



APPENDIX 4

MINDSET GUIDELINES

A performance mindset is fast becoming the key indicator in determining whether athletes will achieve true World Class ability.

However, many young athletes are quickly labelled as 'talented' due to their physical characteristics of early growth or exposure to opportunity. These athletes are then engaged in further opportunity for more attention, coaching and support but without ever really knowing if they have the mental attributes and attitudes that will be required at world class level.

If you can accept that a performance mindset is essential to World Class performance then it is crucial that mindset attitudes are identified early in the process so they can be reinforced and developed alongside physical attributes.

To address this situation **triathlon**scotland want to add greater importance of what we are terming as performance mindset behaviours. The difficulty in this area of selection is the ability to quantify and justify if one athlete displays more or less of one characteristic than another athlete.

Therefore we are being honest and open about the fact that mindset assessment is subjective and that we may not be able to satisfactorily justify the selection of one equally physical able athlete over another based on a reaction from the selection team. However, we will remain fair and honest to what we see on the selection day and also use observations from current squad athletes who have been constantly assessed over the winter training period and the current race season.

This is not a likeability contest such as 'X factor'; this is about looking for the mindset behaviours of world class athletes. The following section outlines the five key areas; CHALLENGE, COMPETITIVENESS, OBSTACLES, EFFORT, CRITICISM and suggests what are termed basic attitudes and developed attitudes.

If interested in learning more about this area, then suggested reading would be:

Mindset by Carol S. Dweck

The Talent Code by Daniel Coyle

MINDSET AREA: CHALLENGE

In every difficult situation is potential value. Believe this, then begin looking for it.

Norman Vincent Peale

It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves.

Sir Edmund Hillary

DESCRIPTION	Performance sport constantly requires athletes to rise to the challenge of logistics, environment, course and competitors. Therefore this is a crucial aspect of operating as a World Class athlete.
BASIC ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ Ability to recognize challenge∞ Adjust mentally and physically to positively face the challenge∞ Have a sense of pleasure in the process of dealing with the process of the challenge even if the ultimate goal is not achieved
DEVELOPED ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ Ability to seek out challenges∞ Physically able to lift to new limits when faced with a challenge∞ Mentally fully prepared with clear process goals and 'what if'? strategies∞ Genuinely motivated and excited when faced with challenges and discomfort

MINDSET AREA: COMPETITIVENESS

A lot of times I find that people who are blessed with the most talent don't ever develop that attitude, and the ones who aren't blessed in that way are the most competitive and have the biggest heart.

Tom Brady

I'm competitive with myself, but not with other people. I set goals for myself. I don't really care about winning or losing as long as I do my best.

Lucas Grabeel

DESCRIPTION	Some athletes are capable of training very well but lack the ability to convert training to racing. Ultimately, performance sport is about being competitive in a race environment. The main approach we would encourage is to 'be the best you can be everyday, to guarantee you are your best on the competition day!'. This is linked to the British Cycling model of directing focus towards the things you as an athlete can control and being competitive with yourself. The other side of competitiveness is being able to use others to inspire and motivate yourself to get your best out of yourself.
BASIC ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∞ Enjoy competing with yourself and others ∞ See the benefit of a competitive environment to personal development ∞ Be the best you can be, everyday
DEVELOPED ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∞ Seeking opportunities to use the competitive environment to aid personal development ∞ Be the best you can be all day, every day and on the competition day ∞ Ability to lift performance standard when it matters most

MINDSET AREA: OBSTACLES

I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.

Thomas A. Edison

Life is a series of experiences, each one of which makes us bigger, even though sometimes it is hard to realize this. For the world was built to develop character, and we must learn that the setbacks and grieves which we endure help us in our marching onward.

Henry Ford

DESCRIPTION	Elite triathlon is a very random and unpredictable environment. The lifestyle, training and racing all involve obstacles to be dealt with on a regular basis. There are two distinct areas which make up a person's ability to overcome and obstacle - i] how an athlete views an obstacle and ii] what the athlete is prepared to do to overcome it
BASIC ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ See obstacles as a necessary and useful part of the a learning process∞ Placing energy and time into developing coping strategies.∞ The athlete can rationalize and understand why the obstacle has occurred and how they might overcome it∞ Commit to working on a solution
DEVELOPED ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ Complete understanding of the need to experience setbacks in order to move forward∞ Remain positive and proactive towards the long term goal when faced with an obstacle∞ Absolute focus on finding a solution to the problem even if previous attempts have not solved it∞ Retention of any learning so that future obstacles can be tackled quickly and effectively

MINDSET AREA: EFFORT

Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration.

Thomas A. Edison

“Effort only fully releases its reward after a person refuses to quit.”

Napoleon Hill

DESCRIPTION	Getting to be the best at anything takes exponential amounts of hard work. This means that early success comes fairly easily, but as an athlete moves further towards a pathway to a major Games medal the workload required to make marginal gains becomes greater and can for some be overwhelming.
BASIC ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ Acceptance that ability is something you gain through hard work∞ Demonstrate that you can work hard on weaknesses and areas that you may find boring∞ Display initiative, self responsibility and independence in quest for progression
DEVELOPED ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ Ability to prioritise lifestyle to encompass all the work needed to progress∞ Sacrificing things you want to do for the things you need to do∞ Consistent, uncompromising energy towards marginal gains in performance

MINDSET AREA: CRITICISM

“Criticism may not be agreeable, but it is necessary. It fulfils the same function as pain in the human body. It calls attention to an unhealthy state of things.”

Sir Winston Churchill

DESCRIPTION	Honest feedback is a central pillar of the triathlonscotland performance programme and wherever possible this comes with a positive intention. However, during the course of a long term performance training programme, not every piece of feedback an athlete gets will come in a positive, motivational and obvious form. There are two parts to this area, i] feedback comes in many forms, recognizing all forms is the first step, and ii] knowing the best way to use feedback in order to move forward.
BASIC ATTRUBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ Acceptance of the different forms and tools that offer feedback∞ Responsive to all styles although aware of their own preferred style∞ Readiness to receive feedback from new or unusual sources
DEVELOPED ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ Pro-actively searches out information and feedback from all sources∞ Ability to turn negative criticism into a positive learning tool

IN SUMMARY:

CHALLENGE	...embrace challenges
COMPETITIVENESS	...be the best you can be everyday, to guarantee you are your best on the competition day
OBSTACLES	...persist in the face of setbacks
EFFORT	...see effort as the path to mastery
CRITICISM	...learn from criticism