

Participant Information Sheet

1. Project title:

More Than Just 'a Bit OCD': A Qualitative Exploration of Athletes' Lived Experiences in Competitive Sport

2. Background, aims of project

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study exploring the experiences of athletes who live with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) within competitive sport. My name is Marcus, and I am a postgraduate student here at the University of Stirling and this study will contribute towards my dissertation in sport psychology.

OCD is a mental health condition that involves distressing thoughts and repetitive behaviours. While mental health in sport is receiving more attention, OCD remains under-researched and is often misunderstood. In sport, certain behaviours such as routines and high levels of control may be seen as normal, making it difficult to recognise when someone may be experiencing symptoms of OCD. The aim of this study is to better understand how athletes experience living with OCD in competitive sport, and how they make sense of these experiences.

3. Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited because you are a competitive athlete who has experiences of OCD, either through diagnosis or by currently receiving support for the condition. This study looks to understand how athletes experience OCD within competitive sport, so it is important to hear from individuals with relevant personal experience.

4. Do I have to take part?

No, taking part in this study is entirely voluntary.

If you do decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without penalty. You can also withdraw your data up to two weeks after your interview. To withdraw your data email mjs00055@students.stir.ac.uk and provide your pseudonym which will be used to identify your interview data. If you choose to take part, please contact the researcher within a week of receiving this information sheet, you will then be asked to complete and sign an electronic consent form before the interview.

5. What will happen if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will need to complete one interview. The interview should take approximately 30-40 minutes.

The interview will involve talking about your experiences of living with OCD within your respective sport and your time competing in it. You are not required to prepare anything in advance. You will be asked open-ended questions and will be able to share as much or as little as you feel comfortable. You are free to skip any questions you do not wish to answer. The interview will either take place in a private classroom/study space at the University of Stirling or online via Microsoft Teams, this is down to your preference. With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded so that it can be transcribed for analysis. There will be no requirement for a follow-up interview, but you may be contacted via your nominated email should the researcher need clarification on any answers. You are under no obligation to respond to any follow-up questions.

6. Are there any potential risks in taking part?

Taking part in this study is considered low risk. However, understandably, discussing your experiences of OCD may feel sensitive and could cause some emotional discomfort. To reduce this risk, you are free to skip any questions and can pause or stop the interview at any time without giving a reason. The researcher will be conscious of taking a supportive and non-judgemental approach throughout. After the interview,

you will be provided with information about relevant support services, such as OCD UK and University of Stirling wellbeing services via a debrief sheet.

7. Are there any benefits in taking part?

There will be no direct personal benefit or payment for taking part in this study. However, your participation may help improve the understanding of OCD within competitive sport environments and contribute to better awareness for athletes, coaches and stakeholders in the future.

8. What happens to the data I provide?

I am carrying out this study as part of my personal studies towards the completion of my degree. As part of the project, some personal data will be collected, such as your name and a contact email address to arrange the interview and (if requested) share a summary of the findings. This information will be stored securely and separately from your interview data.

Your interview will be audio-recorded (with your consent) and transcribed. All data will be anonymised using your chosen pseudonym, and any identifying details will be removed. Only the researcher will have direct access to personal data and personal data will be deleted once it is no longer needed. The researcher and their supervisor will have access to anonymised research data. Your personal and research data will be kept separately on the researcher's university OneDrive and then will be securely destroyed within 6 months of graduation. Quotes from the interview may be used in the research (with your permission), but these will be fully anonymised. Confidentiality will be maintained unless there is a legal obligation to disclose information (for example, if there is a risk of harm to yourself or others)

9. Recorded media

With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded to ensure an accurate record of what is discussed. The recording will be used only for transcription and analysis as part of the research process. Audio recordings will be stored securely and will only be accessible to the researcher. They will be deleted

immediately after transcription and initial analysis. Recordings will not be shared or published and any quotes used in the research will be anonymised so that you cannot be identified.

10. Will the research be published?

This research will be used as part of my postgraduate dissertation. There is a possibility that the findings may be presented at an academic conference or published in an academic journal. If you would like to receive a summary of the findings, indicate this to the researcher and they will be shared with you via email on completion of the study.

11. Who has reviewed this research project?

The ethical approaches of this project have been approved via The University of Stirling General University Ethics Panel.

12. Who do I contact if I have concerns about this study or I wish to complain?

If you would like to discuss the research with someone, you can contact:

- Marcus Scullion – mjs00055@students.stir.ac.uk (Researcher)
- Alban Dickson – alban.dickson1@stir.ac.uk (Supervisor)
- Jayne Donaldson – jayne.donaldson@stir.ac.uk (Head of Faculty of Health Sciences and Sport)

You will be given an electronic copy of this information sheet to keep.

Thank you for your participation.