you will not remember the details when you check-in again. PEOPLE FIRST! It will demonstrate that you genuinely care for the athlete's wellbeing.

Questions Unanswered on Webinar

Any advice / methods to engage with Junior athletes?

Explore different group sizes when doing your Check-Ins. Large scale squad events might not get you the desired outcomes. Use 1:1's and check-in with their parent(s) or whoever currently is their primary carer. Delegate Check-Ins amongst coaches and meet for follow up conversations with them.

I'm finding that setting some challenges helps with motivation but we could be in this for months, do the challenges only get bigger?

Yes, they might get bigger!

Slow down the volume of your challenges. Avoid micro-managing your athlete's daily routines. Let them explore themselves what motivates them in this crazy lockdown time. Facilitate rather than prescribe! Have regular conversations to check-in – it seems, we are in this for the long-haul!

I am carrying on doing lots of virtual training with my athletes. However, we never have any "deeper" conversations. From your experience, how important would it be for me to offer a group chat or a squad meeting to just have a chat? How would you approach it?

People First! This is a massive Global Health crises and Rowing takes a back seat. Therefore, offering conversations about the impact on an individual's life is quite adequate. The smaller the group (including 1:1) - the richer you might find the conversation! If they are not used to that form of interaction, your athletes will most possibly not open up in a large squad meeting. You might want to use those large squad meetings for info sharing only.

What advice would you give to School and university coaches with athletes that are in their last year that have made it to the top boats and now have where to show their talents?

People First - show empathy!

Have the conversation – check-in with those individuals affected. Put it into context. Shift the conversation from obstacle to opportunity. Revisit the GROW model of coaching. Support the athlete to set new goals, in a new reality and create new opportunities!

What advice would you give to coaches to deal with their disappointment and not pass their own disappointment onto their athletes?

It's ok to be disappointed! Have a conversation with yourself, explore where you are yourself on the change curve. Talk about it with someone you trust and find out what it means to you personally and how you cope with it – your partner, peer, friend etc.

This will allow you to show empathy with your athletes & staff. You will be able to relate and will be able to offer insightful check-in conversations.

With the news today that Junior Worlds are now cancelled, what would you suggest for supporting these youngsters and their sense of loss?

People First - show empathy!

It's ok if they feel a sense of loss – this is a moment to grieve and that's important!

Have the conversation – check-in with those individuals affected (1:1). Put it into context. Shift the conversation from obstacle to opportunity. Revisit the GROW model of coaching. Support the athlete to set new goals, in a new reality and create new opportunities! However, allow time to grieve.

Do you think that with modern media routes we lose the personal touch of face to face?

Don't think so! This is physical distancing – keep up the social closeness and develop it to something even closer – use all those available apps! And remember, we will get out of it at some point!

Do you expect people to move straight through that graph, or can people progress and regress through it? (The Kubler one)

Some will however, you will see all sorts of individual differences when applying the change curve: depth, duration, progress, regress - that's reality! Have those check-in conversations regularly.