Abstract

Team selection processes are an inherent part of high performance sport and may impact athletes’ sport engagement and psychological adjustment (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). The purpose of this program of research was to advance understanding of high performance developmental and elite athletes’ experiences with significant team selection processes. Two prospective-longitudinal studies were conducted to achieve this objective. The first study examined how elite athletes negotiated the 2012 Olympic team selection process from an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis perspective (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Three primary themes emerged from analysis of the interviews including the Olympic goal, navigating the Olympic team selection process, and moving on from the Olympics. Results suggested that participants organized their athletic and vocational endeavours around their goal of being selected to compete in the Olympic Games, demonstrating significant investment and sacrifice. To cope with non-selection, athletes reappraised where the 2012 Olympic Games fit within their athletic careers, engaged in new and meaningful athletic, social, and vocational goals, and emphasized the prominence of social and vocational identities unrelated to sport. Study two examined how stress and adaptational processes were impacted by the 2013 Canada Summer Games (CSG) selection process. Multilevel modeling was employed to investigate changes in cognitive appraisals, emotions, coping, sport engagement, athletic goal progress, and life satisfaction in relation to athletes’ CSG selection status. Findings suggested that the CSG tryout had a meaningful impact on athletes as evidenced by changes in emotions, cognitive appraisals, and athletic goal progress in relation to their selection status. However, the CSG selection process did not affect athletes’ sport engagement or life satisfaction. Collectively, results from both studies indicated that athletes reappraised selection processes over time and varied in their
emotional responses to team tryouts, highlighting the importance of investigating intrapersonal change and interpersonal differences associated with team selection events. Findings also suggested that the stage of sport career influenced the meaning athletes attached to specific selection processes and the degree to which these events influenced their life as a whole.
Preface

Study one (outlined in Chapter 2) was conducted at the University of British Columbia. This study was associated with a Faculty of Education Social Sciences and Humanities Seed grant held by Dr. Peter Crocker. A version of this manuscript has been submitted for publication. Dr. Peter Crocker, Dr. Laura Hurd Clarke, and Dr. Kimberley Dawson are co-authors on this manuscript. The co-authors assisted in manuscript preparation. I was involved in all phases of this study including constructing the research question, study design, participant recruitment, data collection and analysis, and manuscript preparation. Ethical approval for this study was granted by the University of British Columbia Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Olympic Transition Study; H11-01961).

Study two (outlined in Chapter 3) was conducted at the University of British Columbia. A version of this work will be submitted for publication. Dr. Peter Crocker, Dr. Laura Hurd Clarke, and Dr. Kimberley Dawson are co-authors on this manuscript. The co-authors aided in manuscript preparation. In addition, Dr. Peter Crocker helped guide the data analysis and Dr. Ilhyeok Park (Seoul National University) provided comments on data interpretation. I was responsible for developing the research question, participant recruitment, data collection, analysis, and interpretation, and manuscript preparation. Ethical approval for this study was granted by the University of British Columbia Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Canada Summer Games Hopefuls; H13-00006)
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

An athletic career is often conceptualized as a miniature lifespan starting from the point of initiation of sport participation through to retirement (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007). Within a sport career, athletes progress through a series of stages and transitions that correspond to their personal and athletic development (Bloom, 1985; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). As a result, researchers within sport psychology have focused on understanding the factors that influence important transitions throughout and at the end of the athletic career (e.g., Erpič, Wylleman, & Zupančup, 2004; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). Within this body of literature, a transition is defined as “an event or non-event [that] results in a change in assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one’s behavior and relationships” (Schlossberg, 1981, p. 5). For example, moving to a higher or lower competition level, changing training locations or coaches, a new team, an injury, or retirement from sport have been identified as events that may result in an athletic transition. Non-events are also included in the definition of a transition to capture subtle changes that may influence the athletic experience such as a loss of sport aspirations or not being selected to a team (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007). Transitions can be classified as normative, relatively predictable transitions such as moving from junior to senior level of competition or beginning of sport specialization, or non-normative, unpredictable transitions such as a season ending injury or a sudden change in coach/team (Stambulova, Alfermann, Statler, & Côté, 2009). That said, the athletic career transition literature goes beyond treating transitions simply as (non)events, but rather conceptualizes them as a process (e.g., Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Stambulova, 2000) where pre- and post-transition environments and demands, coping processes, factors influencing
coping, outcomes, and consequences of a transition are emphasized (Schlossberg, 1981; Stambulova, 2003; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994).

During a transition, athletes can experience a disruption in their athletic status quo due to changes in their athletic experience (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). These changes may occur at the self-identity level (e.g., sport commitment, athletic identity), physiological level (e.g., aging processes, injury), technical or technological level (e.g., a technique change), performance level (e.g., continuous failure or success, competing in a different category), organizational level (e.g., changes in funding, team), or at a personal level (e.g., changes in motivation), all of which can have cognitive, emotional, behavioural, physiological, and relational implications (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). Subsequently, athletic career development through the successful navigation of change processes inherent in sport is important not only for the quality of athletic engagement, but also for an athlete’s overall wellbeing (Blinde & Stratta, 1992; Lavallee & Robinson, 2007; Park, Lavallee, & Tod, 2013; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Stambulova, Stephan, & Japhag, 2007; Warriner & Lavallee, 2008; Wippert & Wippert, 2010).

Team selection processes are commonly cited as a source of stress by athletes (Hanton, Fletcher, & Coughlan, 2005; Pearson & Petitpas; 1990; Woodman & Hardy, 2001) and can have implications for their athletic careers such as retirement from sport or the gaining of recognition and resources (e.g., monetary support; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). Despite leading to important change processes within and/or outside of the athletic domain, how athletes experience significant selection processes is not well understood. The aim of this dissertation was therefore to advance understanding of how athletes experience significant team selection processes.
1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Athletic career transitions and change events.

Traditionally, researchers have examined normative sport transitions (Wylleman, Alfermann, & Lavallee, 2004) and have primarily focused on issues surrounding athletic retirement (e.g., Sinclair & Orlick, 1993; Warriner & Lavallee, 2008; Wippert & Wippert, 2010). However, there has recently been a push to better understand a wide variety of factors that cause change within an athletic career (Bruner, Munroe-Chandler, & Spink, 2008; Debois, Ledon, & Wylleman, 2015; Finn & McKenna, 2010; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Stambulova et al., 2009). Sport transitions are considered to be multi-dimensional in nature and constructs that have been of common interest to researchers have included athletic identity (Park, Tod, & Lavallee, 2012), time passed after retirement, coping strategies (Lally, 2007), voluntariness of transition decision (Blinde & Stratta, 1992), injuries (Werthner & Orlick, 1986), career and personal development (Chow, 2001), sport career achievement (Sinclair & Orlick, 1993), financial status (Lotysz & Short, 2004), self-perceptions, control of life (Kerr & Dacyshyn, 2000), disengagement or drop-out (Koukouris, 1991), athlete-coach relationships (Lavallee & Robinson, 2007), changes in lifestyle and daily routines (Stephan, Bilard, Ninot, & Delignières, 2003), balance between sport and other life activities, pre-retirement planning (Warriner & Lavallee, 2008), psychosocial support (Lavallee, Gordon, & Grove, 1997), sources of stress, emotions, and personal characteristics (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a).

The selection of the aforementioned constructs by researchers has been guided by models of change (see Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999; Salmela, 1994; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Schlossberg, 1981; Stambulova, 1994, 2003; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) as a means to assess the determinants and outcomes of successful or unsuccessful
transitions. One of the most commonly used models (see Stambulova & Ryba, 2014) in the literature (e.g., Baillie & Danish, 1992; Pummell, Hardwood, & Lavallee, 2008; Sinclair & Orlick, 1994) has been the Human Adaptation to a Transition Model (HATM; Schlossberg, 1981) which has its roots in counselling psychology. More recently, Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a) have proposed a Scheme of Change for Sport Psychology (SCSPP) Practice, which is specific to the context of sport. These two models will be described in more detail below.

1.2.1.1 Human Adaptation to a Transition model (HATM). Schlossberg (1981) proposed that the success of an individual’s sport transition (resulting in either growth or deterioration) can be determined by an individual’s ability to cope with the transition and is mediated by three factors: 1) individual characteristics; 2) support systems in the pre and post transition environments; and 3) individual perceptions of how transitional factors interact. Individual characteristics include internal factors such as psychosocial competence, sex, age and life stage, state of health, socioeconomic status, value orientation, and previous experience with a transition of a similar nature. Characteristics of pre-transition and post-transition environments comprise internal support systems (e.g., intimate relationships, family unit, and friend networks), institutional support, and the physical setting. Lastly, an individual’s perception of the transition is influenced by role gain or loss, positive or negative emotions towards the transition, the timing of the event (e.g., normative or non-normative), whether the onset of the transition is gradual or sudden, degree of stress, and if the duration of the transition is permanent, temporary, or uncertain.

All three factors (individual characteristics, perception of the transition, and pre- and post-transition environments) interact with each other and influence an individual’s ability to cope or adapt to the new situation. An individual’s ability to adapt is dependent on a perceived
and/or actual balance between barriers to transitioning successfully and the resources available to the individual to overcome difficulties. This ratio between resources and deficits is viewed as dynamic, allowing for fluctuations to occur as an individual’s situation changes (Schlossberg, 1981). Schlossberg (1981) also proposed that transitions could be assessed by the difference between the pre-transition and post-transition environments. However, this difference is only significant as much as it affects an individual’s assumptions about themselves, the world, and their social relationships (Schlossberg, 1981).

1.2.1.2 Scheme of Change for Sport Psychology Practice model (SCSPP). The SCSPP builds on the HATM model and the coping with stressful life events literature (Beehr & McGrath, 1996; McGrath & Beehr, 1990; Schlossberg, 1981). This model considers the nature of change-events, athletes’ perceptions of the events, environmental characteristics, the athletes’ characteristics, and the athletes’ reactions to events as factors that could potentially affect the change process (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a) argued that when an athlete experiences a disruption in his or her athletic status quo (e.g., injury, performance deterioration, conflict with coach, de-selection), he or she may choose to either ignore the change or react to it by creating intra- and/or inter-personal change. Change may occur at a single or multiple levels of an athlete’s experience including cognitive, emotional, behavioural, physiological, and relational. Furthermore, changes may occur in other dimensions of the athlete’s life (e.g., start of a new academic program) that may impact him or her at the personal level, thus influencing how they engage in sport.

The model implies that when an athlete experiences a change-event (e.g., selection process), his or her athletic status quo is disrupted. Through a three-stage process of events and decisions, the individual either experiences change or no change at a particular level of athletic
engagement. The first two stages are emphasized here as they have more relevance to the current dissertation. In the first stage, the sport environment is stable and unthreatening to the athlete and is associated with meaningful and successful athletic engagement, positive affect, and sport-related decision-making focused towards maintaining this state (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). However, as athletic careers are dynamic, instability will eventually occur either as a result of a change in the environment (e.g., new team), a planned transition (e.g., moving from junior to senior level of competition), or an intrapersonal change (e.g., injury, reduced motivation, prolonged lack of success). This may be a distinct event or a longitudinal process.

Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a) also contended that when a change event occurs, it has the potential to create emotional and cognitive instability, which they associate with stage two of the SCAPP model. Negative change events (e.g., non-selection from a team) are anticipated to be related to negative affect, while positive change-events (e.g., winning a championship) may be related to positive emotions and increased motivation or, depending on the athlete’s perception, may require considerable coping (e.g., increased public status due to an unexpected success). In the SCAPP, when an athlete experiences a change event they will appraise the new situation, existing coping resources, and potential solutions. Based on this appraisal, Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a) predict that the athlete will make one of four strategic decisions to deal with the change event: 1) denial; 2) turning to significant others for support (e.g., friends, parents); 3) making the necessary changes independently; 4) seeking assistance from either a sport psychologist or mental care professional. Avoidance coping (decision one) is hypothesized to be associated with continued emotional instability, unless the event ends positively without the need for the athlete to use active coping. Alternatively, if the athlete decides to take an active approach and addresses the change-event (decisions two to four), they will either make a
decision to change (exploring possibilities for implementing change) or a decision to avoid change (associated with emotional instability).

Furthermore, Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a) proposed six factors that moderate strategic decision making: 1) significance of the change or situation (includes emotional severity, temporal nature, perceived control, with athletic identity impacting the significance and emotional severity of the event; Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993); 2) influence of significant others; 3) past experience in similar situations; 4) availability of external guidance (professional and nonprofessional resources that may assist the athlete to address the transition); 5) personal characteristics (coping skills and resources, competitive level, gender, and type of sport); and 6) motivational factors (intensity, ego-orientation vs. task-orientation; Duda, 1989, intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Even if an athlete makes a decision to cope with the situation, they may not in fact implement the necessary change (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a).

Stage three of the SCSPP model predicts that the athlete will return to emotional stability and will experience a reduction in negative affect and concerns if the individual is able to assume feelings of control over the event by engaging in effective change processes, making a decision to change, and by having the opportunity to implement change (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). In contrast to the HATM (Schlossberg, 1981), return to emotional stability does not imply that the athlete has grown or learned from the process, but rather that they are ready to continue in their athletic development (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). In the SCSPP model, there are three suggested moderating factors that influence whether an individual will experience a successful change process in stage three. First is the application of therapeutic processes independently or with professional assistance. The authors strongly emphasize components of the transtheoretical model (e.g., conscious raising, catharsis, stimulus control) that would assist an athlete with
effective change (Prochaska, 1979). The second moderator is the individual’s capacity for change and is considered to be multi-dimensional in the SCSPP model, consisting of motivation for change, expectancy of therapy, and coping style (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). Existing psychological support is the third moderating factor of an athlete’s decision to change and primarily describes the therapeutic alliance between the athlete and consultant (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a).

1.2.2 Situating team selection processes.

As previously identified, team selection processes can be significant change events for athletes. Munroe, Albinson, and Hall (1999) distinguished between non-selection and de-selection when an athlete is excluded from being a part of a team. Non-selection refers to when an athlete is not selected to a specific team and has never been a member of that team (Munroe et al., 1999). In contrast, athletes who are de-selected were once members of the team (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994). However, the distinction between non-selection and de-selection can be convoluted as athletes’ careers are not linear (Debois, Ledon, Argiolas, & Rosnet, 2012) and both terms are often used interchangeably in the extant literature (e.g., Pearson & Petitpas, 1990; Stambulova, Stambulov, & Johnson, 2012; Vaeyens, Lenoir, Williams, & Philippaerts, 2008).

For the purpose of this dissertation an athlete who did not meet the requirements for selection to an event was considered to have non-selected status.

Team selection processes are inevitable in high performance sport pathways. Successful selection to representative teams often provides athletes with opportunities to compete at a higher level and a gateway to achieving their athletic career goals (Stambulova et al., 2012; Woodman & Hardy, 2001). For some athletes, being selected to a specific event or team represents the pinnacle of their career regardless of competition outcomes (Woodman & Hardy,
As a result, team selection processes may change the athletic experience and lead to a disruption in an athlete’s sport status quo (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). In some instances, the result of a selection process may also contribute to an athlete transitioning (e.g., experiencing a higher level of competition) and/or disengaging from sport (Brown & Potrac, 2009; Debois et al., 2015; Hallinan & Snyder, 1987; Pearson & Petitpas, 1990; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994). For example, de-selection has been frequently described as a non-event that leads to a retirement transition (e.g., Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007; Brown & Potrac, 2009; Ogilvie & Taylor, 1993; Webb, Nasco, Riley, & Headrick, 1998; Wylleman & Reints, 2010) as well as a change event (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a, 2011b). Previous authors have argued that retirement due to de-selection can be difficult because the transition process is forced and unexpected (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007; Brown & Potrac, 2009; Halliman & Snyder, 1987). While these findings demonstrate the consequences of retirement due to de-selection, the accounts are limited in that they are retrospective and athletes have simply cited de-selection as a cause of their retirement. Thus, they do not consider the athletes’ experiences with the selection process, only the outcome.

Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011b) surveyed 338 varsity high school, university, college, professional, and international players and found that 20 percent of their sample reported de-selection at some point in their careers. Furthermore, 43 percent of elite professional and international athletes were de-selected during their career. This study did not include statistics for the percentage of athletes who were not selected to a representative team, which would likely have increased the proportion of athletes who experienced an unsuccessful team selection. Selection processes are therefore a significant change event that many athletes experience during their participation in sport. That said, with a few exceptions (Gaudreau, Amiot, & Vallerand,
2009; Grove, Fish, & Eklund, 2004; Munroe et al., 1999), researchers have yet to consider what impact de-selection and non-selection have on athletes beyond their correlation with forced retirement.

Selection processes may also require athletes to cope with change if they are selected to a team. For example, athletes may have to adjust to new sport environments (e.g., coaches, teammates) or cope with competing at a higher level. Alternatively, even if athletes are selected to a major competition, mismanagement of a stressful selection process can have negative consequences for elite athletes (e.g., unsatisfactory performance at the actual competition; Woodman & Hardy, 2001). Since selection processes hold significant meaning for athletes, more research is required to understand how athletes experience and cope with selection processes and what impact these processes have on athletes and their career in sport.

1.2.2.1 Team selection processes as a source of stress. Stress has been conceptualized as “the quality of experience, produced through a person-environment transaction, that, through either over arousal or under-arousal results in psychological or physiological distress” (Aldwin, 2007, p. 24). Elite athletes have consistently identified team selection processes as a significant source of stress (Arnold & Fletcher, 2012; Fletcher, Hanton, Mellalieu, & Neil, 2012; Fletcher, Hanton, & Wagstaff, 2012; Fletcher & Hanton, 2003; Greenleaf, Gould, & Dieffenbach, 2001; Woodman & Hardy, 2001). Recently, Arnold, Fletcher, and Daniels (2015) examined how organizational stress experiences related to selection processes differed based on demographic factors. Their findings suggested that females and team sport athletes experienced team selection related stress more frequently, intensely, and longer than male and individual sport athletes. Furthermore, athletes competing at county or club levels experienced organizational related stress associated with selection processes less frequently and intensely when compared to
university level athletes and less intensely when contrasted with athletes competing at national or international levels.

Sources of stress associated with team selection processes have predominantly been conceptualized as organizational (Arnold et al., 2015; Fletcher & Wagstaff, 2009; Hanton et al., 2005). Organizational stress is “an ongoing transaction between an individual and the environmental demands associated primarily and directly with the organization within which he or she is operating” (Fletcher, Hanton, & Mellalieu, 2006, p. 329). That said, for many athletes it is likely that performance in competition will influence their selection outcome. Competitive stressors have been described as “the environmental demands associated primarily and directly with competitive performance” (Mellalieu, Hanton, & Fletcher, 2006, p. 3). As a result, both organizational and competition stress processes need to be addressed. While athletes often report that selection processes are stressful experiences, researchers have neglected to discuss changes in coping, appraisals, stressors, and emotion that co-occur as part of the stress process (Lazarus, 1991) in relation to team selection.

1.2.2.2. Stress and coping processes. Coping processes are central to understanding stressful change events in sport (Alfermann, Stambulova, & Zemaityte, 2004; Finn & McKenna, 2010; Lally, 2007; Sinclair & Orlick, 1993; Stambulova et al., 2007; Stier, 2007). Within the mainstream theories reviewed earlier, effective coping is viewed as the key to successful transitions and dealing with athletic career disruptions (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Stambulova, 2003; Schlossberg, 1981). Investigation in transition coping has generally followed the perspective of the HATM. Thus, coping has been treated as a dynamic balance between all internal and external resources and barriers to overcoming transition demands. Empirical research has reflected this perspective on coping by primarily examining coping barriers,
resources, and strategies used by athletes during the transition period. For example, athletes have engaged in denial, venting of emotions, seeking social support (Grove, Lavallee, & Gordon, 1997), alcohol use (Koukouis, 1991), keeping busy, training/exercise, finding a new focus (Sinclair & Orlick, 1993), and proactive diminishment of athletic identity (Lally, 2007) to deal with transition demands. While understanding athletes’ use of coping strategies is important, this research does not capture current theorizing on stress processes within sport (e.g., Lazarus, 2006).

One framework that may assist in advancing our understanding of the stress process during team selection is the cognitive-motivational-relational (CMR) theory of emotion (Lazarus, 1999). While the CMR has been the predominant framework guiding researchers who examine stress and coping processes within sport (Crocker, Kowalski, & Graham, 1998; Gaudreau, Nicholls, & Levy, 2010; Nicholls, 2010; Nicholls & Polman, 2007; Richards, 2011), there has been limited application of this theory in the transition and change event literature (Giacobbi et al., 2004). In the CMR framework, psychological stress and emotions are a result of person-environment relationships, which may change due to time or circumstances, and can be a source of benefit or harm (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, 1987). To negotiate stressors, athletes are required to cope. Coping is conceptualized as a “process of constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands or conflicts appraised as taxing or exceeding one’s resources” (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p. 141). Furthermore, in the CMR, coping processes involve the interaction between stressors, emotions, appraisals, and coping.

Appraisals encompass how individuals interpret a particular situation. Lazarus distinguished between co-occurring primary and secondary appraisals, which influence the
intensity and type of stress and emotional reactions (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Primary appraisals are concerned with the personal relevance of the stressor to the athlete’s goals, world views, values, situational objectives, and well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 2000). Primary appraisals can be categorized as harm/loss, threat, challenge, and beneficial (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 1999), with goal relevance, goal congruence, and type of ego involvement impacting the intensity, valence, and type of resulting emotion experienced (Lazarus, 1991, 2000). Athletes engage in harm/loss appraisals when they evaluate and interpret previous experiences (e.g., non-selection to a team) as detrimental. Threat appraisals assess the potential harm or loss to the individual, whereas challenge appraisals are associated with beneficial outcomes for the individual (e.g., an opportunity to compete in a high level event). Lastly, a benefit appraisal occurs when an athlete perceives they have gained something or grown in the situation (e.g., gained status within a sport organization). Secondary appraisals involve the athletes’ perceptions of available coping options and focus on perceptions of control (Zakowski, Hall, Klein, & Baum, 2001). Assessments are made of who is responsible for the stress, whether or not they can successfully cope with the stressor, and future expectations about the stressor (Lazarus, 2000). It is important to note that the appraisal process is not linear and reappraisal will follow an earlier appraisal when new information becomes available (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). How an athlete appraises a selection process will likely determine engagement in coping efforts (Aldwin, 1994).

Coping responses are typically categorized into higher order dimensions. A commonly used classification is problem and emotion focused coping (see Lazarus, 1999; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Problem focused coping targets the reason an athlete is experiencing stress by managing and altering the cause of the stressor. For example, an athlete may increase their effort
prior to a selection process by spending more time training as a result of feeling underprepared. In contrast, emotion focused coping is aimed at regulating emotional responses originating from the situation. For instance, an athlete may use relaxation techniques to reduce anxiety prior to engaging in the selection process. Gaudreau and Blondin (2002, 2004b, 2008) have also proposed a coping function classification that consists of task, disengagement, and distraction coping orientations. For example, if an athlete’s coping efforts target a stressful situation (e.g., cognitive reappraisal) directly, they are engaged in task oriented coping, as opposed to distraction oriented coping techniques where the athlete focuses their attention away from the source of stress and onto other stimuli (e.g., mental distraction). Lastly, athletes may disengage from the situation either physically or mentally (Gaudreau et al., 2010). A limitation to the coping function approach is that specific coping strategies can be categorized under more than one dimension, depending on the individual and situation encountered (Compas, Worsham, Ey, & Howell, 1996).

The last major component of the CMR framework is emotions. Lazarus (2006) argued that the meaning we attribute to continuing and changing relationships with others and the physical environment will shape our emotions. Furthermore, he viewed emotion as the central part of the coping process (Lazarus, 2006). Theoretically, coping has an impact on emotion and emotion can, through appraisals, impact coping (Lazarus, 1999). While coping has traditionally been associated with negative emotions, it may occur in relation to any type of emotion (Richards, 2012). Finally, the transactional nature of the CMR framework is important to highlight as it emphasizes that individuals can perceive the same situation differently (Richards, 2012). This is particularly important when studying sport selection processes, as individual athletes will differ in their perceptions. As a result, athletes will engage in different coping
efforts depending on their appraisal of the selection process, and will also have different emotional experiences. In summary, the use of the CMR framework has potential to develop our understanding of how athletes experience and deal with stressful team selection processes.

1.2.2.3. Relevant research in stress and coping. Research on stress and coping in the broader transition literature does not reflect the complexities outlined in the CMR framework. For example, discussion of appraisals has been limited to whether the individual perceived the (non)event as positive or negative (Schlossberg, 1981). Consequently, perceptions of the transition and other primary and secondary cognitive appraisals have not been integrated or related specifically to the coping process. As a result, research within athletic transitions has not acknowledged the interrelationship between coping, appraisal, and emotions and has typically treated them as discrete concepts (see Alfermann et al., 2004; Stambulova et al., 2007).

There has also been a dearth of literature exploring stress and coping over the course of selection processes. Munroe and colleague’s (1999) study is a notable exception as it provides preliminary insight into athletes’ experiences with non-selection. Twelve first year university students who tried out but were not selected to a varsity team were interviewed twice. The interviews occurred one and four weeks after the tryout. Participants had positive expectations for making the team prior to selection, however after their tryouts had negative expectations as they perceived their skills to be poorer than those of other athletes. Participants also provided a mix of controllable and uncontrollable reasons for why they did not make the team. While these themes of control and expectation were described, they were not explicitly discussed in terms of appraisals. In addition, participant reactions after non-selection, including emotions (e.g., disappointment, relief), were presented. The experience of positive or negative affect at both time points appeared to be specific to the individual. Also, participants engaged in
“deglamorization” of sport and seeking out alternative activities as strategies to cope with non-selection (Munroe et al., 1999). Although components of the stress process were identified, there was no integration of these related concepts within this study.

While selection processes have been identified as a source of stress by many athletes (Fletcher & Hanton, 2003; Hanton et al., 2005; Woodman & Hardy, 2001), our understanding of these experiences remains in the preliminary stages. Therefore, it is valuable to examine key findings within the broader sport psychology stress and coping literature that may assist in furthering our understanding. First, exploration of the goodness-of-fit approach (Folkman, 1984, 1992) to coping effectiveness has not been explored within sport transitions, beyond being theoretically proposed by Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a) in the SCSSPP framework. The goodness-of-fit approach stresses the importance of the coping response fitting the appraised situation. It is hypothesized that effective coping will occur when problem-oriented coping is applied to controllable situations and when emotion-oriented coping is utilized in uncontrollable situations (Richards, 2012). Evidence has been found to support the goodness-of-fit approach (Anshel, 1996; Anshel & Kaissidis, 1997; Haney & Long, 1995; Kim & Duda, 2003) and it is therefore worth exploring the relationship between appraisals and coping function, in addition to how these relationships change over time as a result of team selection processes.

Furthermore, several studies in sport have suggested that coping changes over different phases of a competition (e.g., Gaudreau & Blondin, 2004a; Gaudreau, Lapierre, & Blondin, 2001). That said, athletes can significantly differ from each other in the amount and the direction in which coping utilization changes (Gaudreau & Miranda, 2010). Individual differences in the use of coping strategies over the course of a selection process have yet to be explored. However, one outcome of coping that has been of interest to sport researchers is satisfaction (e.g.,
performance satisfaction, life satisfaction; Gaudreau & Antl, 2008; Nicholls, Polman, Levy, 2012). Gaudreau and Antl (2008) found that both relationships between task and disengagement orientations to coping and changes in life satisfaction were mediated by goal attainment. In addition, distraction and disengagement oriented coping has been negatively linked to performance satisfaction, while task-oriented coping has been positively associated with performance satisfaction (Nicholls et al., 2012). However, it is not yet clear how engaging in coping in response to stressful team selection processes influences athletes’ affective outcomes.

1.2.3 Athletes’ affect trajectories and team selection.

While affective outcomes have not yet been related to coping, Gaudreau and colleagues (2009) have examined how affect changes as a result of selection status. They examined longitudinal trajectories of positive and negative affect over the course of an athletic season. Participants were adolescent hockey players who at the beginning of the season were attempting to make one of the three elite leagues in Quebec. Team selection at the beginning of the season acted as a time-varying covariate within the study. Similar affective trajectories were grouped together with findings indicating that athletes who were selected to teams and started with moderate levels of positive affect were able to maintain medium levels of affect throughout the season. In contrast, athletes who started with medium levels of positive affect and were not selected experienced a significant decrease in positive affect after the selection process. It was also noted that all participants continued playing in their sport at a high level and thus effects of non-selection on positive affect may have been buffered. In addition, the courses of negative affect trajectories were also deflected by team selection. Athletes who started with high levels of negative affect but were selected to the team experienced a significant decrease in negative affect, whereas non-selected athletes maintained high levels of negative affect (Gaudreau et al.,
One of the strengths of this study was that it examined not only group level effects, but also individual differences in trajectories, reflecting current theorizing suggesting that affective states will change differently depending on the individual (Lazarus, 1999). Furthermore, the prospective-longitudinal design allowed the researchers to capture change in affect that coincided with selection processes. Gaudreau et al. (2009) suggested that coping is likely related to affective trajectories in team selection processes, which further highlights the need to capture the multi-dimensional nature of the stress process in relation to team tryouts.

1.2.4 Athletic identity.

Athletic identity is the “degree to which an athlete identifies with the athlete role” (Brewer et al., 1993, p. 24) and is one of the most frequently studied variables in relation to sport transitions (e.g., Brown & Potrac, 2009; Lally, 2007; Lavallee et al., 1997; Lavallee & Robinson, 2007; Warriner & Lavallee, 2008). Athletic identity is usually framed within the multi-dimensional construct of self-concept (Brewer et al., 1993). It has been argued that a strong, exclusive athletic identity can have a positive impact on developing a salient sense of self and athletic performance, as an athlete must often focus solely on their sport to the exclusion of other activities to meet training and competition demands (Werthner & Orlick, 1986). In contrast, research on retirement from sport has found that a strong athletic identity is associated with a lower quality of transition and a longer adjustment period after retirement (Grove, Lavallee, & Gordon, 1997; Park et al., 2013).

Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a, 2011b) proposed that the degree to which an athlete identifies with the athletic role will influence stress processes associated with change events. They suggested that athletic identity will be positively associated with significance appraisals and intensity of emotional responses to team selection processes that could significantly impact
the athlete’s status in sport. Researchers have found preliminary evidence to support these assertions (Brown & Potrac, 2009; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011b). Brown and Potrac (2009) suggested that elite adolescent soccer players experienced emotional distress when they had a strong athletic identity and were de-selected from receiving a professional contract. Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011b) found that athletic identity was positively associated with current athletes’ appraisals of the significance of change events.

Researchers have also suggested that athletes will decrease their athletic identity to protect their self-concept when experiencing difficult situations in sport (Brewer, Selby, Under, & Petitpas, 1999; Grove et al., 2004). In a study conducted by Grove and colleagues (2004), 47 adolescent state all-star hopefuls completed three observations of athletic identity. The first measure was completed one week before the final selections, the second occurred immediately after participants were notified of their selection status, and the final observation was two weeks after the selected team was announced. The findings suggested that athletes who were not selected significantly reduced how much they identified with the athletic role after the team was announced, while selected individual’s athletic identity remained stable. Taken together, these results suggest that it is important to further examine aspects of athletes’ identities over time as they may impact team selection related stress processes.

1.2.5 Stage of athletic career.

Team selection processes have been discussed within the sport expertise development literature (e.g., Baker, Bagats, Būš, Strauss, & Schorer, 2012; Stambulova, 2000; Vaeyens et al., 2008). Researchers in talent development have used stage based models (Bloom, 1985; C tě, 1999; Salmela, 1994; Stambulova, 1994; Wylleman & Lavalle, 2004) to describe how athletes typically progress through an athletic career and how they simultaneously develop in other life
domains (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). At the beginning of an athlete’s career, there is a strong argument against the implementation of selection processes. A primary focus on sport performance outcomes at an early age and consequently early de-selection hinders the development of a larger pool of talent. Participation and learning should therefore be emphasized during the early stages of an athletic career (Vaeyens et al., 2008).

At the same time, as athletes progress through various stages of development (particularly towards higher competitive levels) selection processes become inevitable. Stambulova (2000) has suggested that pressure of selection to important competitions during the transition to high-achievement and adult sport may lead to transitional problems. In addition, Gaudreau et al. (2009) proposed that age could play a role in how athletes deal with non-selection. Arnold and colleagues (2015) found preliminary evidence that performance level was related to team selection organizational stressors. Their findings indicated that athletes participating at the county or club level identified team selection stressors less frequently and to be less intense than athletes at regional or university levels. In addition, national or international athletes reported more intense team selection stress experiences than club or county level athletes. In accordance with these propositions and findings, it is important to consider stage of athletic career when examining athletes’ team selection process experiences. For example, two athletes are vying for a position on the Olympic team. One is in their late teens and coming out of the junior ranks, and the other is a veteran in their late twenties. While both are elite athletes, it is likely that they will attach different meaning to the selection process. The younger athlete may perceive the selection process as an opportunity to gain experience and recognition, whereas it might be the last chance for the older athlete to make the Olympic team. Ultimately, the meanings attached to the selection process will shape the athletes’ experiences.
1.2.6 Prospective-longitudinal research design.

There is consensus among researchers that change events are a process (Alftermann & Stambulova, 2007; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Stambulova et al., 2009), implying that there will be change over time within the athlete as they adjust to their new situation. Although change events are theoretically treated as a process, the majority of research designs employed to study these processes have not captured change over time. For example, retrospective and cross-sectional designs have been employed to assess the quality of transitions (see Debois et al., 2015; Finn & McKenna, 2010; Park et al., 2012; Sinclair & Orlick, 1993; Stambulova et al., 2012). Cross-sectional designs have offered a snapshot of the relationship among the measured variables at a particular time point, thus implying that the variables measured were consistent over time (Crocker, Mosewich, Kowalski, & Besenski, 2010). Consequently, researchers examining change events have called for longitudinal research (Alftermann & Stambulova, 2007; Park et al., 2013; Stambulova & Ryba, 2014) as cross-sectional studies have been incongruent with conceptualizations of career transitions, change events, and associated stress and coping processes (Lazarus, 1999).

Prospective designs are preferred to retrospective designs (see Grove et al., 2004), although they are rarely used to study change events. All prominent models that examine change in sport emphasize the importance of athletes’ perceptions of the pre-change environment, expectations for the change, or future career goals. However, with a few notable exceptions (e.g., Baruch-Runyon, VanZandt, & Elliot, 2009; Lally, 2007; MacNamara & Collins, 2010; Torregrosa, Ramis, Pallarés, Azócar, & Selva, 2015), studies have been conducted predominantly retrospectively (e.g., Adams, Coffee, & Lavallee, 2015; Brown & Potrac, 2009; Clowes, Lindsay, Fawcett, & Knowles, 2015; Pummell et al., 2008; Stephan et al. 2003;
Warriner & Lavallee, 2008). Retrospective data can be problematic as findings may be confounded by distortions in memory and recall bias (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007; Kerr & Dacyshyn, 2000; Lavallee & Robinson, 2007).

Both studies within this dissertation employed prospective-longitudinal designs. Not only did this theoretically align with the extant literature, but it also allowed for exploration of how much individuals changed, when change occurred, and how athletes differed in the selection processes. Data were collected at pre, post, and follow-up time points in relation to the selection process which enhanced our understanding of psychological change occurring within athletes (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007).

1.3 General Overview of Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this dissertation was to advance understanding of high performance developmental and elite athletes’ experiences with significant team selection processes. Two prospective-longitudinal studies were conducted to achieve this goal. The objective of study one was to examine elite athletes’ experiences with an Olympic team selection process. This population of athletes was important to study as they have been found to often plan their athletic careers and subsequently their social and professional lives around having the opportunity to participate in the Olympic Games (Debois et al., 2015; Durand-Bush & Salmela, 2002; Ryan, 2015). The study was guided by Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith & Osborn, 2003; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) and focused on elite athletes’ experiences of an Olympic team selection process, resources athletes used to cope with an Olympic team selection process, and adaptation to different roles after athletes’ selection status was known. The purpose of study two was to examine changes in athletes’ cognitive appraisals, emotions, coping, athletic goal progress, life satisfaction, and quality of athletic engagement over the course of the 2013
Canada Summer Games team selection process. In addition, changes within and differences between athletes based on selection status in relation to these components of the stress process were examined. This study furthered our understanding of the association between being selected or not selected to a high performance development event and athletes’ stress experiences in sport.

1.4 Approach to Program of Research

This dissertation program of research combined both qualitative (study one) and quantitative (study two) research methods in a mixed methods design. Mixed methods is an approach to answering complex research problems that require data beyond what qualitative and quantitative methods can singularly provide (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Qualitative and quantitative approaches to research have different strengths that often address the other’s limitations. Advantages to qualitative approaches to research include (but not limited to) a) having data that are based on participants’ own perceptions of their meaning; b) providing detailed accounts of complex phenomena; c) the researcher being able to gain insight into how participants understand and describe their personal experiences with phenomena; d) the contexts in which the phenomena occur can be considered; e) a single case can be used to provide readers with a vivid description of the phenomena (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Quantitative approaches have many strengths including (but not limited to) a) the ability to test and validate existing theories with regards to how and why phenomena occur; b) being able to generalize findings to a broader population with large random samples; c) it being often argued that the results are, for the most part, independent of the researcher (e.g., effect sizes); and d) allowing the researcher to study large populations (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). By combining the
strengths of quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a complimentary manner, researchers may be able to obtain a more complete picture of the phenomenon in question (Jick, 1979).

When combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, there is often concern over the opposing philosophical assumptions of the methodologies employed (Sparkes, 2015). These approaches are often associated with underlying differences in ontology (e.g., a singular reality versus multiple realities), epistemology (e.g., the researcher as objective versus co-constructing findings with the participants), and methodology (e.g., nomothetic versus idiographic; Whaley & Krane, 2011). In this dissertation, I followed the perspective of Cresswell and Plano Clark (2011) in which multiple worldviews can exist within a mixed methods program of research. From this perspective, the worldviews are related to the type of research designs employed in different phases of the program of research as opposed how the researcher attempts to know the world. This approach is particularly suited to a sequential study design where one portion of the mixed methods occurs after the other and the researcher’s worldview shifts between the two phases of the dissertation (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In the first study examining athletes’ experiences with an Olympic team selection process, I adopted an interpretative worldview. As such, I assumed a relativist ontology acknowledging the multiple realities of the participants’ experiences, a subjective epistemology as I focused on the co-construction between the participant and myself of the meaning the athletes’ attributed to their experiences, and an idiographic methodology which emphasized the particular. Furthermore, study one followed the theoretical assumptions of phenomenology, idiography, and hermeneutics in accordance with the underlying assumptions of IPA (Smith & Osborn, 2003; Smith et al., 2009). For the second study, a post-positivist worldview was assumed as the study was guided deductively by theory, hypotheses were made to test
assumptions of these theories, and variables were empirically measured and observed within the context of the CSG team selection process. Therefore, I employed a critical realist ontology, an objective epistemology, and a quantitative methodology.
Chapter 2: Study One

2.1 Introduction

Team selection processes are an inevitable part of elite sport. The outcome of these selection processes can have career implications for athletes such as gaining recognition and resources (e.g., Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a), opportunities to compete at a higher level, achieving sport career goals (Stambulova, Stambulov, & Johnson, 2012; Woodman & Hardy, 2001), and athletic retirement (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007; Ogilvie & Taylor, 1993; Webb, Nasco, Riley, & Headrick, 1998). Consequently, team selection processes hold significant meaning and are a central source of stress for many athletes (Hanton, Fletcher, & Coughlan, 2005; Pearson & Petipas, 1990; Woodman & Hardy, 2001). Although they lead to important change processes within and/or outside the athletic domain, selection processes for high performance sporting events have been under researched. The goal of this study was to address this aforementioned gap by examining athletes’ experiences with an Olympic team selection process.

Researchers have suggested that team selection is a salient organizational stressor for athletes (Arnold, Fletcher, & Daniels, 2013; Fletcher, Hanton, Mellalieu, Neil, 2012; Fletcher, Hanton, & Wagstaff, 2012). Organizational stress has been defined as “an ongoing transaction between an individual and the environmental demands associated primarily and directly with the organization within which he or she is operating” (Fletcher, Hanton, & Mellalieu, 2006, p. 329). Athletes have identified perceived unfairness in selection processes, ambiguous or inappropriate selection criteria, inappropriate selectors, lack of selection opportunities, prolonged selection process, selection uncertainty, not being selected for a team, late selection, failure of coaches to deal with selection controversy, and being selected beyond one’s capabilities as stimuli for
experiencing organizational stress (Arnold & Fletcher, 2012; Fletcher, Hanton, Mellalieu et al., 2012; Fletcher, Hanton, & Wagstaff, 2012; Fletcher & Hanton, 2003; Greenleaf, Gould, & Dieffenbach, 2001; Woodman & Hardy, 2001). In addition, while stress related to selection processes has typically been classified as organizational (see Arnold & Fletcher, 2012), many athletes will simultaneously experience competitive and organizational stress as their competitive performance will dictate their selection status (Hanton et al., 2005; Mellalieu, Neil, Hanton, & Fletcher, 2009; Neil, Hanton, Mellalieu, & Fletcher, 2011). Thus, it is important to address both organizational and competition stress processes.

Athletes have reported a range of cognitive and emotional responses to team selection processes, including resentment when the selection process was perceived to be unfair, negative emotions towards their sport participation when they felt they did not have control over the selection process, as well as relief, anxiety, and general dissatisfaction (Fletcher, Hanton, & Wagstaff, 2012; Munroe, Albinson, & Hall, 1999). Gaudreau, Amiot, and Vallerand (2009) have also found that selection status influenced the season-long affect trajectories of elite amateur hockey players, specifically those who had moderate levels of positive affect and those who had high levels of negative affect at the beginning of the season. Other athletes have responded by reappraising the selection process as a challenge and have used a negative outcome as motivation to achieve their goals (Fletcher, Hanton, & Wagstaff, 2012; Hanton, Wagstaff, & Fletcher, 2012). Finally, how athletes respond to and cope with selection processes will affect their ability to adapt to new sport environments (Crocker, Tamminen, & Gaudreau, 2015; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). That said, it is unclear how engaging in coping in response to stressful team selection processes influences athletes’ experiences in high performance sport.
Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a, 2011b) have proposed that an individual’s athletic identity plays a key role when a stressful change event is experienced. Athletic identity is the “degree to which an athlete identifies with the athlete role” (Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993, p. 24). Change events have the potential to threaten an athlete’s status in sport (e.g., de-selection or non-selection); athletes with a strong athletic identity will appraise the event as more significant and therefore have a more intense emotional reaction to the event than athletes who identify with the athletic role to a lesser extent (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a, 2011b). A study of currently competing athletes found that a strong and exclusive athletic identity was positively correlated with appraisals of the significance of change events (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011b). Specific to selection processes, Brown and Potrac (2009) also found that when elite adolescent soccer players identified strongly with the athletic role, they experienced significant emotional distress upon de-selection from receiving a professional contract.

Other researchers have suggested that individuals will reduce their athletic identity in response to personal loss in the sport context as a self-protection mechanism (Brewer, Selby, Under, & Petitpas, 1999; Grove, Fish, & Eklund, 2004). For example, athletes who were dissatisfied with their sport performance throughout a season tended to identify less with the athletic role (Brewer et al., 1999). A similar pattern was found in a study examining 47 adolescents who were attempting to be selected to a state all-star team. Results suggested that athletes who were not selected had a significant decrease in athletic identity after the selection process, whereas selected athletes’ athletic identities remained consistent over time (Grove et al., 2004). In sum, these findings suggest that athletic identity plays an important role in how athletes appraise and cope with selection processes. Further research is required to extend these
findings by exploring how athletic and other identities change over time and influence coping processes during team selection.

Collectively, researchers have provided preliminary insight into how athletes respond to and cope with stressful selection processes. It is important to understand how athletes experience coping processes as effective coping is viewed as the key to successfully dealing with athletic career disruptions (e.g., non-selection; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Stambulova, 2003). However, researchers have yet to consider the complexity of coping processes in relation to team selection, including interactions between stressors, emotions, appraisals, goals, identity, and coping (Lazarus, 1991, 2000).

Olympic team selection processes provide an ideal context to examine coping processes within elite sport. The Summer Olympic Games are a unique worldwide event occurring every four years and for many athletes they represent the pinnacle of sport achievement (Gould & Maynard, 2009; Serpa, 2009; Stambulova et al., 2012). Elite athletes often plan their careers around the Olympic Games, sacrificing other life and social goals (Debois, Ledon, & Wylleman, 2015; Durand-Bush & Salmela, 2002; Ryan, 2015). For these athletes, being selected or not selected to the Olympic Games may have consequences for their athletic careers, performance (Greenleaf et al., 2001), and psychosocial functioning. The purpose of this study was to prospectively examine how elite athletes perceived and experienced an Olympic team selection process. The questions that guided the research were: 1) How do elite athletes experience an Olympic team selection process?; 2) What resources do elite athletes use to cope with an Olympic team selection process?; and 3) How do elite athletes adapt to different roles after their selection status is known?
2.2 Method

2.2.1 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith & Osborn, 2003; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) approach was adopted to examine athletes’ experiences of Olympic team selection processes. IPA is concerned with how individuals make sense of major life events (Smith et al., 2009), which made it a suitable approach to understanding athletes’ experiences of the Olympic Games selection process. Underpinning IPA are three theoretical foundations, namely: 1) phenomenology; 2) hermeneutics; and 3) idiography (Smith et al., 2009).

IPA is phenomenological in nature because the researcher is concerned with the participants’ lived experiences and perceptions of an event, as opposed to an objective account (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2003). The term “experience” within an IPA context refers to “a lived process, an unfurling of perspectives and meanings, which are unique to the person’s embodied and situated relationship to the world” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 21). Consequently, when attempting to understand the meaning participants ascribe to their experiences, researchers are engaging in interpretation which, in turn, invokes a discussion of hermeneutics (Smith et al., 2009). Hermeneutics refers to the theory of interpretation. In IPA, a double hermeneutic is employed in which interpretation is a two phase process (Smith & Osborn, 2003): the researcher is attempting to make sense of the participant (second order sense-making) trying to make sense of their experience (first order sense-making). Lastly, in IPA, an idiographic approach focuses on the perspective of specific people in a particular context in relation to an event or process (Smith et al., 2009). Thus, idiographic underpinnings are evident in IPA research; small sample sizes are generally employed as single cases take on significant importance (Smith et al., 2009).
2.2.2 Participants.

Ethical approval was obtained from the researcher’s University Behavioural Research Ethics board. Participants were recruited by distributing information about the study through gatekeepers (e.g., coaches and sport administrators) and posters in physiotherapy clinics and sport training facilities frequented by high performance athletes.

Participants were purposefully sampled (Patton, 2002) in order to obtain a homogenous sample for which the research question was meaningful (Brocki & Wearden, 2006; Smith et al., 2009). Thus, the criteria for selection were: 1) participants must have been international caliber Canadian athletes and 2) participants were attempting to qualify for the 2012 London Olympic Summer Games. Seven participants who met these criteria were recruited for the study (see Table 2.1 for demographic information).

Participants ranged in age between 19 and 32 (average = 24.3) years old and the average age that the athletes began training in the event they were attempting to qualify for the Olympics was 14.3. All recruited participants competed in individual sports that had defined standards for Olympic qualification. To meet these criteria, six participants were required to achieve a specific time in their event within a predetermined time frame and finish top three at the Canadian Olympic trials. This standard was set by the athletes’ Canadian National Sport Organization. The remaining athlete was required to achieve a specific world ranking. The athlete’s world ranking was determined by accumulation of points based on placement at predetermined competitions. This standard was imposed by the athlete’s International Sport Federation. One participant was selected to and did compete in the 2012 Olympic Games, while the other six participants were not able to obtain the established standards.
2.2.3 Procedures.

Participants completed a demographic questionnaire and were invited to take part in a series of three in-depth semi-structured interviews. The first interview (average length = 1.5 hours; range = 55 minutes to 2 hours) took place during or prior to the participants’ Olympic selection processes between April and June 2012. The second interview (average length = 1.75 hours; range = 50 minutes to 2.30 hours) occurred between June and July 2012 after the athletes had knowledge of their Olympic team selection status, but prior to the Olympic Games. The third interview (average length = 1.75 hours; range = 1.15 to 2.50 hours) occurred one to eight months after the Olympic Games between September 2012 and April 2013. Six of the participants completed all three interviews and one athlete only completed the first and third interview due to training commitments in preparation for the London Olympics. Interviews were conducted in person (11 interviews; average length = 2 hours) or over the telephone (9 interviews; average length = 1.5 hours) to accommodate the participants’ training and competition demands. Pseudonyms were assigned to participants when reporting the findings to maintain their anonymity.

In depth semi-structured interviews are considered an advantageous means of collecting data in IPA studies, as rapport may be built and participants are provided with time to think and be heard (Reid, Flowers, & Larkin, 2005; Smith et al., 2009). Semi-structured interviews allowed the first author to ask about topics pertaining to the research questions and for the unprompted discussion of experiences that held significant meaning to the participants (Bryman, 2004; Smith et al., 2009). Thus, the interview schedule was designed to examine elite athletes’ experiences with the Olympic team selection process and how their perceptions of the Olympic team selection process impacted their athletic career. Consistent with IPA, the primary research
questions were exploratory in nature, although the topics presented within the interview guides engaged with previous theory and existing literature on significant change events and transitions within sport. Participants were asked questions about 1) perceptions of the selection process; 2) sources of stress; 3) coping strategies and resources; 4) adaptation to new roles; 5) future athletic and life plans; and 6) the impact of being either selected or non-selected to the Olympic team. Participants were encouraged to deviate from the interview questions and highlight experiences that had significant meaning to them (Bryman, 2004). Probes were used to examine continuity in participants’ responses and change over time, as well as to ask participants to clarify and/or elaborate ideas and examples (Keats, 2000).

For the purpose of this study, a qualitative longitudinal design was appropriate for answering the research questions because it allowed the researcher to gain a sense of continuity within participants’ experiences (Smith, 1999). The longitudinal design also assisted the researcher in building rapport with participants, and allowed for reflection and the opportunity to follow up with participants for clarification or elaboration on their thoughts. Furthermore, researchers have argued that change-events (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007; Stambulova, Alfermann, Statler, & C té, 2009) as well as coping (Lazarus, 1999) are dynamic processes and thus examining changes within these processes required a longitudinal study design to address the research questions. Interviewing the athletes prior to and during their selection process also allowed for the researcher to explore the participants’ expectations prospectively rather than just relying on retrospective accounts.

2.2.3.1 Data analysis. This study used Smith et al.’s (2009) framework for IPA data analysis, which takes into account the idiographic nature of IPA. The analysis began with a reading of each transcript while listening to the audio-recording. Transcripts were re-read
multiple times to assist with the first author’s immersion in the data. Recollections of the interview and observations about the transcript were recorded. A process of initial inductive noting occurred where semantic content and language were explored by noting points of interest. Next, each individual transcript was examined for emergent themes and the researcher’s initial notes were incorporated. Themes reflected the researcher’s interpretation of the participant’s words and thoughts and the data continued to be reorganized as new themes emerged. Connections among the themes were then examined (Smith et al., 2009).

After these stages were completed separately for each participant, patterns were examined across participants. This process was iterative in nature which involved moving back and forth between the interpretations and the participants’ transcripts, checking them against the actual words of the participants (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

2.2.3.2 Credibility. Indicators of quality within an IPA study have been discussed in several texts (Chamberlain, 2011; Smith, 2011a; Smith, 2011b; Smith et al., 2009). In accordance with these authors’ suggestions, the credibility and quality of the current IPA study was addressed in the following ways; namely: 1) Sensitivity to context was demonstrated through knowledge of the extant literature on athletic career development, sport transitions, and coping processes within sport, by choosing IPA as an appropriate methodology to explore how athletes’ experience an Olympic team selection process, by focusing on the particular of participants’ experiences from an idiographic perspective, and by providing a large number of verbatim extracts from participants to support researcher interpretations and thus giving the participant a voice and permitting the reader to check interpretations; 2) Commitment was highlighted through the extent to which the interviews were centered around the participants and within the detail of the analysis pertaining to each case; 3) Rigour or thoroughness of the study
was established by selecting participants that had homogenous characteristics and matched the research question, by the quality of the interviews, and the comprehensiveness of the data analysis which was conducted thoroughly and systematically with the engagement of idiographic and interpretative components of IPA; 4) Extracts from the participants’ transcripts were selected to demonstrate convergence and divergence to incorporate variability in participant experiences; 5) Analysis provided an interpretative component and went beyond the basic description of the themes; and 6) The study remained consistent with the principles of IPA (phenomenology, idiography, and hermeneutics throughout; Smith, 2011a; Smith, 2011b; Smith et al., 2009; Yardley, 2000).

2.3 Findings

Three key themes emerged from the participants’ accounts including 1) Commitment to the Olympic goal; 2) Navigating the Olympic team selection process; and 3) Moving on from the Olympics. Each of the themes will be described in the following sections.

2.3.1 Commitment to the Olympic goal.

In this section, I describe participants’ commitment to the Olympic goal as evidenced by the prioritization of sport and delay of social and vocational goals. I then discuss how attaining or reinforcing an Olympian identity allowed participants to validate sacrifices they had made in the pursuit of the Olympic goal.

Participants perceived the Olympic Games as the premier competition in their respective sports and assigned preeminent status to the event. As Michael explained after the 2012 Olympic Games “lots of people go to the World Championships but the Olympics are much more impressive because it is every four years.”
During the selection process, all athletes indicated that their primary goal for the 2012 season was to qualify for the summer Olympic Games. Anna, who had previously competed in an Olympic Games, explained her commitment to the 2012 Olympic goal and the sacrifices she was willing to make to compete in London:

I am really committed this year to spend a significant chunk of time in [city] training. I am getting away from all of the distractions that I put on my plate at home…I am not worried about how much money I spend. I am going to do what it takes. If it means that I have to go away for four weeks…it’s going to cost a lot of money then well [my partner and I] will make money at some point and get my life paid off.

Similar to Anna, all participants increased their investment in their athletic development in the year preceding the Olympics to position themselves to achieve team selection.

The prioritization of sport resulted in participants delaying social and career goals to provide themselves with the best opportunity to make the Olympic team. The specific sacrifices athletes made in pursuit of their Olympic goal were unique to the individual and were influenced by their life stage. For the youngest participants, James and Mark, this meant spending less time with friends outside of sport and reducing their university course load. Mark explained in the lead up to selection events that he “took the year off school to help give me that best opportunity possible to get there [2012 Olympics]. Went and trained in [country] with arguably one of the best [his sport] countries in the world.” Based on Mark’s account, it was interpreted that he experienced tension over taking a year off school during the Olympic team selection process. He acknowledged that taking time off of school was a “tough decision” and one of the biggest challenges he had faced that season because he was close to the people with whom he went to school. Despite missing social connections, Mark felt that taking time off school and focusing
on his sport meant that he had no regrets when he subsequently did not qualify for the Olympic team:

When I took this year off school and I ended up putting all my eggs in this basket. It was so that I wouldn’t have any regrets. You know if I had not done this and gone to school and not made it then I’d kind of be “oh what if I had taken a year off school could I have made it?” Because I did everything I could have done to give myself the opportunity to make it, I don’t have any regrets, which is a really good way to do it.

The athletes who were in their mid-twenties to early thirties perceived that they were postponing a combination of the following: investing in their careers, starting graduate school, romantic relationships, starting a family, and financial security. For example, Anna described how her training leading up to the Olympic selection process had influenced various domains of her life:

I am not really enjoying [her job]. Even though I have done that job for a few years and not full time, but still I have had enough of a glimpse of it and I would like to have kids and I would like to have just a good family life…I [compete] for the love of the sport but at some point I do need to start paying my way and not being a continual deficit to the family.

Despite having deferred other life goals, all of the participants were unfazed by their sacrifices as evidenced by the casual tones with which they described their choices. Furthermore, participants perceived the delay of vocational and social goals to be normal and expected within their sport culture.

The participants’ concentration on sport leading up to the 2012 Olympic Games was also reflected in how they discussed their athletic roles. Specifically, participants believed that if they were able to attain their goals and compete in the 2012 Olympics then they would “become an
Olympian” or reinforce their Olympian status depending on their competitive history. This was in line with the participants’ view of the Olympian identity as being different from and more prestigious than that of elite athlete. Additionally, participants perceived that being an Olympian was an aspirational identity that athletes, stakeholders in sport, and sport outsiders privileged and equated with athletic success. As James explained prior to the selection process, “I have always seen athletes who are not Olympians as not exactly being real athletes…it’s a way of identifying yourself as a serious, serious athlete as opposed to somebody who just sort of does it quasi-recreationally.”

Attainment, or in the cases of Steven and Anna reinforcement, of the Olympian identity was a means of validating their athletic career and the concomitant sacrifices they had made in other life domains. Indeed, Anna contended the following:

This is really what I have been training for, for four years, eight years really, since I made the [Olympic] team. It will be a real sense of relief…I think I will feel really proud of myself that I stuck with it for so long despite the ups and downs and that my husband didn’t let me quit when I wanted to two years ago, because he said I wasn’t done yet and I think he and my coach will be really happy and I will feel really grateful to them for sticking by me.

Similarly, Michael noted that becoming an Olympian would validate his pursuit of an athletic career: “if you [compete] in the Olympics it’s this thing of being an Olympian that you don’t get from anything else…It’s for everything that I have given up to have it…it’s validation of that choice.”
2.3.2 Navigating the Olympic team selection process.

Prior to or during the Olympic selection process all seven participants perceived that they were capable of being selected to the Olympic team. Despite five athletes having to achieve a personal best at a sanctioned competition, participants expressed confidence in their ability to meet the required eligibility standards for selection. As James described prior to the selection process:

It’s just I know that pace wise I can. I am super confident I can do [the] standard just based on the [distance] that I did this weekend. I am pretty sure I could obliterate [the] standard based on just the pace I was keeping up this weekend.

Michael also indicated leading up to the selection process that “it’s faster than I have ever [competed] before, [but] I think it’s within my ability level.” The majority of participants scheduled their physical preparation (e.g., rest, recovery, conditioning, training phases etc.) and competition schedule around being able to attain these standards. One exception was Tim, who achieved the qualifying standard months prior to the London Olympics and subsequently shifted his goals and training to achieve a personal best at the 2012 Olympics.

One explanation for why participants were confident in their ability to be selected for the Olympic team was the degree of control they felt over the selection process. James, Michael, Mark, Lisa, and Tim, who had never competed in the Olympic Games before, perceived the selection criteria to be straightforward and objective. Thus, these participants had a sense of self-determination over whether they achieved selection, as articulated by Michael who stated:

I mean it’s very clearly delineated what you have to do to make the Olympics for Canada. I think there would be far more stress if you were kind of on the bubble. I mean you
didn’t really know what you were going to have to do to qualify but it’s pretty simple. I mean you [achieve] a time and beat the people, and you get to go.

In their accounts after not making the Olympic team, James, Michael, Mark, and Lisa maintained that the qualification process had been objective, which they defined in terms of clear expectations or standards that were communicated to them well in advance of the selection process. Following not being selected, James reflected:

I think it’s a pretty solid selection process. I mean before I thought it would be easier but now I know that maybe the standard that I needed wasn’t as easy as I thought it was. The selection process is what it is and I guess I have to work with that.

Lisa also indicated “it’s pretty clear across the board…everybody’s known about this for years, the selection standards were made years ago…people who are whining maybe they don’t understand it?” Yet, after the Olympics these same participants began to discuss ways in which they would modify the selection process to provide more athletes with an opportunity to compete in the Olympics. Mark recounted after the selection process:

You can agree with [the standards] or you cannot agree with [the standards] but you can see why they did it…I think the biggest problem with our selection criteria and our trials is, is that people aren’t willing to speak up until something happens… there was a bit of a communication issue on [national sport organization] part insofar as, yeah, they didn’t really justify why their rules were what they were. You know at the end of the day their rules are their rules and if you have a problem with them then you should be getting them fixed before they become inconvenient to you.

The tension in participants’ accounts was interpreted as athletes wanting to take responsibility for their non-selection status. Even though athletes began to critically examine how the Olympic
selection standards were constructed, they prioritized the maintenance of self-determination as it meant that they would have control over future selection processes.

In contrast, for Anna and Steven, external factors (e.g., competition conditions) influenced the selection process from the beginning. They perceived complexities in the way that the selection criteria were developed and applied within their sports. Anna provided insight before the Olympic qualification process on the selection criteria:

There are so many variables and going on such a strict [standard] and not looking at the context of how well you [compete] and the fact that we [compete] the early season...under these kind of contrived [competition conditions] and then you get to the Olympics or nationals or rounds...and being really strong tactically [is what is important]. It is like two different ways to [compete] that can have completely different results.

Similarly, Steven added:

In terms of the selection process it is more or less fair...there is one issue though where the points for one of the biggest meets for athletes in the [name of continent] were reduced to [number] points. It should have been a [number] point competition. Now that was an oversight on the international federation’s part. They won’t acknowledge that ever because of all of the trouble they have had with the Beijing Games.

Anna and Steven’s awareness of the intricacies of an Olympic team selection process was attributed to the depth of their experience at a high performance sport level.

Participants identified potential barriers to qualifying for the London Olympic Games that were sources of stress. The athletes perceived becoming injured, poor competition conditions when attempting to make standards, lack of opportunities to make standards, and poor relationships with sport governing bodies as primary sources of stress related to the selection
process. Acquiring a serious injury was cited by six of the athletes prior to the selection process as a barrier to meeting the required standards. To minimize the risk of an injury, participants actively engaged in physical treatment with physiotherapists and massage therapists. However, the possibility of a new injury and overcoming existing injuries were perceived to be central sources of stress that would limit their performance. James stated prior to the selection process “the fear of injury is always there and it has never been there in the past.” The participants’ amplified fear of injury leading up to the qualification process was interpreted as a product of the Olympic Games occurring every four years. Thus, participants perceived that an injury would risk their chances to compete in a rare Olympic opportunity.

Five of the participants reported experiencing stress related to competition conditions prior to and during the days that they were attempting to make the Olympic standard. These participants had limited opportunity to make the Olympic standard due to a lack of sanctioned competitions and the number of competitions they could physically endure during the qualifying period. Athletes perceived that poor competition conditions such as wind, rain, heat, inadequate race pacers, or their competitors’ lack of ability on these competition days, would hinder their limited opportunity to attain specific time standards. Anna explained prior to her qualification events that "there will be a [pacer] in the [competition] who is in charge of dictating the pace. If they don’t do a proper job...it messes up your whole time.” Mark described the limited opportunities to compete and the impact of poor competition conditions:

If you really want a good competition and a good chance, you got to go overseas…it’s a hard process to plan stuff knowing that the closest that you are going to get a good [competition] is in Europe or Asia. So that is definitely a challenge…I had a [competition] in February where we thought everything was going to be great…we
thought it would be a good opportunity and the [competition] started at 6pm and it was 38 degrees...so stuff like that you know that you are just like “okay well I can’t qualify today.”

Steven, who was one of the most internationally experienced athletes in this study, perceived that his relationship with his national sport governing body was a barrier to his selection. He had a history of conflict with the members of the sport organization. Consequently, he did not feel supported in his efforts to qualify for the Olympic team. He experienced intense stress when having to interact with representatives of the sport governing body and thus he felt he was not able to perform to his potential during the qualification period. Steven explained prior to his qualification events:

I want to do this. I want to be at my best and I am putting the leg work in to do that, but it kills me having to even talk to these people, because I don’t respect them…and you need that support from your [national team] coach, but things have broken down so deeply that it pulls away entirely from the performance.

2.3.3 Moving on from the Olympics.

Six participants responded in a variety of ways to not meeting the 2012 Olympic qualifying standard. The four participants who perceived that they were young international athletes reappraised the significance of the 2012 Olympic Games within the context of their sport careers. As previously discussed, participants put social and career goals on hold to provide themselves with the best opportunity to qualify for the 2012 Olympic team. However, after they were not selected these four participants downplayed the importance of the qualification process despite previously planning their lives around trying to compete at the 2012 Olympic games. For example, James stated:
Even if I did get the [standard] I probably wouldn’t have been mature enough in order to compete at the Olympics…chances are if I had gone, I would have just gone and embarrassed myself. So really, in some ways I’m thankful I didn’t get that standard. And like 2016, at that point if I keep up with training and everything goes as projected then I’ll be so much better and so much more ready to compete there.

After not qualifying for the 2012 Olympics, James and the other three young international competitors reappraised the 2012 Olympic selection process as a stepping stone to success for the 2016 Olympic Games. I interpreted this reappraisal of where the 2012 Olympic Games fit within these four athletes’ careers as a means of coping with the disappointment of not making the Olympic team.

For Anna and Steven, who had previously competed in an Olympic Games, not meeting the qualifying standard in 2012 was met with a mix of disappointment, frustration, and relief. For example, Steven articulated that he experienced conflicting emotions in response to not qualifying. He felt “destroyed” that he was not able to achieve the goal that he had pursued for many years and yet he was also relieved that he no longer had to cope with an adverse training environment:

I’ve been so unhappy in the sport for the last while that as much as I would give anything to have been in London…the stress that I’ve been under for the last couple years and how negative it’s been, I was also quite relieved knowing that it was the last time that I was going to have to spend time with my coaches and to have to deal with my [sport organization]…I was relieved but in the bigger picture obviously feeling pretty destroyed on the inside.
The qualification process was a source of organizational stress for Steven as he felt that he had no option but to engage in "toxic" interpersonal relationships with members of his sport organization to achieve his goal. Upon not meeting the qualification standard Steven immediately disengaged from these relationships which alleviated a primary source of daily stress.

Similar to Steven, Anna also expressed disappointment that she had not made the 2012 Olympic team:

I am disappointed that it didn’t work out and I might be a little disappointed in myself that I didn’t make it happen…I always thought that I was doing the best that I could do and I had to be happy with the outcome and I have to keep going back to the process…and that it is the outcome that I was disappointed in, it was not the process.

Anna also experienced frustration towards external factors which she perceived had interfered with her selection. For Anna that meant not having the opportunity to compete in events that would optimize her ability to perform the standard. Anna had this to say after the qualification period: “I wouldn’t direct my frustration as much to [sport organization] as the situation with my manager and the circumstances of not getting into [events].” Anna coped with her inability to qualify by attributing her non-selection to her manager’s failure to gain her entry into specific competitions. In contrast to the four younger athletes who did not qualify, Anna and Steven's sense of disappointment was intensified and they did not devalue the opportunity to compete in the 2012 Olympic Games, as they both recognized it had likely been their last opportunity to return to the Olympic stage.

All athletes who were not selected to the 2012 Olympic team readjusted their goals to cope with not competing in London. These athletes were able to disengage with their 2012
Olympic goal as the selection process unfolded and it became clear to them that they would not meet the standard. To cope with not meeting the standard, four athletes disengaged entirely from previously held sporting goals. After not meeting the standard, Mark explained how disengaging with performance goals in the event he had attempted to qualify in helped him cope with non-selection:

The idea of doing another [event competed in during selection process] was really daunting because I was like what if I go and do a really good one?...Probably going to hate myself, so I just needed something different to focus on…if my mindset stayed focused on [event competed in during selection process] I don’t think I could do that…for the next year at least I’d be saying “oh I can do that now, why couldn’t I’ve done that six months ago?” It has helped me focus on the future instead of reflecting on the past.

For these four athletes, disengagement from goals created distance from both the Olympics and a goal that they had failed to achieve.

After the Olympics all participants engaged in new athletic goals. For James and Lisa, this meant engaging in new goals related to the event in which they had competed in during the Olympic selection process. For example, Lisa wished to obtain a personal best at the world championships, set a new Canadian record, and medal at an international competition. James wanted to compete well internationally and qualify for the next World championships. Michael and Mark decided to pursue their sport careers in different events as they perceived this afforded them better opportunities to make the 2016 Olympic team. Michael explained his decision to change events in this way:

It is a new challenge…I did the math…you know the math from [other competitors]...and it says that I should be pretty good at that event and if I can stay healthy I should be able
to make [standard]. They said I could win a medal [in the new event], like the implication is once you get good enough…I think I can actually get to the start line in Rio [in the new event].

Mark also described after not qualifying how engaging with a goal in a new event helped him shift his focus away from the 2012 Olympics and direct his attention towards what he wanted to achieve in the future:

The biggest thing was creating a new goal right away. I had to have something. I hadn’t thought at all after London. So it was really important to get a goal down right away. I needed something in place to keep going, otherwise I wasn’t going to be able to keep going. I just basically threw down “make Worlds in the [new event]” and that was sort of my goal. That is what I am of focusing on now and now I am kind of like it’s a good goal, its working! I’m on my way.

For Mark, Michael, James, and Lisa, engaging in new goals allowed them to conceptualize the Olympic selection process as a step towards their future sport goals.

Engaging in new sport goals assisted Anna, Steven, and Tim in moving on from their 2012 Olympic goal. Anna made the decision to retire from her sport after the 2012 Olympic team selection process was complete; however she felt that she was not done competing at a high level. Refocusing on a new sport after her retirement helped to ease this transition. Engaging with goals in her new sport allowed Anna to maintain a semblance of her former athletic life which included training, competing, and social networks. Anna explained after the qualification period:

I love competing and I love testing and pushing my body to see how far it will go and how fast it will go…I think I still have a lot of unfulfilled potential that maybe has not
manifested itself in [my event] in the last few years but I still think I have the ability and the drive to be really good at other things, but like I said I’d approach it with more balance. In terms of [the new sport], I love the challenge of maybe picking up new skills because I’ve been doing the same thing for basically 15 years.

After not making the qualification standard, Steven opted to take a break from his primary sport, and three months after the Olympics he had yet to decide whether he would return. During this time he engaged with new goals in a different sport with the intention of competing at a high level, which appeared to allow him to regain a sense of excitement and optimism about sport. Lastly, after competing in the 2012 Olympic Games, Tim engaged in new sport goals which helped him to remain motivated and progressing towards the 2016 Olympics in Rio. Tim explained eight months after the Olympics:

We have sort of planned [the 2012 Olympics] was step one of two… then there are races that get you to the next one so whether I try to aim for a medal at the PanAm games and Worlds and try to be top 8 there, so that by the time you get to Rio you’re in the mix.

By contextualizing his first Olympic experience within the broader scope of his athletic career, Tim was able to overcome the letdown after the London Olympics and focus on his future goals.

In addition to participants engaging in new sport goals, during the second and third interviews all participants prioritized pursuing goals in other life domains. Participants’ goals included going back to or increasing the amount of time invested in school, starting a new job, reconnecting with family and friends, and investing in romantic relationships. The prioritization of social and vocational goals contrasted with the period before or during the 2012 Olympic selection process where participants’ accounts emphasized the Olympic goal. Engaging in social and vocational goals that had been put on hold during the Olympic qualification process
provided a distraction for the athletes as they concentrated on other life domains. Anna explained how her priorities had shifted after not meeting the qualification standard:

I have started going back to school for education but also I have been interviewing for a job that I really want. If I get the job I am going to drop out of school but if I don’t get the job I will be in school so basically I am focusing more on career…I would like to have kids in the next year or two. So those types of priorities that I have put on the back burner for years are going to be more in the forefront and if I can do [new sport] it is going to have to fit around my other life goals.

Tim also placed importance on goals outside of sport to buffer the effects of “coming down” after competing at the 2012 Olympic Games. He stated after the Olympic Games:

Ideally you want to start school right after [the Olympics]…I mean people commonly say that there is kind of a downward feeling after the Olympics so having something that is there to keep you motivated is good. So that is why I said “ok 2012 September I need to be back in school.”

Thus, engaging with goals outside of sport was a means to cope with the disappointment of not making the Olympic team and, in the case of Tim, the conclusion of the 2012 Olympic Games.

Social and vocational identities were central in the participants’ accounts after the Olympic qualification process when they were engaging in non-athletic goals. Participants believed that they were “more than just an athlete” prior to the selection process; however non-athletic identities came to the forefront after the Olympics. For example, James indicated “I see myself more as a student…athletics are just something exciting that I do on the side and helps with my resume.” In addition, after the Olympic Games, Anna emphasized social roles while diminishing the role of sport in her life: “I am going to be a good teacher, parent…a good
daughter, sister, and friend and wife and all of those things that are really important to me…more than any kind of personal glory that I could have achieved through [sport].” The combination of athletes fostering multiple identities outside of sport and engaging in meaningful goals in these life domains mitigated the impact of not competing or “coming down” from competing in the 2012 Olympic Games.

All of the athletes believed they were progressing towards a sport, vocational, and/or social goal at the time of the final interview. The five athletes who were early in their high performance international careers perceived that they had progressed in their athletic goals regardless of whether or not they competed in the 2012 Olympic Games. Despite four of these athletes not meeting the qualifying standard, they believed that their performance in the Olympic qualifying events advanced them towards their new goals by gaining experience, meeting short term goals, increasing their funding, and being “noticed” by their national sport organization.

Lisa stated after the Olympic Games that:

I accomplished the personal goals I wanted in that season and it’s putting me in a really great position for next season…there’s a lot of stuff going on and I think it will be a big giant step forward for me.

These four participants were optimistic about their sport futures and perceived that they were making progress towards their ultimate goal of successfully competing in the 2016 Olympics. Comparatively, Steven and Anna, who were later in their athletic careers, did not perceive that they were progressing towards their sport career goals. However, they felt that they were progressing towards their goals in other life domains (e.g., building a career, finishing school), which gave them a sense of satisfaction.
2.4 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the experiences of elite athletes engaging in an Olympic team selection process. Athletes delayed social and vocational goals leading up to the 2012 Olympics to achieve their primary goal of making the Olympic team. Becoming an Olympian or reinforcing their Olympian status, which was perceived as a privileged and distinct identity, would validate the sacrifices they had made for their sport career. Participants were confident in their abilities to make the Olympic team; however, perceptions of control over the selection process varied based on the stage of their athletic career. To cope with non-selection, they engaged in a process of reappraisal and goal adjustment while emphasizing the importance of non-athletic identities.

Athletes’ appraisals varied over the course of the Olympic selection process. For example, before and during the selection process all athletes indicated that making the 2012 Olympic team was their primary goal and thus they all put considerable resources into achieving that goal. Yet, upon non-selection, the four youngest athletes reappraised the significance of competing at the 2012 Olympic Games within the context of their athletic careers. Evidence of reappraisal throughout the selection process is consistent with current stress and coping perspectives (see Lazarus, 1991, 1999). These suggest that the appraisal process of a selection event is dynamic; reappraisal will follow an earlier appraisal when new information becomes available (e.g., selection status; Hanton et al., 2012; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Yet, the two participants who had previously competed in an Olympic games and were later in their career did not reappraise the significance of the selection process. The significance of the selection process likely remained salient for these two participants as it was their last opportunity to attempt to compete in the Olympics. Consistent with Lazarus’s (1999) argument that future expectancies
are a key secondary appraisal factor that influences coping and emotion, this finding suggests that future career expectancies will impact whether or not athletes engage in reappraisal processes.

Regardless of their appraisal of the selection process, all athletes engaged in goal readjustment. By the final interview, participants had focused on new meaningful goals in sport and other life domains. This finding is consistent with research that has suggested that the process of goal readjustment is adaptive when a goal, such as competing in the Olympics, is unattainable (Wrosch, Scheier, Carver, & Schulz, 2003a; Wrosch, Scheier, & Miller, 2013). Specifically, athletes emphasized the importance of social and vocational goals following non-selection or after having competed in the Olympic Games. In this way, they attempted to distance themselves from their previous sporting goals to cope with the end of an Olympic cycle. These findings extend the current sport literature by suggesting that goal adjustment, in particular engagement in new meaningful sport, social, and/or vocational goals, may assist athletes in overcoming a difficult sporting experience.

Participants provided further evidence of distancing themselves from their athletic role following non-selection and competing in the Olympic Games. Athletes primarily focused on their athletic role prior to knowing their selection status; however their focus shifted to emphasizing social and vocational roles after the Olympics. This finding provides preliminary support for research that has suggested that athletes may reduce their athletic identity after non-selection or poor performance as a means of self-protection (Brewer et al., 1999; Grove et al., 2004). However, due to the methodological constraints of the present study it cannot be claimed that athletes reduced their athletic identity in response to non-selection; rather other social and vocational roles became more central to their accounts after non-selection. That said, the
findings from this study would suggest that a shift in identity centrality coincided with transference in the importance of goals to those roles which were at the forefront for the athletes. Furthermore, this process was facilitated by athletes identifying with roles outside of sport prior to and during the selection process.

Athletes experienced both competition as well as organizational stress during the Olympic team selection process, which is consistent with current literature on stress experiences in sport (e.g., Arnold et al., 2013; Crocker et al., 2015; Fletcher et al., 2012; Mellalieu et al., 2009). The present findings expand the extant sport literature by suggesting that the degree of familiarity an athlete has with high performance selection processes will impact the number of competitive and organizational sources of stress he or she expects and experiences. For example, athletes new to the Olympic selection process perceived a high degree of control over their performances and outcomes, whereas those who were late in their careers perceived more barriers to and complications with the selection process. In addition, once the younger athletes gained experience with an Olympic selection process they began to explore the associated complexities. Yet, these athletes who would be experiencing future Olympic selection processes worked to maintain a sense of self-determination over the selection outcome.

The findings from the present study have implications for future research examining selection processes in sport. With a few notable exceptions (e.g., Gaudreau et al., 2009; Grove et al., 2004), the majority of existing research that considers selection processes has been conducted with retrospective and cross-sectional designs (e.g., Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011b; Hanton et al., 2005). These designs do not allow for examination of changes that may occur within the selection process and may be susceptible to distortions in memory and recall bias (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007). A strength of this study was the prospective longitudinal approach to
understanding psychological change occurring in athletes during an Olympic selection process. Indeed, this study reveals that the athletes experienced changes in identity, appraisals, and goals which provided further evidence for the necessity to use longitudinal designs when studying selection processes. Furthermore, the findings suggest that it is important to consider athletes’ experiences with a selection process from a holistic perspective by taking into account life domains outside of sport and how they interact to influence identity, adaptation, and coping processes.

It is important for practitioners to be mindful that selection processes are meaningful events for athletes which cause stress. Since non-selection may cause changes in athletes’ sport, social, and vocational lives and trigger strong emotion responses, they may require resources following non-selection to a major event such as the Olympics despite not competing. Practitioners should also encourage athletes to diversify their identities and goals prior to selection events as it is likely easier for them to move on from the event by engaging in new meaningful goals in other life domains. This would be a proactive strategy to cope with non-selection or ‘coming down’ after a significant event, and would allow athletes to experience a sense of goal progress.

Future research should address selection processes in athletes who participate in interdependent sports. It is likely that these selection processes may not have as clearly defined standards and thus their experiences may differ (Arnold, Fletcher, & Daniels, 2015). Researchers should also explore changes in and the relationship between cognitive appraisal, goal adjustment, and identity in a larger sample to determine if these findings generalize to other elite athletes. Additionally, future research is needed to understand how the Olympian identity is
constructed, how and why it is perceived to be distinct and prestigious, and its social and personal implications.
Table 2.1  

*Participant Demographics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $75 000</td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>Years of Previous International Competition Experience</strong></td>
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<td>Participant</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years on Senior National Team</td>
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</table>

*Note.* Participants were permitted to indicate as many cultural origins that they identified with.
2.5 Bridging Summary

The qualitative inquiry used in study one allowed for an in-depth exploration of Olympic hopefuls’ experience with the Olympic team selection process. This approach had several advantages including a) being able to gain insight into how participants described and made sense of their personal experiences with the selection process; b) consideration of the context in which the phenomena occurred; and c) using an idiographic approach that allowed for in-depth description of individual experiences (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The findings from study one suggested that athletes experienced changes in identity, appraisals, emotions, and goals in relation to the 2012 Olympic Games selection process.

The purpose of study two was to examine if components of the stress process changed in relation to the CSG tryout as well as the relationship between selection status and intrapersonal and interpersonal differences in stress processes. Thus, study two was designed to build off study one’s findings by examining whether the changes in the components of the stress process that were identified in the first study could be generalized to a more diverse sample and a different team selection context. Sampling athletes with varied sport backgrounds has recently been advocated for to be able generalize findings to a broader population when examining differences in their stress experiences (Arnold, Fletcher, & Daniels, 2015). In study two, over one hundred competitive development athletes who varied in their sport types (e.g., individual, team) and who were required to meet a variety of selection criteria were sampled in relation to the 2013 Canada Summer Games team selection process. Changes in athletes’ stress processes and differences between athletes were quantified to examine general patterns in the data.
Chapter 3: Study Two

3.1 Introduction

Team selection processes are stressful sport experiences for many athletes (Arnold & Fletcher, 2012; Arnold, Fletcher, & Daniels, 2015; Hanton, Fletcher, & Coughlan, 2005) and may impact the quality of athletes’ sport engagement and affective experiences (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Gaudreau, Amiot, & Vallerand, 2009). Although athletes have consistently cited factors (e.g., unfair selection procedures) related to team selection as a source of competitive and organizational stress (see Arnold & Fletcher, 2012; Fletcher, Hanton, & Wagstaff, 2012; Greenleaf, Gould, & Dieffenbach, 2001; Hanton et al., 2005; Mellalieu, Neil, Hanton, & Fletcher, 2009; Woodman & Hardy, 2001), we know very little about how athletes’ stress experiences differ and change as a result of being selected or not selected to a team (Arnold & Fletcher, 2012). Being selected or not selected for a major sporting event is likely to have a major impact on a developmental athlete’s life. The present study examined changes in specific stress and adaptational processes including cognitive appraisals, emotions, coping, sport engagement, athletic goal progress, and life satisfaction in relation to the selection process for the Canada Summer Games (CSG).

3.1.1 Cognitive appraisals.

Sport researchers have frequently employed Lazarus’ (Lazarus, 1991, 1999) cognitive-motivational-relational framework (CMR) to explore stress processes in sport (see Crocker, Tamminen, & Gaudreau, 2015; Nicholls & Polman, 2007). The CMR posits that psychological stress and emotion are a result of dynamic person-environment relationships (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). From this perspective, a key component in the stress process is how an athlete interprets or appraises a situation, such as a team selection process. Appraisals can be classified...
into co-occurring primary and secondary appraisals (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Primary appraisal is when athletes evaluate the personal relevance of the stressor in relation to their goals, world views, values, situational objectives, and well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 2000). Of particular relevance to sport team selection processes are threat, challenge, and centrality primary appraisals. Athletes will appraise a selection process as threatening if they believe it to have potential harm or loss (e.g., losing social status if not selected). In contrast, athletes will evaluate a selection process as a challenge if they perceive the outcome to be associated with benefits (e.g., an opportunity to compete at the Canada Summer Games). Athletes will also interpret the importance of the selection process in relation to their well-being. Secondary appraisals are related to athletes’ perceptions of control and availability of coping options.

Researchers have suggested that athletes may appraise the same selection process differently (Munroe, Albinson, & Hall, 1999) and reappraise the selection process when new information becomes available (Fletcher et al., 2012; Hanton, Wagstaff, & Fletcher, 2012; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). For example, first year athletes who were not selected for their university team identified a mixture of controllable and uncontrollable reasons for not making the team (Munroe et al., 1999). Moreover, Hanton and colleagues (2012) found that an athlete who had perceived a selection process as unfair later reappraised their non-selection as a challenge to make the team in the future. Recently there has been a call to further understand appraisal processes in relation to stressful team selection events (Arnold & Fletcher, 2012; Fletcher et al., 2012; Gaudreau et al., 2009). Furthermore, researchers have yet to use longitudinal designs that capture both interpersonal differences and intrapersonal change in
appraisals over a selection event and thus reflect the dynamic nature of the appraisal process (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

3.1.2 Coping.

Athletes’ appraisals of a selection process should also influence their engagement in coping (Aldwin, 1994; Lazarus, 1999). Coping is a central component to managing stressful change events in sport (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Lazarus, 1999, 2000) and has been defined as “all effortful cognitions and behaviours an athlete employs to manage constantly changing perceived important adaptation challenges” (Crocker, Tamminen, & Gaudreau, 2015, p. 30). Although there are many ways to classify coping, task-oriented coping involves using coping efforts to directly target a stressful situation, whereas disengagement-oriented coping involves mentally and/or physically disengaging from a stressful situation (Gaudreau & Blondin, 2002, 2004b, 2008). Research has demonstrated that there are intrapersonal changes and interpersonal differences in athletes’ use of task- and disengagement-oriented coping across and within sport competitions (Gaudreau & Blondin, 2004a; Gaudreau, Nicholls, & Levy, 2010; Louvet, Gaudreau, Menaut, Genty, & Deneuve, 2007). Despite team selection processes having been identified as a stressful sport experience (e.g., Arnold et al., 2015), researchers have yet to examine athletes’ use of coping efforts, how these efforts change over time, and differences between athletes in these efforts in relation to the outcome of team selection processes.

3.1.3 Emotion.

Emotion experience is also central to understanding stress processes in sport (Lazarus, 2000). Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a) posited that negative change events (e.g., non-selection) would be associated with negative affect, while positive change events (e.g., selection to a team) would be related to positive affect in athletes. These hypotheses were partially supported by
Gaudreau and colleagues (2009) in a study of elite adolescent hockey players who were attempting to make the top amateur hockey teams in their province. Positive and negative affect were observed during team training camps (team selection period), after athletes became aware of their selection status, and two months after the completion of the team selection period. This research reported that only two of the six types of affect trajectories were influenced by selection status. Specifically, athletes who started the season with medium positive affect experienced a significant decline in positive affect after non-selection. Furthermore, athletes who had high negative affect at the first time point and were not selected had a significant increase in negative affect, whereas selected athletes’ negative affect decreased after the selection process. Taken together, these findings suggested that not all athletes were equally impacted by non-selection (Gaudreau et al., 2009). However, Gaudreau and colleagues (2009) examined general positive and negative affect and did not explore specific emotions related to the selection process.

Theorists have called for the examination of discrete emotion states as opposed to general positive or negative emotions (see Lazarus, 2000) in relation to sport events (Jones, Lange, Bray, Uphill, & Catlin, 2005). Specifically, the emotions of anger, dejection, and happiness may be of particular relevance to selection processes. Lazarus (1999) suggested anger would be experienced when an event was perceived as a demeaning offense towards the individual, which might increase in non-selected athletes after learning that they did not meet the team’s standards. Happiness and dejection are emotions related to the athlete’s goal progress, which is pertinent when examining how the outcome of a team selection process affects athletes. Specifically, athletes will experience happiness when they perceive that they are “making reasonable progress towards the realization of a goal” (Lazarus, 1999, p. 96) and dejection when they believe that they are not “making sufficient progress to achieve a meaningful goal, or following actual or
perceived failure to achieve a meaningful goal” (Jones et al., 2005, p. 411). The frequency, intensity, and duration with which athletes experience dejection and anger in sport has been positively correlated with stress related to team selection processes, although happiness showed no significant association (Arnold, Fletcher, & Daniels, 2013). These findings are limited in that they are based on cross-sectional methods and were unrelated to the outcome of a specific selection event. Further research is required to determine how athletes respond to being selected or not selected to a significant selection event.

3.1.4 Quality of athletic engagement and life satisfaction.

An athlete’s ability to adapt to the outcome of a stressful selection process may impact his or her quality of sport engagement (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). For example, research suggests that athletes will reduce how much they identify with the athletic role after an unsuccessful selection process to protect their self-concept (Grove, Fish, & Eklund, 2004). Strong athletic identity (Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993) has also been associated with emotional distress and appraisals of significance in the context of selection processes (Brown & Potrac, 2009; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011b). However, athletic identity has only been examined in relation to team selection outcomes at a group level and thus additional research is required to explore intrapersonal changes. In addition to the quality of athletic engagement, the outcome of a selection process could also impact other dimensions of an athlete’s life (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a) resulting in a perturbation in life satisfaction. In a sample of athletes, task- and disengagement-oriented coping have both been associated with changes in life satisfaction with goal attainment mediating the relationships (Gaudreau & Antl, 2008). Further exploration of how the outcome of a team selection process is related to changes in athletes’ use of coping, perceptions of sport goal progress, and life satisfaction is warranted.
Team selection processes have been consistently identified by athletes as a source of stress that could impact the quality of their athletic engagement (Grove et al., 2004; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a) and affective experiences (Gaudreau et al., 2009). Despite these findings, we know very little about how athletes’ stress experiences change in relation to the outcome of a significant selection process. Furthermore, researchers have primarily used cross-sectional and/or retrospective designs to study selection processes (e.g., Arnold et al., 2015; Brown & Potrac, 2009). These study designs are theoretically incongruent with current stress and coping perspectives (Lazarus, 1999) which treat stress processes as dynamic and changing. As a result, sport stress and coping researchers have advocated for research designs that can capture interpersonal as well intrapersonal effects (Crocker, Mosewich, Kowalski, & Besenski, 2010).

The present study sought to address these gaps in the literature by examining components of the stress process over time in relation to an important team selection event and by using multilevel modeling to explore patterns of intrapersonal change and interpersonal differences in these processes.

3.1.5 The Canada Summer Games.

The Canada Summer Games (CSG) is a multisport development event that occurs every four years. It receives significant government funding and media attention within Canada. Athletes are selected to represent their home province at the games and many are considered to be the best junior athletes in Canada. The junior period has been identified as a critical period in athletic development where talented athletes often transition out of sport (Stambulova et al., 2009). Indeed, the CSG selection process may represent a critical event that could affect the quality of sport engagement in talented development athletes. Consequently, the CSG tryouts
provided a context to explore stress processes over time in relation to the outcome of a
significant selection process.

3.1.6 Purpose and hypotheses.

The purpose of this study was to examine: a) if cognitive appraisals, emotions, coping,
athletic goal progress, life satisfaction, and quality of athletic engagement changed over the
course of the CSG selection process; b) the relationship between selection status and
intrapersonal change in stress processes; and c) the association between selection status and
differences in athletes’ stress processes after they became aware of their selection status. To
address these aims, a three-wave prospective longitudinal design was employed where variables
were measured prior to final selection events and one and five weeks after athletes’ became
aware of their selection status.

Non-selected athletes were anticipated to perceive the selection outcome as a harm or
loss, with threat appraisals expected to increase in these athletes. Non-selected status scores on
threat appraisal were hypothesized to be higher at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels.
Challenge appraisals were expected to decrease in non-selected athletes, as it was expected that
they would perceive less opportunity for future gains from the selection process. Thus, non-
selected status was hypothesized to have lower challenge appraisal scores at both the
intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. Centrality appraisals for non-selected athletes were
expected to decline as it was anticipated they would distance themselves from failing to make the
team and reappraise the selection process as having less of an effect on their well-being. Non-
selected status would score lower on centrality appraisals at both the intrapersonal and
interpersonal levels. For control appraisals, it was hypothesized that selected status scores would
be higher than non-selected scores at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels, as it was anticipated that non-selected athletes would perceive less control over the selection outcome.

As disengagement-oriented coping is commonly associated with lower control and higher threat appraisals (see Nicholls, Polman, & Levy, 2012), athletes were anticipated to use more disengagement-oriented coping strategies when they had non-selected status at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. In contrast, it was hypothesized that athletes with non-selected status at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels would engage in less task-oriented coping as these strategies are typically related to higher control and challenge appraisals (see Nicholls et al., 2012). It was also expected that there would be significant proportions of variance at the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels of task- and disengagement-coping (Gaudreau & Blondin, 2004a; Gaudreau et al., 2010; Louvet et al., 2007).

Theorists have suggested that positive change-events will be associated with positive emotions and negative change-events will be related to negative emotions (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). As such, athletes who were not selected were expected to experience an increase in anger in relation to the CSG tryouts after non-selection, as it was anticipated that they would be more likely to perceive a personal offense against them. This would result in not selected status having higher anger scores compared to selected status at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. Non-selected athletes were expected to experience an increase in dejection and a decrease in happiness in relation to the CSG tryouts after not being selected, as they likely had not progressed towards their selection goals. This would result in non-selected status having higher dejection scores and lower happiness scores compared to selected status at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels.
It was anticipated that when athletes had selected status they would score higher on sport goal progress than non-selected status at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. Indicators of athletic engagement (athletic identity and sport commitment) were expected to decrease for non-selected athletes after they became aware of their selection status (Grove et al., 2004). This would result in non-selected status having lower athletic identity and sport commitment scores compared to selected status at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. No specific hypotheses were made for the relation between life satisfaction and selection status.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Participants.

One hundred seventy-eight Canadian athletes who attempted to represent their province or territory [Ontario (17.4%), Saskatchewan (15.7%), British Columbia (13.5%), Prince Edward Island (11.8%), Alberta (11.7%), Manitoba (10.7%), New Brunswick (7.3%), Nova Scotia (6.2%), Newfoundland and Labrador (5.1%), Northwest Territories (0.6%)] at the 2013 Canada Summer Games (CSG) participated in the first phase of the study. Athletes [Caucasian (96.2%), Aboriginal (1.3%), Black (1.3%), Chinese (.6%) Southeast Asian (.6%)] were 56.1% female and ranged in age between 14-22 years old ($M_{\text{age}} = 17.88$ years, $SD = 1.89$) upon completion of the first questionnaire. Athletes from a variety of sports were attempting to make their provincial CSG team in athletics (25.3%), baseball (9.0%), basketball (1.7%), beach volleyball (.6%), canoe kayak (5.1%), cycling (3.4%), diving (2.2%), fencing (2.2%), golf (2.8%), indoor volleyball (7.9%), rowing (10.7%), mountain biking (1.7%), sailing (3.9%), soccer (3.9%), softball (8.4%), swimming (.6%), triathlon (6.2%), and wrestling (4.5%). The majority of participants had not tried out for ($n = 34$ previously tried out; $n = 144$ first time trying out) or competed in a previous CSG ($n = 22$ had competed; $n = 156$ had not competed). Selection status was obtained for 137
(n_{selected} = 102; n_{not selected} = 35) participants who completed questionnaires at the second and/or third time point (n_{time1} = 178 participants; n_{time2} = 115 participants; n_{time3} = 101 participants).

3.2.2 Measures.

3.2.2.1 Demographic information. Demographic information collected at the first time point included the date, date(s) of CSG tryouts, date of birth, email addresses (to contact participants at subsequent time points), gender, ethnic origin, CSG sport and event(s), province or territory representing, history of previous CSG tryouts and participation, and when the athletes became aware of their CSG selection status. Demographic information collected at the second and third time points, to match participants to their initial survey, included date of birth, email addresses, gender, CSG sport and event(s), and province or territory. In addition, athletes’ CSG team selection status was obtained.

3.2.2.2 Cognitive appraisal. The Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM; Peacock & Wong, 1990) examined athletes’ appraisals of the CSG selection process. Five subscales of the SAM, consisting of 20-items, captured dimensions of primary and secondary appraisals. Two subscales measured relational meaning, threat (e.g., “Will the outcome of this situation be negative?”) and challenge (e.g., “How eager am I to tackle this problem?”). In addition, the centrality subscale (e.g., “How much will I be affected by the outcome of this situation?”) indicated the extent to which athletes perceived the CSG tryouts to be an important event for their well-being. The secondary appraisal dimensions were comprised of controllable-by-self (control; e.g., “Do I have the ability to do well in this situation?”) and uncontrollable-by-anyone (uncontrollable; e.g., “Is this a totally hopeless situation?”) subscales. All subscales consisted of four items and were rated on a 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Extremely) scale. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for the SAM have been reported to range from .74 to .90 (Peacock & Wong, 1990).
Participants were asked to respond to the SAM based on their thoughts about the CSG tryouts at the time of questionnaire completion. Items on the SAM were originally worded for anticipatory stress (Peacock & Wong, 1990) and thus items were adapted at the second and third time points to reflect a past tense sentence structure (e.g., “How eager am I to tackle this problem?” was adapted to “How eager was I to tackle this problem?” at the second and third survey). This adaptation reflected the timing of when the participants completed the different surveys in relation to their selection process.

3.2.2.3 Emotions. Anger (four items), dejection (five items), and happiness (four items) were measured using the Sport Emotion Questionnaire (SEQ; Jones, Lange, Bray, Uphill, & Catlin, 2005). For each item, participants were asked to rate how they felt “right now, at this moment, in relation to trying out for the Canada Summer Games” on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 0 (Not at all) to 4 (Extremely). Jones et al., (2005) found acceptable reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = .81-.90), model fit, and criterion validity for the SEQ.

3.2.2.4 Coping. Task-oriented (23 items) and disengagement-oriented (eight items) coping were measured with the English version of the Coping Inventory for Competitive Sport (CICS; Gaudreau & Blondin, 2002). Eight subscales were used to represent different coping strategies. Participants were asked to respond to items on a scale from 1 (does not correspond at all) to 5 (corresponds very strongly). Subscales were categorized into a hierarchical structure that included the two dimensions of task-oriented and disengagement-oriented coping (Gaudreau & Antl, 2008; Gaudreau & Blondin, 2004; 2008). Task-oriented coping included thought control (four items; e.g., “I tried to get rid of my doubts by thinking positively”), mental imagery (four items; e.g., “I visualized that I was in total control of the situation”), relaxation (four items; e.g., “I tried to relax my body”), effort expenditure (three items; e.g., “I gave a relentless effort”),
logical analysis (four items; e.g., “I analyzed the demands of the tryout”), and seeking support (four items; e.g., “I asked other athletes for advice”) subscales. The disengagement/resignation (four items; e.g., “I let myself feel hopeless and discouraged”) and venting of emotion (four items; e.g., “I expressed my frustrations”) subscales were categorized under disengagement-oriented coping. Adequate reliability for the CICS has been demonstrated with Cronbach’s alpha coefficients ranging from .67 and .87 in both the subscale and higher order models (Gaudreau & Blondin, 2002; Gaudreau et al., 2010; Nicholls et al., 2012).

The CICS was designed to assess temporal phases within a sport competition as well as across sport situations (Gaudreau & Blondin, 2002). In this study, the CICS was adapted to direct athletes to respond in relation to the CSG tryout as opposed to a sport competition. The CICS at the first time point reflected coping strategies athletes employed leading up to the CSG tryouts. At the second time point, athletes were asked the extent to which they used coping strategies to deal with the outcome of the CSG tryouts, and at the third time point, athletes reported on the strategies they had used to cope with the outcome of the CSG tryouts within the last week.

3.2.2.5 Athletic goal progress. Athletic goal progress was measured at all three time points using a questionnaire created by Dugas, Gaudreau, and Carraro (2012). The instrument consisted of five items (e.g., “you came closer to reaching your athletic goals”) with responses ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 9 (Totally). Dugas and colleagues (2012) provided evidence that the scale had adequate reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = .98) and factorial validity. The stems were adapted to reflect when the athletes completed the questionnaire in relation to the CSG selection process (time one: “Leading up to the Canada Summer Games Tryouts”; time two: “Based on the
outcome of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts”; and time three: “Since the Canada Summer Games Tryouts”).

3.2.2.6 Athletic identity. The extent to which participants identified with the role of an athlete was measured at all three time points using the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS; Brewer & Cornelius, 2001). The AIMS consisted of seven-items (e.g., “Sport is the most important part of my life”), which had been shortened from its original version (Brewer et al., 1993). Participants indicated the extent of their agreement with the items on a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). The AIMS has demonstrated adequate reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = .81; Brewer & Cornelius, 2001).

3.2.2.7 Sport commitment. Sport commitment reflects athletes’ desire and resolve to continue athletic participation (Scanlan, Simons, Carpenter, Schmidt, & Keeler, 1993). Sport commitment was assessed using a four-item (e.g., How dedicated are you to playing your sport?) five point Likert-type subscale from an instrument that was developed to assess different components of the Sport Commitment Model (Scanlan et al., 1993). At all three time points, participants were asked to rate their commitment to the CSG sport in which they had tried out. Previous research has shown that the sport commitment subscale has demonstrated adequate reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = .89) and factor validity (Scanlan et al., 1993).

3.2.2.8 Life satisfaction. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Pavot & Diener, 1993) measured participants’ evaluations of their life as a whole. The SWLS consisted of five-items (e.g., “In most ways my life is close to my ideal”) on a Likert-type scale with item responses ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). The SWLS has demonstrated adequate reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = .79 - .89) over the course of several studies (Pavot &
Diener, 1993) and it has been previously used in sport contexts (e.g., Gaudreau & Antl, 2008). The SWLS was administered at all three time points.

3.2.3 Procedures.

Ethical approval was obtained from the researchers’ University Behavioural Research Ethics board. Approximately 400 gatekeepers (e.g., coaches and administrators within provincial sport organizations whose contact information was found on provincial sport organization websites) were contacted via email and/or by telephone. Gatekeepers who agreed to assist with the study distributed the study information to CSG hopefuls, which included a link to the first online survey. Athletes were also recruited through posters placed in athletic facilities and physiotherapy clinics.

Participation entailed the completion of three online-surveys which included the previously described measures. Online surveys were used to maximize representation of CSG hopefuls from across Canada. Participants completed the first questionnaire package prior to their final selection event. They received the link to the second online questionnaire within a week of gaining knowledge of their 2013 CSG selection status. As a result, athletes completed the second questionnaire approximately one to three weeks after they became aware of their selection status. The timing of when the athletes would receive knowledge of their selection status was triangulated for accuracy by using participants’ reported selection dates from the first demographic questionnaire, information from coaches and sport administrators, and selection dates published on websites. The third questionnaire package was provided to participants one month following the completion of the second time point questionnaire.
3.2.3.1 Data analysis.

3.2.3.1.1 Data screening. Data were screened for missing responses at the item level for each time point. Less than 5% of the data were missing at the item level and median replacement was used when participants had 50% or more item responses on a subscale (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Missing responses at the occasion level within participants (e.g., a participant missing data at time two) were estimated with full information maximum likelihood (Baraldi & Enders, 2010) in the multilevel model analyses described below. To be able to conduct these analyses, however, all data were required for predictors. Thus, only participants whose selection statuses (selected or not selected) were reported at either time two or three were included in the multilevel analyses. As a result, the final sample included 137 participants ($n_{\text{female}} = 78; n_{\text{male}} = 59$).

Data normality were examined through a combination of histograms, box plots, normal Q-Q plots, skewness, kurtosis, Komogorov-Smirnov normality tests, and investigating outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Scores on measures that departed from normality were transformed and normality was re-examined. None of the transformed variables demonstrated significant improvements in their distribution and thus the data were left untransformed. Cronbach’s alphas and descriptive statistics were computed for each subscale.

3.2.3.1.2 Multilevel models. Multilevel models were analyzed using Hierarchical Linear Modeling 7 (HLM; Raudenbush, Bryk, & Congdon, 2013) to examine the effect of selection status on threat, challenge, centrality, control, and uncontrollable appraisals, dejection, anger, happiness, task- and disengagement-oriented coping, goal progress, athletic identity, sport commitment, and life satisfaction. Multilevel modeling offered several advantages including: a) using all available data to handle missing observations at the intrapersonal level (e.g.,
participants could be included if they completed time one and reported selection status at either time two and/or three; b) exploration of intrapersonal change and interpersonal differences; c) linear growth rate and intercept were calculated for each participant; d) time and intercepts were modeled at the intrapersonal level as random or fixed effects; e) intraclass correlations were calculated; and f) no assumptions made of data being collected at the same time, sphericity, and data being missing completely at random (Hox, 2010; McCoach & Kaniskan, 2010; Quené & Van den Bergh, 2004). Multilevel analyses closely followed the procedures suggested by McCoach and Kaniskan (2010) for modeling an event (e.g., selection versus non-selection) as a time-varying covariate. All models were estimated using full information maximum likelihood to determine: a) the proportion of variance that was distributed at the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels on each variable; b) if athletes scores on the dependent variables changed over the course of a selection process; c) the relationship between intrapersonal differences in the dependent variables and selection status; and d) if selection status explained interpersonal differences in the dependent variables after athletes became aware of whether they were selected to the CSG or not.

Unconditional means models were first estimated for each variable to determine the distribution of variance that could be attributed to intrapersonal and interpersonal levels by calculating intraclass correlations (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Next, the full model was built to test the hypotheses. Time was entered into the model at level one and coded such that the intercept was at time two (time one = -1; time two = 0; time three = 1). Coding for the intercept at time two allowed for exploration of differences in athletes’ responses after becoming aware of their selection status, which was of primary interest in this study. The intercept and linear growth were both estimated as random effects, which allowed each athlete to have a unique
intercept and rate of growth (Hox, 2010; McCoach & Kaniskan, 2010). Selection status was entered into the models as a time-varying covariate (TVC) to examine the relationship between selection status and intrapersonal differences in the dependent variables. To capture this effect, the athletes who were selected (time one = 0; time two = 1; time three = 1) and not selected (time one = 0; time two = 0; time three = 0) were coded such that all participants had a status of being not selected at time one and time two and three represented change or no change in their selection status. Similar TVC coding schemes have been used in previous research (Gaudreau et al., 2009; McCoach & Kaniskan, 2010). Based on preliminary examinations of the data (e.g., individual trajectories, means, differences in model fit) selection status was treated as a persistent effect. It was not possible to estimate the TVC as a random effect since there were only three observations per person in the study (Snijders & Bosker, 1999). Thus, the TVC was estimated as a fixed effect. To explore interpersonal variability in the dependent variables one week after athletes became aware of whether they were selected or not, selection status was entered as a predictor of the intercept. Selection status was dummy coded (not selected = 0; selected = 1) and entered into the model at level two.

The full model was estimated using the following equation:

Level-1 Model

\[ \text{Dependent Variable}_{ti} = \pi_{0i} + \pi_{1i}(TIME_{ti}) + \pi_{2i}(TVC_{ti}) + e_{ti} \]

Level-2 Model

\[ \pi_{0i} = \beta_{00} + \beta_{01}(Selectio\text{n Status}_{i}) + r_{0i} \]
\[ \pi_{1i} = \beta_{10} + r_{1i} \]
\[ \pi_{2i} = \beta_{20} \]

The subscript \(i\) represented the individual and \(t\) signified time. Also, \(i\) specified that the model estimated a unique intercept and growth curve for each athlete in the study. The coefficients \(\pi_{0i}, \pi_{1i}, \pi_{2i}\)
\( \pi_{1i} \) and \( \pi_{2i} \) in the level one model represented an individual’s intercept, linear growth rate, and an individual’s \( i \) selection status at time \( t \). The coefficient \( e_{iti} \) denoted the residual of an athlete \( i \)'s dependent variable score at time \( t \) from their predicted score (level one variance). At level two, \( \beta_{00} \) was the intercept, which indicated the average score on the dependent variable for non-selected athletes at time two controlling for all other variables in the model. The effect of interpersonal selection status was represented by the coefficient \( \beta_{01} \), which indicated the differential in the average score of the dependent variable at time two between selected and non-selected athletes controlling for all other variables in the model. The coefficient \( \beta_{10} \) represented the average change rate of the dependent variable after controlling for all other variables in the model. Intrapersonal selection status was indicated by the coefficient \( \beta_{20} \) and was the differential in the dependent variable between selected status and not selected status controlling for all other variables in the model. The random effects in the model were denoted by the coefficients \( r_{0i} \) and \( r_{1i} \) and indicated the deviation across athletes at time two and the linear growth rate after controlling for all other variables in the model.

3.3 Results

3.3.1 Preliminary analyses.

Means, standard deviations, and Cronbach’s alphas for study variables are reported in Table 3.1.

3.3.2 Multilevel model results.

Intraclass correlations (ICC) were computed for each variable to determine the proportion of intrapersonal and interpersonal variance (see Table 3.2). For emotions, analyses indicated that 59%, 57%, and 55% of the variability in athletes’ feelings of dejection, anger, and happiness were associated with interpersonal variance, whereas 41%, 43%, and 45% were attributed to
intrapersonal variance. Analyses for appraisals indicated that 54%, 59%, 62%, 61%, and 51% of the variability in athletes’ threat, challenge, centrality, control, and uncontrollable appraisals were related to interpersonal variance, while 46%, 41%, 38%, 39%, and 49% were associated with intrapersonal variance. For coping, 62% and 67% of the variability in athletes’ task- and disengagement-oriented coping was attributed to interpersonal variance, while 38% and 33% was related to intrapersonal variance. Lastly, 48%, 69%, 65%, and 74% of the variance in athletes’ perceptions of sport goal progress, life satisfaction, athletic identity, and sport commitment was associated with interpersonal differences, as opposed to 52%, 31%, 35%, and 26% attributed to intrapersonal variance. All models suggested that selection status could explain variance at intrapersonal and interpersonal levels.

3.3.2.1 Cognitive appraisals. Coefficients for all cognitive appraisal multilevel models can be found in Table 3.3.

3.3.2.1.1 Threat appraisals. Results suggested that on average, athletes’ threat appraisals did not significantly change over the course of the study ($\beta_{10} = .03, p > .05$). On average there was not a significant difference in intrapersonal threat appraisals between the statuses of selected and not selected ($\beta_{20} = -.15, p > .05$). Time and intrapersonal selection status accounted for 28% of the variance at level one.

At level two, non-selected athletes’ average scores of threat appraisal one week after becoming aware of their non-selection was significantly different than zero ($\beta_{00} = 2.33, p < .001$). Selection status did significantly predict differences in inter-athlete scores of threat appraisal at time two ($\beta_{01} = -.50, p < .01$) with selected athletes on average scoring lower on threat appraisal with a predicted value of 1.83. This effect explained an additional 9% of the variance at level two. The variance components for both the intercept and slope were significant.
suggesting that there remained unexplained variance as to why athletes differed in threat appraisals at time two and in their growth curves after selection status was controlled.

The findings only partially supported hypotheses made about athletes’ threat appraisals. Level one results did not support hypotheses as, on average, athletes’ appraisals of harm or loss associated with the CSG tryout remained stable throughout the study and intrapersonal differences in selection status did not significantly explain their appraisals. These findings indicated that on average athletes did not reappraise the degree to which the CSG tryout was threatening after becoming aware of their selection status. However, athletes who were not selected did appraise the CSG selection process to be more threatening than selected athletes, which supported the level two hypothesis.

3.3.2.1.2 Challenge appraisals. On average, athletes’ challenge appraisals significantly decreased between two consecutive observations when controlling for selection status ($\beta_{10} = -.31, p < .001$). There was a significant effect of selection status on intrapersonal perceptions of challenge appraisals ($\beta_{20} = .25, p < .05$). This effect specified that on average when athletes had a selected status, they scored higher on challenge appraisals than not selected status. Time and intrapersonal selection status accounted for 25% of the level one variance in challenge appraisals.

At level two, selection status did not predict interpersonal differences in athletes’ challenge appraisal scores one week after the CSG team was determined ($\beta_{01} = .21, p > .05$) when the rest of the variables in the model were controlled. The addition of selection status at level two only explained 2.6% of the variance. The average challenge appraisal score for athletes who were not selected was 3.32 and was significantly different than zero ($\beta_{00} = 3.32, p < .001$). Significant variance components for the intercept and linear slope ($p < .05$) suggested
there remained unexplained deviation across athletes on these effects after controlling for selection status.

The findings only partially supported challenge appraisal hypotheses. Level one findings supported hypotheses as, on average, athletes’ appraisals of challenge in relation to the CSG selection process decreased during the study and intrapersonal differences in selection status did significantly explain their appraisals. These findings indicated that on average athletes reappraised the challenge associated with the CSG tryout to be less after becoming aware of their selection status and this effect was stronger for non-selected athletes. Conversely, after controlling for intrapersonal differences in selection status, selected and non-selected athletes did not differ in challenge appraisals one week after learning their selection status, which did not support the level two hypothesis.

3.3.2.1.3 Centrality appraisals. The average centrality appraisals score for not selected athletes at time two was significantly different than zero (β₀₀ = 2.96, \(p < .001\)) and there was significant unexplained variance (\(p < .05\)) in athletes’ scores after controlling for selection status. Contrary to expectations, selection status did not have a significant effect on athletes’ centrality appraisals at the intra- or interpersonal levels. In addition, on average, athletes’ centrality appraisals remained stable throughout the three time points as the linear slope was not significant. Time and intrapersonal selection status explained 17% of the variance at level one, whereas the addition of selection status at level two only accounted for 1% of the variance.

3.3.2.1.4 Control appraisals. Two models assessed athletes’ interpretations of the amount of control they had over the outcome of the selection process. On average, athletes perceived that they had significantly less control over the selection process as the study progressed when selection status was controlled (β₁₀ Control Appraisal = -20, \(p < .001\)). However, on
average, athletes’ appraisals that the selection process was uncontrollable did not significantly increase (β_{10} \text{Uncontrollable Appraisal} = .10, p > .05). Intrapersonal selection status was significant for both control (β_{20} = .22, p < .05) and uncontrollable (β_{20} = -.21, p < .001) appraisals, indicating that when athletes had selected status they scored higher in control appraisals and lower in uncontrollable appraisals than not selected status. Time and intrapersonal selection status accounted for 9% and 12% of the variance in the control and uncontrollable appraisal models.

At level two, not selected athletes’ scores on control (β_{00} = 3.54, p < .001) and uncontrollable (β_{00} = 1.98, p < .001) appraisals one week after becoming aware of their selection status were significantly different than zero. Furthermore, selected athletes’ predicted average control appraisal score of 3.95 was significantly higher (β_{01} = .41, p < .01) and the uncontrollable appraisal score of 1.65 was significantly lower (β_{01} = -.33, p < .05) than non-selected athletes at time two. These effects explained an additional 7% in the control appraisal model and 6% in the uncontrollable appraisal model at level two. The variance components for linear slope of time were non-significant in both models suggesting that the rate of change over time was uniform amongst athletes when selection status was controlled. Variance components for both intercepts indicated that there was significant variance (p < .05) to still be explained in the models for why athletes varied on control and uncontrollable appraisals at time two after controlling for selection status and time.

All control appraisal hypotheses were supported. The data revealed that when athletes gained selected status they perceived having more control over the CSG tryout. Selected athletes also had higher perceptions of control over the CSG selection process after becoming aware of their selection status compared to non-selected athletes. Lastly, athletes’ appraisals of control
decreased over the course of the study, suggesting that on average athletes reappraised the amount of control they had over the CSG tryout.

### 3.3.2.2 Emotions

Coefficients for all emotion multilevel analyses are displayed in Table 3.4.

#### 3.3.2.2.1 Dejection and happiness

The findings indicated that on average, athletes’ emotion states of dejection significantly increased ($\beta_{10} = .23, p < .001$) and emotion states of happiness significantly decreased ($\beta_{10} = -.39, p < .001$) over the course of the study when controlling for selection status. Intrapersonal selection status had a significant effect on both dejection ($\beta_{20} = -.40, p < .001$) and happiness ($\beta_{20} = 1.07, p < .001$), suggesting that on average when athletes had selected status, they scored significantly lower on dejection and significantly higher on happiness than not selected status. Time and intrapersonal selection status accounted for 9% and 37% of the variance in dejection and happiness at level one.

The average dejection and happiness scores for non-selected athletes at time two were 1.05 and 1.28 respectively and were significantly different than zero ($p < .001$). Selection status also significantly explained interpersonal variance in dejection ($\beta_{01} = -.57, p < .001$) and happiness ($\beta_{01} = .64, p < .001$) emotion states one week after they became aware of whether they would be on the CSG team or not. Thus, the average predicted dejection score for selected athletes of .48 was significantly lower than non-selected athletes, while the average predicted happiness score for selected athletes of 1.92 was significantly higher than non-selected athletes at time two. The addition of selection status at level two explained 21% and 11% of the variance in dejection and happiness at this level. There remained significant deviation across athletes in dejection and happiness scores at time two ($p < .001$) after controlling for time and selection.
status. In addition, after controlling for selection status, there was significant variability in athletes’ rate of change in happiness ($p < .01$) but not dejection ($p > .05$).

Results for both dejection and happiness supported intrapersonal and interpersonal hypotheses. On average, athletes’ feelings of dejection increased and feelings of happiness decreased after the CSG tryouts and this effect was stronger for non-selected athletes. Therefore, athletes whose status remained not selected experienced significantly higher feelings of dejection and lower feelings of happiness than athletes who gained selected status after the CSG tryout. Furthermore, selected athletes reported experiencing significantly higher feelings of happiness and lower feelings of dejection compared to non-selected athletes after the CSG team had been announced.

3.3.2.2.2 Anger. Selection status did not have a significant effect on anger at either the intrapersonal ($\beta_{20} = -.13, p > .05$) or interpersonal levels ($\beta_{01} = -.26, p > .05$). Moreover, on average, athletes’ emotion states of anger in relation to the CSG tryouts did not significantly change over time when selection status was controlled ($\beta_{10} = .03, p > .05$). Non-selected athletes’ average anger score at time two of .65 was significantly different than zero ($p < .001$) and there was significant variance to still be explained in the model for why athletes varied on anger after they became aware of their selection status when time and selection status were controlled. Time and intrapersonal selection status explained 65% of the variance at level one, whereas the addition of selection status at level two only accounted for 3% of the variance. Athletes’ experiences of anger did not support the hypotheses. The findings indicated that athletes’ feelings of anger associated with the CSG tryout did not change over the course of the study and were not associated with selection status.
3.3.2.3 Coping. All multilevel coefficients for task- and disengagement-oriented coping are in Table 3.5. The findings indicated that selection status did not have a significant effect on athletes use of task- and disengagement-oriented coping at both the intrapersonal \( \beta_{20} \text{Task-oriented} = .01, p > .05; \beta_{20} \text{Disengagement-oriented} = -.13, p > .05 \) and interpersonal \( \beta_{01} \text{Task-oriented} = .12, p > .05; \beta_{01} \text{Disengagement oriented} = -.13, p > .05 \) athlete levels. On average, athletes’ use of task-oriented coping did significantly decrease over time after controlling for selection status \( \beta_{10} = -.13, p < .05 \), but use of disengagement-oriented coping remained stable \( \beta_{10} = .05, p > .05 \). Non-selected athletes average score of task-oriented coping was 3.09 \( p < .001 \), whereas disengagement-oriented coping was 1.83 \( p < .001 \). Time and intrapersonal selection status explained 30% and 35% of the variance at level one in task-and disengagement-oriented coping, whereas the addition of selection status at level two only accounted for 1% of the variance in both models. Variance components for both task- and disengagement-oriented coping were significant, indicating that there was unexplained variance in why athletes differed on the intercept and changes in the use of coping.

Only the findings from task-oriented coping partially supported the hypotheses. Task-oriented coping was expected to be lower for non-selected status, however all athletes decreased in their use of task-oriented coping strategies. Overall, the results indicated that selection status was not associated with the existent interpersonal differences in athletes’ use of task- and disengagement-oriented coping.

3.3.2.4 Athletic goal progress, quality of athletic engagement, and life satisfaction. Full results for athletic goal progress, athletic identity, sport commitment, and life satisfaction can be found in Table 3.6.
3.3.2.4.1 Athletic goal progress. The findings suggested that on average, participants’ perceptions of athletic goal progress decreased during the study ($\beta_{10} = -0.42, p < .001$) after controlling for selection status. The effect for intrapersonal selection status was significant ($\beta_{20} = 0.54, p < .05$), which specified that on average when athletes had a selected status they scored higher on perceptions of progressing towards their goals than not selected status. Time and intrapersonal selection status accounted for 9% of the variance at level one in goal progress.

Selection status did not explain significant interpersonal variance in athletic goal progress at time two after controlling for intrapersonal selection status ($\beta_{01} = 0.36, p > .05$). This effect only explained an additional 2% of the variance at level two. The average athletic goal progress score for non-selected athletes was 5.86, which was significantly different than zero ($p < .001$). Examination of the variance components revealed that there remained unexplained interpersonal variance in athletes’ scores of athletic goal progress at time two ($p < .001$). The variance component for time was not significant, which indicated that after controlling for selection status athletes’ rate of change in athletic goal progress did not significantly differ.

The data only partially supported hypotheses for athletic goal progress. Level one hypotheses were supported as, on average, athletes’ perceptions of sport goal progress decreased after they became aware of their selection status and this effect was stronger for non-selected athletes. This meant that athletes whose status remained not selected had significantly lower perceptions of sport goal progress than athletes who gained selected status after the CSG tryout. In contrast, after controlling for intrapersonal differences in selection status, selected and non-selected athletes did not differ in perceptions of athletic goal progress one week after learning their selection status, which did not support the level two hypothesis.
3.3.2.4.2 Quality of athletic engagement. Athletic identity and sport commitment were measured as indicators of how much athletes’ engaged with their sport throughout the study. On average, neither athletic identity ($\beta_{10} = -0.09, p > 0.05$) nor sport commitment ($\beta_{10} = -0.05, p > 0.05$) significantly changed after controlling for selection status. In addition, selection status did not explain significant proportions of intrapersonal athlete variance in either athletic identity ($\beta_{20} = 0.08, p > 0.05$) or sport commitment ($\beta_{20} = 0.05, p > 0.05$). Time and selection status accounted for 26% and 2% of the variance in athletic identity and sport commitment at level one.

Selection status did significantly predict interparticipant differences in athletic identity one week after selection, with selected participants identifying with the athletic role less ($\beta_{01} = -0.29, p < 0.05$) than non-selected athletes whose average at time two was 5.92 ($p < 0.001$). Although this effect was significant it only explained an additional 2% of the level two variance in athletic identity. The effect of selection status on interpersonal differences in sport commitment was not significant and accounted for less than 1% of the level two variance in the model. There remained significant variance to be explained in both models for why athletes varied on athletic identity ($p < 0.001$) and sport commitment ($p < 0.001$) at time two after controlling for time and selection status, as well as in rate of change in athletic identity ($p < 0.001$).

Results for athletic identity and sport commitment were incongruent with hypotheses. On average, the degree to which participants identified with the athletic role remained consistent throughout the study and intrapersonal differences in selection status did not significantly explain variance in athletic identity. These findings suggested that on average athletes’ identity did not change as a function of their selection status. However, athletes who were not selected tended to identify more with the athletic role than selected athletes. Furthermore, athletes’ commitment to their CSG tryout sport did not change throughout the study and was not significantly associated
with selection status. As a result, while athletes differed in their commitment to their sport, the CSG selection process did not influence this commitment.

3.3.2.4.3 Life satisfaction. On average, athletes’ life satisfaction remained stable over time ($\beta_{10} = .48, p > .05$) and selection status did not significantly explain variance at the intrapersonal ($\beta_{20} = .22, p > .05$) or interpersonal levels ($\beta_{01} = 1.45, p > .05$). The average life satisfaction score of a non-selected athlete at time two was 27.56 which was significantly different than zero ($p < .001$) and had significant unexplained variance for why athletes deviated on life satisfaction at time two when time and selection status were controlled. Time and intrapersonal selection status accounted for 6% of the variance at level one, whereas the addition of selection status at level two only explained 2% of the variance in life satisfaction. The findings indicated that, on average, life satisfaction did not change over the course of the study and was not significantly associated with selection status. Consequently, while athletes differed in their life satisfaction, the CSG selection process did not affect their quality of life as a whole.

3.4 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of the Canada Summer Games selection process on athletes’ sport engagement and psychological adjustment. Multilevel modeling was used to investigate the effect of the CSG selection process on changes in athletes’ cognitive appraisals, emotions, coping, athletic goal progress, quality of sport engagement, and life satisfaction. Changes in cognitive appraisals, emotions, and sport goal progress suggested that the CSG selection process had a meaningful impact on athletes (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). The association between selection status and components of the stress process was also examined at intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. Results suggested that while athletes’ cognitive appraisals, emotions, and sport goal progress were related to their selection status, the
CSG selection process did not affect their sport engagement and life satisfaction. The findings highlighted the importance of investigating intrapersonal change and interpersonal athlete differences in relation to selection events.

3.4.1 Cognitive appraisals and emotions.

The CSG team tryout was a stressful selection process for many athletes as evidenced by changes in emotions and appraisals. Specifically, athletes who had non-selected status perceived that they had less control over the selection process, found it to be more threatening, and experienced higher feelings of dejection and less feelings of happiness. Athletes’ appraisals of the CSG selection process partially supported previous work that suggested that appraisals of a selection event will differ between athletes and change over time (Fletcher et al., 2012; Hanton et al., 2012; Munroe et al., 1999). In line with these studies, intraclass correlations indicated that there were significant proportions of intrapersonal and interpersonal variance in appraisals. Furthermore, selection status was related to intrapersonal differences in challenge and control appraisals providing evidence that athletes engaged in reappraisal processes after learning of the outcome of their CSG tryout. These findings are consistent with current conceptualizations of the stress process, which suggest that reappraisal will occur after new information becomes available (e.g., selection status; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 1999). Significant random effects for appraisals supported propositions that athletes will appraise the same selection process differently (Richards, 2012; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). However, selection status only predicted significant amounts of interpersonal variance in threat and control appraisals, which indicated that the outcome of the CSG selection process did not explain differences in athletes’ challenge and centrality appraisals after the team was announced. Taken together, these findings emphasized the importance of modeling both intrapersonal and interpersonal appraisal selection.
effects. For example, selection status was only associated with intrapersonal changes in some appraisals (e.g., challenge), interpersonal differences in others (e.g., threat), and not significantly associated with centrality appraisals. Differences in appraisal processes of the CSG tryouts highlight the need to capture the multi-dimensional nature of primary and secondary appraisals (Lazarus, 1999) as opposed to simply investigating positive and negative appraisals of selection events (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Schlossberg, 1981).

Athletes who were not selected reported experiencing less happiness and more dejection after becoming aware of their selection status, which was congruent with hypotheses. Happiness and dejection emotion states are related to athletes’ perceptions of goal progress and failure to achieve a meaningful goal (Jones et al., 2005; Lazarus, 1999). Non-selected athletes’ perceptions of sport goal progress also decreased after not being selected to the CSG team and thus findings related to happiness and dejection were unsurprising. Contrary to hypotheses, athletes varied significantly in their experiences of anger, although these experiences were not related to the outcome of the selection process. One explanation for these results is that athletes who were not selected perceived that they were responsible for their non-selection and thus did not believe that an offense had been committed against them. Differences in athletes’ reported experiences of anger and dejection throughout the study highlight the importance of examining discrete emotions (Lazarus, 1999) in relation to specific selection events. By examining discrete emotions as opposed to grouping them into positive and negative affect (Gaudreau et al., 2009; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a), a differentiation could be made between athletes taking responsibility for non-selection, while still feeling like they were not progressing towards their goal. This study extended Gaudreau and colleagues’ (2009) findings by examining discrete
emotions in relation to a selection event and Arnold and colleagues’ (2013) findings by exploring intrapersonal change and interpersonal differences in those emotions.

3.4.2 Coping.

In line with previous work that has examined coping over time (Gaudreau et al., 2010; Louvet et al., 2009), there was significant interpersonal and intrapersonal variance in task- and disengagement-oriented coping. These findings are conceptually in line with current perspectives of coping as a dynamic process (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). On average athletes’ use of task-oriented coping strategies significantly declined over the course of the study, which was consistent with hypotheses for athletes with non-selected status. Unexpectedly, athletes’ use of disengagement-oriented coping did not significantly increase when they had non-selected status. These findings suggested that athletes were still using similar amounts of disengagement strategies to cope with the outcome of the selection process as they were prior to the CSG tryouts. Athletes may have used less task-oriented coping after the CSG team was determined as they could no longer directly target the outcome of the tryouts and thus continued using disengagement coping strategies to manage the selection outcome. Furthermore, selection status was not related to coping, indicating that the outcome of the selection process created demands for both selected and non-selected athletes. Athletes who were selected may have had to adjust to a new team, expectations, and competition and training demands, whereas non-selected athletes may have had to cope with disappointment and lack of goal progress. Additional research examining other stress components, such as appraisals, in relation to the use of coping strategies would be useful in explaining intrapersonal and interpersonal coping variance associated with selection processes (Aldwin, 1994; Richards, 2012).
3.4.3 Quality of athletic engagement and life satisfaction.

Despite selection status being associated with intrapersonal and interpersonal differences in athletes’ emotions and appraisals, it appeared to have little impact on participants sport engagement. Contrary to hypotheses and previous research (Grove et al., 2004), non-selected athletes’ identification with the athletic role did not significantly decrease after the CSG tryout. Although non-selected athletes had significantly higher athletic identity than selected athletes, this effect was small explaining only an additional two percent of interpersonal variance. One explanation for these contradictory findings is when athletic identity was observed in relation to the team tryout. Grove and colleagues (2004) measured athletic identity one week prior to tryouts, immediately and two weeks after athletes were aware of their selection status. In the present study, measurement of athletic identity may not have been in close enough proximity to the selection process and thus fluctuations in athletic identity were not captured. Selection status was also not related to athletes’ sport commitment nor did it significantly change throughout the study. Taken together with athletic identity, the timing of the CSG tryout in relation to athletes’ regular seasons may also explain minimal changes in their sport engagement. For most athletes, the CSG tryouts were in the middle of their regular season and thus likely represented one event, albeit unique, within the context of their yearly cycle. Having the opportunity to participate in sport and commitment to other teams or events likely buffered the effects of non-selected athletes’ disengagement from sport after not being selected to the CSG team (Gaudreau et al., 2009).

Furthermore, Arnold and Fletcher (2012) have argued that some organizational stressors are peripheral whereas others permeate an athlete’s sport experience. Although selection status was related to athletes’ experiences of the stress process (e.g., emotions and appraisals)
associated with the CSG tryouts, the findings would suggest that the CSG tryout did not permeate their sport experiences. Thus, as most participants’ quality of athletic engagement remained high after the CSG selection tryout despite their selection status, it was unsurprising that athletes’ attitude toward the quality of their life as a whole remained unchanged (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). However, it is likely that specific team selection processes will have a unique influence on the degree to which they permeate an athletes’ sport experience. It is therefore important to further examine individual selection events within the context of an athletes’ career.

3.4.4 Practical implications.

Understanding athletes’ trajectories of the stress process and their relation to selection status has several implications for practitioners and coaches. First, athletes who are not selected to a team may experience periods of heightened dejection, lowered happiness, and decreased perceptions of goal progress. Coaches and/or practitioners may be able to buffer these negative sport experiences by being mindful of how they communicate the selection outcome to athletes, by providing feedback on performance, and by assisting athletes in adjusting sport related goals. Second, coaches and sport administrators should set clearly defined selection criteria well in advance of team selections to enhance athletes’ appraisals of control over their tryout experience, regardless of their selection status. Third, a positive selection outcome may still require athletes to cope with new social, training, or competition demands and thus practitioners should be aware that all athletes may need assistance in developing effective coping strategies to manage the outcome of a selection process. Fourth, athletes’ involvement in other teams or training at the time of the selection process may mitigate the effects of non-selection on their overall sport
experience. Having diverse sport goals that encompass more than participating on one specific team may assist athletes in moving on from an unsuccessful team selection.

3.4.5 Strengths and future directions.

Researchers have advocated for study designs that capture the dynamic nature of stress processes (Crocker et al., 2015; Lazarus, 1999). A strength of the present study was its prospective-longitudinal design and the use of multilevel modeling to capture intrapersonal change and interpersonal differences in the stress process as they related to the CSG tryout. All estimated intraclass correlations of study variables further highlighted the need to examine selection processes at intrapersonal and interpersonal levels (Hox, 2010). By estimating random effects for the intercept and linear slope, it was determined that for many components of the stress process there was significant variance yet to be explained after accounting for selection status.

A limitation of the present study is that participants were from a convenience sample. While significant effort was made to incorporate a representative sample of Canada Summer Games hopefuls, the study information was primarily distributed to athletes on short or long lists created by coaches and sport administrators. As a result, the participant recruitment material may have been disproportionately sent to athletes who were eventually selected to the team and thus findings may not be representative of the experiences of all Canada Summer Games hopefuls. Another limitation was that components of the stress process, such as coping, appraisals, goals, and emotions, were treated as discrete concepts. The moderate sample size prevented the examination of the relationships between growth curves as large sample sizes are needed to model this complexity. To further explain variance in the study variables at both the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels, future research should aim to recruit large samples to
explore interrelationships between components of the stress process (Lazarus, 1999) in relation to meaningful selection events.
Table 3.1

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach’s Alphas*

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<th></th>
<th>Time 2</th>
<th></th>
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<td>.85</td>
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<td>.84</td>
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<td>4.59</td>
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</table>

*Note.* Means, standard deviations, and Cronbach’s alphas were estimated using participants’ observed scores at each time point.
Table 3.2

*Intraclass Correlations for Cognitive Appraisals, Emotions, Coping, Athletic Goal Progress, Quality of Athletic Engagement, and Life Satisfaction*

<table>
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<th>ICC</th>
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<td>Challenge Appraisal</td>
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<td>Centrality Appraisal</td>
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<td>Happiness</td>
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<td>Disengagement-oriented Coping</td>
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<td>Athletic Identity</td>
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<td>Sport Commitment</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. ICC = intraclass correlation*
Table 3.3

**Multilevel Coefficients for Cognitive Appraisals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Threat Coefficient (SE)</th>
<th>Challenge Coefficient (SE)</th>
<th>Centrality Coefficient (SE)</th>
<th>Control Coefficient (SE)</th>
<th>Uncontrollable Coefficient (SE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td><strong>Fixed Effects</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{00}$</td>
<td>2.33*** (.12)</td>
<td>3.32*** (.11)</td>
<td>2.96*** (.13)</td>
<td>3.54*** (.09)</td>
<td>1.98*** (.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{01}$</td>
<td>-.50** (.15)</td>
<td>.21 (.15)</td>
<td>.14 (.17)</td>
<td>.41** (.13)</td>
<td>-.33* (.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{10}$</td>
<td>.03 (.06)</td>
<td>-.31*** (.06)</td>
<td>-.04 (.06)</td>
<td>-.20*** (.04)</td>
<td>.10 (.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{20}$</td>
<td>-.15 (.10)</td>
<td>.25* (.11)</td>
<td>.03 (.11)</td>
<td>.22* (.09)</td>
<td>-.21*** (.09)</td>
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<td><strong>Variance Components</strong></td>
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<td>.25 (.04)</td>
<td>.27 (.04)</td>
<td>.21 (.03)</td>
<td>.19 (.03)</td>
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<tr>
<td>$r_{0i}$</td>
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<td>.50*** (.08)</td>
<td>.55*** (.08)</td>
<td>.33*** (.05)</td>
<td>.20*** (.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$r_{1i}$</td>
<td>.08*** (.03)</td>
<td>.03* (.03)</td>
<td>.06* (.03)</td>
<td>.0003 (.02)</td>
<td>.02 (.02)</td>
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</table>

*Note. SE = Standard error; Threat = threat appraisal; Challenge = challenge appraisal; Centrality = centrality appraisal; Control = control appraisal; Uncontrollable = uncontrollable appraisal; $\beta_{00}$ = the average score on the dependent variable for non-selected athletes at time two controlling for all other variables in the model; $\beta_{01}$ = the effect of interpersonal selection status or the differential in the average score of the dependent variable at time two between selected and non-selected athletes controlling for all other variables in the model; $\beta_{10}$ = the average change rate of the dependent variable after controlling for all other variables in the model; $\beta_{20}$ = the effect of intrapersonal selection status or the differential in the dependent variable between selected status and not selected status controlling for all other variables in the model; $r_{0i}$ = the deviation across athletes at time two controlling for all other variables in the model; $r_{1i}$ = the deviation across athletes in linear growth rate after controlling for all other variables in the model. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. 
### Table 3.4

**Multilevel Coefficients for Emotions**

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<th>Parameter</th>
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<th>Anger</th>
<th>Happiness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta_{00}$</td>
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<td>.65*** (.13)</td>
<td>1.28*** (.14)</td>
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<td>.64*** (.18)</td>
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<td>-.39*** (.07)</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.13 (.09)</td>
<td>1.07*** (.14)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Variance Components</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$e_{ij}$</td>
<td>.20 (.03)</td>
<td>.15 (.02)</td>
<td>.39 (.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$r_{0i}$</td>
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<td>.24*** (.04)</td>
<td>.50*** (.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$r_{1i}$</td>
<td>.002 (.02)</td>
<td>.04*** (.02)</td>
<td>.09** (.05)</td>
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</table>

*Note.* SE = Standard error; $\beta_{00}$ = the average score on the dependent variable for non-selected athletes at time two controlling for all other variables in the model; $\beta_{01}$ = the effect of interpersonal selection status or the differential in the average score of the dependent variable at time two between selected and non-selected athletes controlling for all other variables in the model; $\beta_{10}$ = the average change rate of the dependent variable after controlling for all other variables in the model; $\beta_{20}$ = the effect of intrapersonal selection status or the differential in the dependent variable between selected status and not selected status controlling for all other variables in the model; $r_{0i}$ = the deviation across athletes at time two controlling for all other variables in the model; $r_{1i}$ = the deviation across athletes in linear growth rate after controlling for all other variables in the model. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. 
Table 3.5

Multilevel Coefficients for Coping

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<td>1.83*** (.11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>( \beta_{01} )</td>
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<td>-.13 (.12)</td>
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<td>( \beta_{10} )</td>
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<td>.05 (.04)</td>
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<td>( \beta_{20} )</td>
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<tr>
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<td>( r_{0i} )</td>
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<td>.32*** (.05)</td>
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<tr>
<td>( r_{1i} )</td>
<td>.03*** (.02)</td>
<td>.05*** (.02)</td>
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</table>

Note. SE = Standard error; Task = task-oriented coping; Disengagement = disengagement-oriented coping; \( \beta_{00} \) = the average score on the dependent variable for non-selected athletes at time two controlling for all other variables in the model; \( \beta_{01} \) = the effect of interpersonal selection status or the differential in the average score of the dependent variable at time two between selected and non-selected athletes controlling for all other variables in the model; \( \beta_{10} \) = the average change rate of the dependent variable after controlling for all other variables in the model; \( \beta_{20} \) = the effect of intrapersonal selection status or the differential in the dependent variable between selected status and not selected status controlling for all other variables in the model; \( r_{0i} \) = the deviation across athletes at time two controlling for all other variables in the model; \( r_{1i} \) = the deviation across athletes in linear growth rate after controlling for all other variables in the model. * \( p < .05 \). ** \( p < .01 \). *** \( p < .001 \).
Table 3.6

**Multilevel Coefficients for Athletic Goal Progress, Quality of Athletic Engagement, and Life Satisfaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
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<td>-.09 (.05)</td>
<td>-.05 (.03)</td>
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<td>.08 (.01)</td>
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<td>.04 (.15)</td>
<td>.07*** (.03)</td>
<td>.001 (.01)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* SE = Standard error; $\beta_{00}$ = the average score on the dependent variable for non-selected athletes at time two controlling for all other variables in the model; $\beta_{01}$ = the effect of interpersonal selection status or the differential in the average score of the dependent variable at time two between selected and non-selected athletes controlling for all other variables in the model; $\beta_{10}$ = the average change rate of the dependent variable after controlling for all other variables in the model; $\beta_{20}$ = the effect of intrapersonal selection status or the differential in the dependent variable between selected status and not selected status controlling for all other variables in the model; $r_{0i}$ = the deviation across athletes at time two controlling for all other variables in the model; $r_{1i}$ = the deviation across athletes in linear growth rate after controlling for all other variables in the model. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$. 
Chapter 4: General Discussion

Team selection processes are an inherent part of elite sport and associated developmental pathways. They can impact athletic engagement (Grove et al., 2004; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a) and are a commonly cited source of stress for competitive athletes (Arnold et al., 2013; Arnold et al., 2015; Fletcher et al., 2012). Despite having the potential to influence athletes’ careers and often being identified as stressful negative sport events, we know very little about how athletes experience specific team selection processes. The present dissertation made several contributions in addressing this gap in the literature.

Two studies were conducted to advance understanding of how athletes experience significant team selection processes. The purpose of study one was to explore how elite athletes perceived and experienced an Olympic team selection process, what resources they used to cope with an Olympic team selection process, and how they adapted to different roles after they were aware of their selection status. Study two built upon findings from study one by examining changes in stress and identity processes. The aim of study two was to explore the association between Canada Summer Games (CSG) selection status and intrapersonal and interpersonal differences in cognitive appraisals, emotions, coping, athletic goal progress, life satisfaction, and quality of athletic engagement. The findings from both studies provided support for a) the need to study appraisals from a multi-dimensional perspective; and b) the case that athletes will reappraise a selection process over time when new information becomes available (Lazarus, 1999). Athletes also had varying emotional responses to selection processes and engaging in goal adjustment processes may assist them in adapting to non-selection. Furthermore, the stage of an athletes’ career may influence the meaning attached to a specific selection process and, in
turn, affect the degree to which athletes’ experiences change at psychological, social, vocational, and athletic levels (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) as a result of selection or non-selection.

The present dissertation contributed to advancing knowledge of athletes’ experiences with team selection processes and, more broadly, change-events. The prospective-longitudinal study designs used in this program of research were theoretically congruent with conceptualizations of change-events and stress processes (Lazarus, 1999; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Schlossberg, 1981) and allowed for both intrapersonal change and interpersonal differences to be examined. Taken together, findings from study one and two developed our understanding of a) athletes’ cognitive appraisal and reappraisal processes associated with team selection; b) athletes’ emotion responses to team selection outcomes; c) athletes’ coping efforts in relation to selection outcomes; d) how athletes situated an Olympic team selection process within the context of their respective sport careers; e) athletes’ perceptions of goal progress in relation to selection status; f) goal adjustment as an adaptational process following non-selection or competing in the Olympic Games; g) the shift or maintenance of athletes’ identities; and h) the degree to which the outcome of different selection events permeated athletes’ lives and influenced psychological change. In the following sections, key points from this program of research and how they relate to future work on team selection processes are discussed. Topics include stage of athletic career, goal adjustment, engagement in life domains outside of sport, implications of study designs, implications for sport practitioners, coaches, and administrators, and approach to mixed methods research.

4.1 Stage of Athletic Career

The stage of an athletes’ career will affect how they experience significant change events and transitions (Arnold et al., 2015; Debois, Ledon, & Wylleman, 2015; Gaudreau et al., 2009;
Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Stambulova, 2000). Researchers have demonstrated that elite performers encountered more organizational stressors (including team selection processes) than non-elite performers (Fletcher, Hanton, Mellalieu, & Neil, 2012). Furthermore, Arnold and colleagues (2015) found differences in athletes’ reports of team selection stressor frequency, intensity, and duration in relation to performance level. It is therefore important to consider stage of athletic career when studying selection processes. The two studies within this dissertation included samples of athletes who were at different stages in their careers. In study one elite international caliber athletes who were attempting to make the 2012 Olympic team were recruited, whereas in study two development athletes who were in high performance career pathways partook in the study. The findings in this dissertation will be discussed in relation to previous team selection experience and the significance of and investment in team selection processes.

4.1.1 Previous team selection experience.

Researchers have proposed that past experiences in similar situations will influence how athletes perceive and respond to change events (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a, 2011b; Schlossberg, 1981). The findings from study one supported this claim. Athletes who had previous experience trying out for an Olympic team perceived that external factors (e.g., competition conditions) would influence their 2012 selection process more than first time Olympic hopefuls. After they had experienced an Olympic selection process, the first time Olympic hopefuls began to critically examine how the Olympic selection standards were constructed. These findings suggest that as athletes accumulate experiences with particular types of team selection processes it may influence their control appraisals and perceptions of fairness of the selection process. In turn, control appraisals and perceptions of fairness significantly
impact athletes’ experiences of stress in relation to team selection processes (Fletcher, Hanton, & Wagstaff, 2012).

Although previous CSG selection was not explicitly examined in relation to the stress process in the second study, the majority of participants did not have any previous experience with the CSG tryout. While the selected status was related to higher scores of intrapersonal and interpersonal control appraisals, upon examination of the mean values both non-selected and selected athletes scored towards the upper limit on control appraisals and near the lower limit for uncontrollable appraisals. These findings suggest that, on average, athletes appraised that they had control over the selection process. In line with study one, when athletes first came in contact with a specific selection process they tended to have high control appraisals at the elite and developmental level. Further research is required to corroborate the effect of prior experiences on athletes’ appraisals of specific selection events.

**4.1.2 Significance of and investment in team selection processes.**

Selection processes may disrupt athletes’ sport experiences (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). Samuel and Tenenbaum (2011a) contended that athletes could experience simultaneous change at many different levels of their sport experience. Athletes in study one and two reported experiencing changes in cognition, coping, and emotions that were associated with the respective selection processes. However, there were differences between the two studies in reported changes in athletic engagement. It is likely that these differences can partially be explained by the stage of the participants’ athletic career and the meaning they ascribed to the events for which they were trying out.

Participants in study one were athletes in the mastery stage of their sport careers (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) and had put social and vocational goals on hold for the
opportunity to be successful in an Olympic team selection process. They perceived competing at the Olympic Games to be the pinnacle of their sport and arranged their yearly training and competition schedules around peaking for the selection process. Thus, the Olympic team selection process was central to participants’ sport experiences (Arnold & Fletcher, 2012). Upon non-selection participants’ athletic engagement significantly changed. One athlete transitioned into retirement from international competition, another athlete took a break from competing and was undecided on his athletic future, and two athletes pursued goals in different events within their sports. As a result, non-selection to an Olympic team had prompted significant change in how athletes were engaging with their respective sports. In contrast, the participants in study two were talented development athletes (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004) who were trying out to participate in the CSG. Competing in the CSG may have represented a seasonal goal or highlight for some development athletes; however, most participants would not have structured their entire yearly competition and training schedule around participation. It is likely that most athletes perceived the CSG as a peripheral event (Arnold & Fletcher, 2012) in their athletic career trajectory as they also had other club, regional, and provincial team commitments. This may explain why most athletes did not report changes in indicators of athletic engagement regardless of their selection status (Gaudreau et al., 2009). It is also possible that the more global self-identity measures of sport commitment and athletic identity did not capture changes that occurred in different levels of the athletes’ sport experiences (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a).

It is also important to examine the meaning that athletes attribute to specific team selection processes in the context of their athletic careers. The findings in study one suggested that future expectancy appraisals (Lazarus, 1999) of athletes’ sport careers influenced whether they reappraised the significance of the 2012 Olympic team selection process. Athletes who
believed that they had future opportunities to achieve their athletic goals (e.g., competing in the Olympic Games) reappraised the selection process to be less important in the context of their sport career trajectory after not being selected. Conversely, athletes who believed it was their last opportunity to compete in the Olympic Games did not downplay the significance of the 2012 Olympic team selection process within the context of their athletic careers after not being selected. These findings indicate that the athlete’s stage of athletic career is tied to future career expectancy appraisals which will influence his or her team selection stress related experiences (Lazarus, 1999).

While performance level has been found to be associated with athletes’ stress experiences (Arnold et al., 2015), the findings in study one highlight the need to examine athletes’ future career expectancies in addition to stage of athletic career. Arnold and colleagues (2015) categorized national and international level athletes together when examining differences in athletes reported frequency, intensity, and duration of team selection related stressors based on performance level. However, the findings from study one would suggest that athletes who were broadly categorized as international would have different future career expectancies based on their stage of athletic career and would, therefore, differ in their appraisals of selection processes.

4.2 Goal Adjustment

Sport psychology researchers have emphasized the importance of goal attainment, as it has been found to be associated with increased positive emotion states, lower negative emotion states, and enhanced psychological well-being (Amiot, Gaudreau, & Blanchard, 2004; Gaudreau & Blondin, 2004b; Smith, Ntoumanis, & Duda, 2007). Although persistence in pursuing goals is important, there are circumstances where it may not be adaptive (Wrosch, Scheier, Miller, Shulz, & Carver, 2003b). Goal adjustment theory proposes that disengaging from goals might be more
adaptive in situations where a goal is unattainable. Capacities to disengage from unattainable goals would allow an individual to avoid accumulated experiences of failure (Nesse, 2000) and consequently alleviate psychological distress (Wrosch, Scheier, & Miller, 2013; Wrosch et al., 2003a). The second component of goal adjustment theory is goal reengagement. The capacity to reengage in goals involves identification, commitment to, and pursuit of new goals when faced with goals that are unattainable (Wrosch et al., 2003b). Empirical research has suggested that goal adjustment capacities have been associated with subjective well-being, psychological stress, and physical health (Wrosch et al., 2013).

Team selection processes are contexts where non-selected athletes may no longer be able to engage in behaviour that would assist them in achieving their goals (Wrosch et al., 2013). Therefore, it may be adaptive for athletes to engage in goal adjustment processes before and/or following an unsuccessful selection event. Elite athletes’ goal adjustment was evident in study one when it became clear to them that they would not be able to make the 2012 Olympic team standard in their respective sports. These athletes described engaging in and pursuing new athletic, vocational, and/or social goals to assist them in moving on from the Olympic selection process. These findings suggest that through goal adjustment processes athletes may engage in new and meaningful athletic, social, and/or vocational goals to overcome difficult sporting experiences.

Researchers may consider two approaches to further explore the role of goal adjustment in athletes’ adaption to significant change events or transitions. The first approach is to examine specific goal adjustment processes in relation to particular events or transitions. Researchers should use methods that take into consideration the idiographic nature of goals (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999) and that are able to capture the goal adjustment process (e.g., longitudinal designs).
Currently, there is no quantitative instrument that captures the goal adjustment process and thus researchers may consider qualitative methods or quantitative inventories that capture change in athletes’ goals. Findings from this line of inquiry may enhance our understanding of when and how athletes decide to disengage with unattainable goals and factors that influence goal engagement (e.g., identifying with other domains outside of sport). Secondly, using existing measures (Wrosch et al., 2003b), researchers could capture relationships between general capacities for goal adjustment and indicators of adaptation following significant change events or transitions. This investigative approach may further our understanding of which athletes are at risk of experiencing serious psychological distress when encountering a change event or transition. In summary, it is important for researchers to address a) both goal adjustment capacities and processes when studying change events and transitions; b) the relation between goal adjustment and indicators of adaptation to change events and transitions; and c) to use methods that capture goal engagement in domains outside of sport.

4.3 Engagement in Life Domains Outside of Sport

Elite athletes who did not meet the qualifying standards for the 2012 Olympic Games distanced themselves from the athletic role as social and vocational roles became central to their accounts. It is likely that participants’ investment in roles outside of sport prior to the selection process allowed them to engage with other identities with ease after non-selection as they were already developed. The association between sport participants’ tendencies to have a strong exclusive athletic identity and difficulties adjusting to significant change events has been well documented within the literature (see Park et al., 2013). Consistent with previous research, having multiple personal identities (see Gaudreau et al., 2009; Torregrosa, Ramis, Pallarés, Azócar, & Selva, 2015) allowed participants to adapt to the outcome of a significant team
selection process within sport. The findings from study one extended this literature by suggesting having multiple personal identities assisted athletes in adjusting their goals post-Olympic (non)selection.

Researchers have recently expressed an increased interest in athletes’ dual career development (see Baron-Thiene & Alfermann, 2015; Gledhill & Harwood, 2015; Ryan, 2015; Tshube & Feltz, 2015) and studying athletes’ experiences from a holistic perspective (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004; Wylleman, Reints, & De Knop, 2013). Dual career refers to when an athlete is heavily invested in both sport and work or education (Stambulova & Wylleman, 2014). Athletes’ development of dual careers has been found to create role conflict, enhance career development in domains outside of sport (Gledhill & Harwood, 2015), facilitate performance (Carless & Douglas, 2013; Lally, 2007), reduce sport dropout, and aid in adaptation during significant transitions or change events (Debois et al., 2015; Gaudreau et al., 2009; Larsen, Alfermann, Henrikson, & Christensen, 2013; Ryan, 2015; Stambulova, Franck, & Weibull, 2012). The findings from study one suggested that athletes suspended investment in social and vocational goals prior to the Olympic selection process to give them the best opportunity for success. To move on from non-selection or competing in the Olympic Games it was adaptive for athletes to engage with existing identities outside of sport. Thus, it may be adaptive for athletes to decrease investment in education or work approaching a major sport event in their athletic career provided they still strongly identify with roles outside of sport and have the skills and support to reengage with their vocation upon non-selection or completion of the event.

Wylleman and Lavallee (2004) go beyond arguing for consideration of dual careers when studying change events and advocate for consideration of athletes from a holistic perspective that considers multiple facets such as psychological, athletic, psycho-social, and vocational levels.
The Olympic team selection process (study one) engulfed not only athletes’ sport (Arnold & Fletcher, 2012) and vocational experiences but it also had implications for their social relationships. These findings are consistent with previous research which has suggested that change may occur in multiple domains when an athlete encounters a transition (Debois et al., 2015; Wylleman, Reints, & Van Aken, 2012). While study one explored the selection process from a holistic perspective, study two did not consider changes in other life domains outside of sport beyond life satisfaction. Although there were psychological and emotional changes in response to the CSG selection outcome it appeared that they did not affect global attitudes of life satisfaction. However, life satisfaction is a global measure and thus did not provide enough information to assess changes in or buffering effects of engagement in other life domains. Researchers should further explore the effects of selection process outcomes on various life domains.

4.4 Implications for Sport Practitioners, Coaches, and Administrators.

The above discussion also highlights the need for athletes to engage in diverse goals and develop identities in different life domains. However, research has suggested that athletes often perceive that they are not supported in exploring identities outside of sport (Ryan, 2015). Practitioners, coaches, and sport administrators play a significant role in fostering a culture that encourages personal development in non-sport contexts (Pink, Saunders, & Stynes, 2015; Ryan, 2015). These key stakeholders should attend to the athletes’ overall wellbeing by supporting the development of other identities and the engagement in goals in other life domains. This may act as a proactive strategy, assisting athletes in adapting to important selection process outcomes.

Practitioners, coaches, and sport administrators should not only consider the stage of athletes’ careers but also their future expectancies in relation to their sport. Thus, athletes’
perceptions of where a team selection process fits within their career needs to be considered on an individual basis by maintaining open communication with athletes prior to, during, and after selection processes. Although there may not always be changes in athletes’ sport engagement, team selection processes may cause athletes to have negative emotion experiences. Therefore, coaches should be conscientious of how they deliver news of athletes’ selection statuses. Lastly, practitioners and coaches should be aware that athletes may have to cope with new demands associated with a successful selection process (Wylleman et al., 2012) and may require assistance in this adaptation process.

Game Plan is a holistic wellness program that seeks to assist Canadian national team athletes through career management, networking, partnering with academic institutions to provide flexible education for athletes, skill development (e.g., brand and financial management), and raising awareness of health related services (Canadian Olympic Committee, 2015). The Game Plan program and associated resources may be integral to fostering identities and goals in multiple life domains, thus helping athletes cope with selection processes. Game Plan administrators and stakeholders should be aware that athletes may need assistance as they experience perturbations to the athletic status quo when experiencing selection processes. Practitioners should not make assumptions of the needs of athletes as this experience will vary amongst individuals. That said, both athletes who are selected as well as not selected athletes may require resources to cope with selection outcomes.

4.5 Implications of Study Designs

Both studies supported the assertion that team tryouts need to be studied as a process (Alfermann & Stambulova, 2007; Lazarus, 1999; Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a). For example, the findings suggested that there were changes in appraisals, emotion, coping, and goals in both
Olympic and CSG hopefuls. These effects were captured through longitudinal designs. Furthermore, the prospective nature of the studies allowed for examination of both pre- and post-selection psychological processes, emotions, and behaviours which is consistent with current theoretical conceptualizations of change events in sport (Samuel & Tenenbaum, 2011a; Schlossberg, 1981). Lastly, both studies demonstrated that there were intrapersonal changes and interpersonal differences in relation to the selection processes, further highlighting the necessity of employing quantitative or qualitative methods that capture both between and within athlete effects.

Future research is needed to determine the optimal proximity to the selection event to capture psychological change. For example, it is plausible that no change in athletic identity was observed in study two because the second measurement occurred approximately a week after athletes became aware of their selection status. An additional time point may be useful in determining the persistence of effects related to the selection process on an athlete’s career. Specific to study two, adding another time point would allow researchers to explore additional random effects. Finally, future research should consider shared variance between athletes who are trying out for the same team as they may have similar experiences. By modeling this shared variance (e.g., three level multilevel models) researchers can examine factors such as coach influence on perceptions of team selection outcomes.

4.6 Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Research

It has been suggested that researchers need to be forthcoming and aware of what is being mixed and when, within the different phases of mixed methods research (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Sparkes, 2015). In this dissertation, the two strands interacted at two points. First, preliminary observations stemming from the semi-structured interviews in the first study guided
the research questions and use of theory in the second study. For example, it was noted after the first two interviews that participants were shifting identities, appraisals, and goals in response to not meeting standards to compete in the Olympic Games. These preliminary findings led to the research questions and subsequent systematic testing of whether selection status was related to changes in athletes’ stress processes (e.g., identity, appraisals, goal progress) prior to and after the CSG tryout and if athletes differed in these stress processes after the CSG team had been announced. Measuring and systematically studying components of the stress process allowed for examination of whether findings in the first qualitative study could be generalized to a larger population of athletes. Secondly, the findings of the two studies were integrated during the general discussion and interpretation section of the dissertation with a focus on stress processes, stage of athletic career, and athletic career change events.

4.7 Conclusion

The findings presented in this dissertation provided evidence that team selection processes are meaningful sport experiences that may impact multiple facets of athletes’ lives. Team tryouts have the potential to influence athletes’ affective experiences, psychological adjustment, goals, sport engagement, and identities. These processes may be dependent on athletes’ stage of sport career which will influence the meaning they attach to specific selection events. Since team tryouts are significant stress experiences, goal adjustment may be a promising coping strategy to adapt to non-selection and coming down after competing in a major event. It is important for researchers to adopt study designs, such as the prospective-longitudinal ones employed in this dissertation, that allow them to capture intrapersonal and interpersonal differences in perceptions, affect, and behaviour associated with team selection processes. Practitioners, coaches, and sport administrators should create sporting environments where
athletes feel supported in identity exploration and development as having non-sport related goals and identities may assist them in adapting to (un)successful team selection processes. In summary, team selection processes may cause significant change and transition experiences in multiple domains of athletes’ lives.
References


Appendices
Appendix A: Consent Form for Study One

Sport transitions following the selection to or de-selection from the Olympic team

CONSENT FORM

Peter Crocker, PhD (Principal Investigator)  Carolyn McEwen, MSc
School of Kinesiology  School of Kinesiology
University of British Columbia  University of British Columbia
Contact Number: ____________________________  Contact Number: ________
mccrocker@interchange.ubc.ca  cmcewen@interchange.ubc.ca

Kimberley Dawson, PhD
Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education
Wilfrid Laurier University
Contact Number: ____________________________
dawson@wlu.ca

Purpose of the Project:

You are invited to take part in a research study entitled: “Sport transitions following the selection to or de-selection from the Olympic team”. An athletic transition can occur within an athlete’s career or upon career termination as the athlete moves out of competitively engaging in their sport. One event that may impact an athlete’s decision to transition is either being selected to or de-selected from the Olympic team. The purpose of this research is to examine elite athletes’ perceptions of the Olympic team selection process, its impact on the athletes’ careers, and any subsequent transitions that may occur.

Participation:

If you agree to participate you will be invited to take part in three one-on-one interviews. The first will occur during or prior to the Olympic selection process. The second interview will occur after you have knowledge of whether you were selected to the Olympic team, but prior to the Games. The third interview will occur up to three months after the Olympic Games. The location of these
interviews will be at a place that is convenient to you (e.g., UBC campus) and will last approximately 1 to 2 hours. If a convenient location cannot be found you have the option of participating in the interview over the phone. If there are issues you do not wish to talk about, you do not have to discuss them and you will not be pressured to talk about that issue by the interviewer. Also, if you wish to withdraw from the study, you may do so at any time without having to give any reason for doing so. Withdrawing from the study will not result in any negative consequences for you. The interview will be tape-recorded and transcribed (written out word for word) in order to analyze the information you provide. You will have the opportunity to look over the transcripts (typed copy of the interview) and change, add, or delete any comments as you see fit. If you chose to look over your transcripts, this meeting will last approximately 30 minutes.

**Potential Risks:**

This study will not subject you to any physical risk. You can refuse to answer any question during the interview and doing so will result in no penalty to you or anyone else. Although we do not expect any psychological risk, if we feel participation is placing you under undo stress we will discontinue your involvement in the study, again resulting in no penalty. Any data collected prior to this point will be omitted from the study and destroyed. In the event that you would like to further discuss your feelings regarding the topics discussed in the interviews, Family Services of Greater Vancouver (counselling services [phone number]) can be of assistance.

**Potential Benefits**

There are no guaranteed benefits if you agree to participate in this study.

Although no benefits of participation in the study can be guaranteed, there is the potential for participation to help increase understanding of how elite athletes experience the selection process for the Olympic Games and subsequently how the selection process impacts their future athletic careers. Results from the study could inform future interventions and provide guidance for sport organizations in allocating resources that would benefit elite athletes throughout and after the Olympic selection process.

If you would like to know about the results of the study, feel free to contact Carolyn McEwen ([email]) or [phone number]. A Summary of the results and copies of any resulting publications will be provided.

Furthermore, you will receive $20 for each interview that you complete.
Confidentiality:

The researchers will strive to keep any information you provide within this interview anonymous. Personal information that can identify you such as sport organization and real name will be removed from any reports that may result from this research. You will be identified by a pseudonym (a fake name) in the transcripts and the consent form with your name on it will be stored separately from your transcript. However, although all identifying information will be removed, there is still a chance that you could be identified based on what you have said. If you feel uncomfortable with any part of the discussion, you can indicate to the interviewer that you do not want that part of the discussion included in the data to be analyzed. You also have the chance to review your transcript and make any changes to the document at that time.

Your confidentiality will be upheld in the highest regard possible. We will make sure that audio-recordings are not overheard and that transcripts are not read by anyone other than the researchers involved with this study. All interview transcripts will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office of the principal investigator and no one other than the researchers associated with this study will have access to this information. It is important that you are aware that there are certain types of information that the researcher may be obliged to report to relevant authorities if it comes up during the interview (e.g., child or elder abuse, intent to do harm to oneself or others).

Contact Information about the Study:

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time without having to give any reason for doing so and without experiencing any negative consequences. If you have any questions or want further information about the study please contact Dr. Peter Crocker and/or Carolyn McEwen at the contact information provided at the beginning of this form.

Contact for Concerns about the Rights of Research Subjects:

If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research subject, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at [Contact Information] or if long distance e-mail to [Contact Information].

Consent:

I consent to take part in this study titled ‘Sport transitions following the selection to or de-selection from the Olympic team’. The study has been explained to me and I understand what is involved.
I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study without having to give any reason for doing so and without experiencing any negative consequences. I understand that if I do not wish to answer any question or discuss any topic that is raised, I may refuse to answer and the interviewer will go onto the next question. If I withdraw from the study, the information I have supplied (tapes, notes) will be destroyed.

I am willing to take part in the three interviews and understand that each will last approximately 1 to 2 hours, and I am happy for the conversations to be tape-recorded.

I understand that quotations from my interview may be used in publications to support conclusions.

I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records. I also understand that any identifying characteristics will be removed from the information I supply so that my anonymity is protected.

By signing this form you have consented to participate in this study.

Name of Participant (printed): ____________________________________________

Signature of Participant: _________________________________________________

Date: _______________________________________________________________
Appendix B: Demographic Questionnaire for Study One

Demographic questionnaire

The following questionnaire will ask for some background information and will be used for research purposes only. Accurate information is greatly appreciated, however questions may be left unanswered if you do not feel comfortable providing certain information.

If you would like to create your own pseudonym (for confidentiality purposes), please include it here:

_______________________________________________________________________

Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY):

Place of Birth:

How would you describe your cultural origin?
(Canadian, French, English, Chinese, First Nations, Italian, German, Scottish, Irish, East Indian, Ukrainian, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese, Filipino, Jewish, Greek, Jamaican, Vietnamese, Lebanese, Chilean, Somali etc.)

First language:

For the following questions, please circle the most appropriate answer:

What is your current Marital Status?
Married/Common Law   Widowed   Separated/Divorced   Single/Never Married
What is your highest level of education completed?

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<th>High School</th>
<th>University/College</th>
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<td>Completed</td>
<td>Diploma</td>
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What is your average household income (yearly)?

- Under $15 000
- $15 000 - $30 000
- $31 000 - $50 000
- $51 000 - $75 000
- $75 000 and above

At what age did you start participating in your sport?

What is the highest level you have competed at?

How long have you competed at this level?

How many years have you been competing nationally?

How many international events have you been selected to and competed in representing Canada?

What are your results nationally/internationally over the past four years? Please provide competition name and year (please continue on next page if necessary).
How many years have you been a member of the senior national team?

Have you ever been a carded athlete?

How long were you carded for?

Are you currently a carded athlete?

Have you ever lost your carding status?

How many previous Olympic Games have you attempted to qualify for?

How many previous Olympic Games have you competed in?

If you would like to provide any further information regarding yourself, please do so below:

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________
Appendix C: First Interview Schedule for Study One

Interview Guide: Elite athletes

First Time Point

The following questions represent an overarching agenda for the first interview with participants. The questions will be pursued flexibly and may be altered and added to over time as different themes and patterns emerge in the data.

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself?
   Probes:
   
   a. Is there anything you would like to ask me before we begin?

2. Can you tell me about your previous athletic experience?
   Probes:
   
   a. What are some of your athletic successes?
   b. What setbacks have you previously experienced in sport?

3. Can you tell me about your goals for the upcoming season?
   Probes:
   
   a. What are some obstacles or challenges that may prevent you from achieving your goals?
   b. What will help you attain these goals?
   c. Do you believe you will be able to attain your goals?

4. How would you evaluate your current sport performance?
   Probes:
   
   a. Are you where you want to be at this point in the season?
   b. What are some challenges you have experienced this season?

5. Tell me about your qualification process for the Olympic team.
   Probes:
a. What has to happen for you to be selected to the Olympic team?
b. How do you feel about this process?
c. What has been your experience thus far trying to qualify for the Olympics?
d. What are some challenges with the process?
e. How long have you had the goal of qualifying for the Olympics?
f. How do you anticipate the selection process unfolding?

6. How confident are you in your ability to make the Olympic standard required to be selected to the Olympic team?
   Probes:
   a. How confident are you that you will be selected to go to London to compete if you make the Olympic standard?
   b. What has affected your confidence?

7. What do you anticipate your reaction to be if you were:
   Probes:
   a. Selected to the Olympic team?
   b. De-selected from the Olympic team?
   c. Do you anticipate the selection or de-selection to the Olympic team impacting your future athletic career?

8. When do you experience stress in relation to your sport?
   Probes:
   a. What is currently causing you stress in relation to your sport?
   b. What is stressful about the selection process?
      i. Where is the stress coming from?
   c. What factors do you anticipate causing you stress during the selection process?
   d. What factors do you anticipate causing you stress after the selection process?
   e. Describe for me any situations in which you commonly feel stress.
   f. Is this season more stressful than your previous seasons?
   g. Are other factors or situations in your life causing you stress currently?
   h. Do you anticipate other factors or situations in your life to cause you stress?

9. Tell me how you commonly react to things that are causing you stress?
   Probes:
a. What do you do to relieve the stress?
b. How do you cope with stressful athletic situations?
   i. Does it depend on the situation?
c. How are you coping with the selection process?

10. Please describe for me your support network.
   Probes:
   a. Who supports you athletically? Who supports you in other areas of your life?
      i. Coaches?
      ii. Support staff?
      iii. Peers?
      iv. Parents?
      v. Teammates?
      vi. Sport organization?
b. What types of support do they offer you?
c. In what situations do they offer you support?

11. How do you financially support your athletic career?
   Probes:
   a. Does your financial situation have any impact on your athletic career?
   b. What impact does your athletic performance have on your financial situation?

12. Tell me about your current training environment.
   Probes
   a. How has your training environment influenced you?
   b. What is your role on your team or in your training environment?
   c. Tell me about your relationship with your coach.
   d. How has your coach impacted you?
   e. Tell me about your relationship with support staff (e.g. physio, trainers, etc.)
   f. Tell me about your relationships with people affiliated with your sport organization.
   g. Tell me about your relationships with your teammates.

13. What are your future plans for your athletic career beyond the Olympics?
   Probes:
a. Will you continue to train after the Olympics?

14. What other activities are you currently engaged in other than sport?
Probes:

   a. Are you currently working? Going to school?
   b. How do these activities impact your life as a whole?
   c. How do these activities impact your training?
   d. How do these activities impact your sport performance?

15. What are your plans for the future outside of sport?

16. Is there anything that we have not discussed regarding your experience with the Olympic
    team selection process that you think is important?
Probes:

   a. Is there anything we have not discussed about your athletic experience that you
      think is important?
Appendix D: Second Interview Schedule for Study One

Interview Guide: Elite athletes

Second Time Point

The following questions represent an overarching agenda for the second interview with participants. The questions will be pursued flexibly and may be altered and added to over time as different themes and patterns emerge in the data.

1. How has your season been going?
   Probes:
   a. How did you perform in your Olympic qualifying events?
   b. Were you satisfied with your performances in competition?
   c. Did you experience any challenges or setbacks?

2. How would you evaluate your current sport performance?
   Probes:
   a. Are you where you wanted to be at this point in the season?
   b. What is your current status in your sport?

3. Can you please tell me about your qualification process for the Olympic team?
   Probes:
   a. What was your experience when trying to qualify for the Olympics?
   b. Did the selection process unfold how you anticipated it to?
   c. What are your thoughts about this process?
   d. Has your feelings about the qualification process changed since you started it?
   e. What were some challenges with the process?
   f. Has being selected/de-selected changed how you feel about yourself as a person?
      i. As an athlete?
      ii. If so how?
      iii. If not why not?

4. What was your reaction to being selected (or de-selected) to the Olympic team?
Probes:

a. How did being selected (or de-selected) to the Olympic team make you feel?
b. Has being selected (or de-selected) changed your perspective on:
   i. Your sport?
   ii. The selection process?

5. Have your goals changed since being selected (or de-selected) from the Olympic team?
   If so, how?
   Probes:

   a. Have you met your goals?
   b. Did anything stand in your way of achieving your goals?
   c. What assisted you in achieving your goals?
   d. Do you have any new goals for your athletic performance?

6. When do you experience stress in relation to your sport?
   Probes:

   a. What was stressful about the selection process?
      i. Where was the stress coming from?
   b. What is currently causing you stress in relation to your sport?
   c. What factors do you anticipate causing you stress in the future in relation to your sport?
   d. Describe for me any situations in which you commonly feel stress.
   e. Are there other factors or situations in your life that caused you stress during the transition process (if not continuing in sport)? Now?

7. Can you tell me how you commonly reacted to things that were causing you stress during the selection process?
   Probes:

   a. What did you do to relieve the stress?
   b. How did you cope with stressful athletic situations?
      i. Did it depend on the situation?
   c. How did you cope with the selection process?
   d. How did you cope with the news of being selected (or de-selected) to the Olympic team?
8. Please describe for me your support network during the selection process.
   Probes:
   
   a. Has it changed at all since we last spoke?
   b. Has it changed as a result of being selected (or de-selected) from the Olympic team?
   c. Did you feel supported through the selection process?
   d. Who supported you?
      i. Who is currently supporting you?
      ii. Who supports you in other areas of your life?
         1. Coaches?
         2. Support staff?
         3. Peers?
         4. Parents?
         5. Teammates?
         6. Sport organization?
   e. What types of support did they offer you?
   f. In what situations did they offer you support?

9. Has your financial situation changed as a result of being selected (or de-selected) to the Olympic team?
   Probes:
   
   a. Do you anticipate your financial support changing?
   b. How will your financial situation affect your training and your athletic career?

10. Has your training environment changed as a result of being selected (de-selected) to the Olympic team?
    Probes:
    
    a. Has your role on your team or in your training environment changed as a result of being selected (de-selected) to the Olympic team?
    b. Can you tell me about your relationship with your coach?
    c. How did your coach impact you during the selection process?
    d. Can you tell me about your relationship with support staff (e.g. physio, trainers, etc.)?
    e. Can you tell me about your relationships with people affiliated with your sport organization?
f. Can you tell me about your relationships with your teammates?

11. What are your future plans for your athletic career beyond the Olympics?
   Probes:
   
   a. Will you continue to train after the Olympics?
   b. Have your plans changed as a result of the Olympic selection process?

12. What other activities are you currently engaged in other than sport?
   Probes:
   
   a. Are you currently working? Going to school?
   b. How do these activities impact your life as a whole?
   c. How do these activities impact your training and sport performance?
   d. Have they changed since being selected (or de-selected) to the Olympic team?

13. What are your plans for the future outside of sport?
   Probes:
   
   a. Do you feel supported in those plans?

14. Is there anything that we have not discussed regarding your experience with the Olympic team selection process and how it has impacted you that you think is important?
   Probes:
   
   a. Is there anything we have not discussed about your athletic experience that you think is important?
Appendix E: Third Interview Schedule for Study One

Interview Guide: Elite athletes

Third Time Point

The following questions represent an overarching agenda for the third interview with participants. The questions will be pursued flexibly and may be altered and added to over time as different themes and patterns emerge in the data.

1. How has your season been going?
   Probes:
   a. What was your Olympic experience like?
   b. What was your experience competing (not competing) in the Olympics?
   c. How did the Olympics impact your life?
   d. What is your current status in your sport?

2. What are your future plans for your participation in sport?
   Probes:
   a. Did the Olympics change your plans for your future in sport?
   b. Did being selected (or de-selected) impact your decision to continue (discontinue) your participation in sport?
   c. Did the selection process impact your future athletic plans?

3. How do you currently feel about being selected (or de-selected from) to compete in the Olympics?
   Probes:
   a. Has being selected (or de-selected) changed your perspective on:
      i. Your sport?
      ii. The selection process?
   b. Has being selected/de-selected changed how you feel about yourself as a person?
      i. As an athlete?
      ii. If so how?
      iii. If not why not?
4. Have your current goals for your sport changed as a result of being selected (or de-selected) to the Olympic team?

Probes:
   a. If so, how?

5. What has your transition (if not continuing) experience been like thus far?
   Probes:

   a. How has your transition impacted your life?
   b. What has it been like not participating in elite level sport?

6. What is your experience participating in your sport (if continuing) after the Olympics?
   Probes:

   a. What challenges have you faced?
   b. Has your motivation to compete remained the same post Olympics?

7. What stressors do you experience in relation to your sport?
   Probes:

   a. What is currently causing you stress in relation to your sport?
   b. Describe for me any situations in which you commonly feel stress.
   c. Are there other factors or situations in your life that have caused you stress during this transition process?

8. How do you cope with things that cause you stress?
   Probes:

   a. What do you currently do to cope with stressful situations in your sport?
      i. Does it depend on the situation?
   b. How did you cope with being selected (or de-selected) to the Olympic team?
   c. How have you coped with the Olympics being over?

9. Please describe for me your support network.

   Probes:
a. Has it changed since we last spoke?
b. Has it changed as a result of being selected (or de-selected) from the Olympic team?
c. Did you feel supported through the selection process?
d. Who supported you?
   i. Who is currently supporting you?
   ii. Who supports you in other areas of your life?
      1. Coaches?
      2. Support staff?
      3. Peers?
      4. Parents?
      5. Teammates?
      6. Sport organization?
e. What types of support did they offer you?
f. In what situations did they offer you support?

10. Has your financial situation changed as a result of being selected (or de-selected) to the Olympic team?
Probes:

   a. Has your financial situation changed since the Olympics?
   b. Do you anticipate your financial support changing?

11. Has your training environment changed since the Olympics?
Probes:

   a. Has your role on your team or in your training environment changed since the Olympics?
   b. Can you tell me about your relationship with your coach?
   c. What role has your coach played since the Olympics?
   d. Has your relationship changed with support staff (e.g. physio, trainers etc.)?
   e. Has your relationship with people affiliated with your sport organization changed?
   f. Has your relationship with your teammates changed?

12. What other activities are you currently engaged in other than sport?
Probes:

   a. Are you currently working? Going to school?
b. How do these activities impact your life as a whole?

c. How do these activities impact your training and sport performance?

d. Have they changed since the Olympics?

13. What are your plans for the future outside of sport?
   Probes:

   a. Do you feel supported in those plans?

14. Is there anything that we have not discussed regarding your experience with the Olympic team selection process and how it has impacted you that you think is important?
   Probes:

   a. Is there anything we have not discussed about your athletic experience that you think is important?
Appendix F: Consent Form for Study Two

INFORMED CONSENT

Principle Investigator:
Peter Crocker, PhD
School of Kinesiology
University of British Columbia
Contact Number: [Redacted]
peter.crocker@ubc.ca

Carolyn McEwen, MSc
School of Kinesiology
University of British Columbia
Contact Number: [Redacted]
carolyn.mcewen@alumni.ubc.ca

Why are we doing this study?
You are invited to take part in a research study entitled: “Canada Summer Games Hopefuls: A Study of How Athletes Experience the Selection Process.” The purpose of this research is to examine how competitive athletes experience an important selection process. How athletes deal with selection processes may influence the way they approach their participation in sport. It is important to study significant selection processes so we can understand how to promote positive sport experiences and to assist in the continued development of competitive athletes.

What is involved in this study?
Interested athletes who will be trying out for the Canada Summer Games and are 15 years and older will be invited to take part in the study. You will be asked to complete three surveys. The first will be before your Canada Summer Games tryouts. The second will be within a week of you being aware of whether you have made the team and the third a month after the second.

Each survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete and will be completed online. You will be asked about your perceptions of the selection process, perceptions of yourself, how you are dealing (coping) with the selection process, your emotions, and about your goals in sport. You do not have to answer any question you do not feel comfortable answering. If you wish to withdraw from the study, you may do so at any time without having to give any reason for doing so with no negative consequences.

Are there any risks in this study?
We do not think there are any risks involved in this study. You can refuse to answer any question and doing so will result in no penalty. You can stop answering the survey at any time, again resulting in no penalty. To withdraw from this study, please contact the researcher: Carolyn McEwen (carolyn.mcewen@alumni.ubc.ca). Any data collected prior to withdrawal will be omitted from the study and destroyed. In the event that you would like to further discuss feelings regarding the topics in the surveys, you may wish to contact Family Services of Greater Vancouver (Counselling Services: [Redacted]). If you are from another part of Canada they can assist in directing you to services in your region.
There are no explicit or guaranteed benefits to participating in this study. However, some athletes may enjoy the opportunity to reflect on their Canada Summer Games tryout. The information we collect for this study will help in the future to design programs and sport tryouts that benefit sport administrators, coaches, and athletes.

All participants' email addresses will be placed into a random draw after submitting the time 1 questionnaire for a chance to win 1 of 5 SportChek gift cards valued at $100 each or 1 of 10 iTunes gift cards valued at $50 each. An additional entry into the draw will be made for each participant that submits time 2 and time 3 questionnaires. For example, if a participant submits all three questionnaires, their name will be entered 3 times into the draw. A participant can only win 1 prize. Participants will still be eligible to win the prize if they withdraw from the study early or submit incomplete questionnaires. Participants chance to win is not contingent on full completion of the questionnaires.

If you would like to know about the results of the study, feel free to contact Carolyn McEwen (carolyn.mcewen@alumni.ubc.ca). A summary of the results and copies of any resulting publication will be provided upon request.

Information gathered will be used for research purposes only and participants will not be matched to individual responses. All data will be collected online and will be stored using Edudata Canada, a University of British Columbia-based company that provides online data collection services. Edudata provides a secure facility for storing personal information, and complies with British Columbia’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Participants will not be identified in any reports of the completed study. Results of this study will be analyzed in group form and will be used in the presentation of academic presentations and publications. Once questionnaires are completed, they will be identified by code number only and will be securely stored for a minimum of five years as required by the University of British Columbia guidelines. You do not waive any legal rights by consenting to participate in this study.

Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?
If you have any questions or want more information about the study please contact the investigators with the contact information provided at the beginning of this page.

Who can you contact if you have concerns about the study?
If you have any concerns about your rights as a research subject and/or your experiences while participating in this study, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at [contact information] or if long distance e-mail [email]@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free [phone number].

ATHLETE CONSENT: PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY
• You have the right to refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part, you may choose to pull out of the study at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact on your selection to the Canada Summer Games team.

• You may wish to discuss this study with your parents before deciding to participate, however the decision is entirely up to you and your responses will be confidential.

• By submitting the first questionnaire, you are consenting to participate in this study. Please keep a copy of this consent form for your records.
Dear Athlete,

My name is Carolyn McEwen and I am a PhD student conducting research at the University of British Columbia. I would like to invite you to participate in a study entitled “Canada Summer Games Hopefuls: A Study of how Athletes Experience the Selection Process.” If you are aged 15 and older and are trying out for the Canada Summer Games we are interested in learning about you and your experience with the tryout.

The purpose of this research is to examine how competitive athletes experience an important selection process. How athletes deal with selection processes may influence the way they approach their participation in sport. It is important to study significant selection processes so we can understand how to promote positive sport experiences and to assist in the continued development of competitive athletes.

This study involves completing three online questionnaires about your perceptions of the tryouts, how you cope with the tryouts, your athletic and life satisfaction, your goals and sport commitment, and how you see yourself as an athlete. The first questionnaire you will complete will be before your Canada Summer Games tryout. The second and third questionnaires you will complete one and five weeks after you are aware of whether you are selected to compete at the Canada Summer Games. Each questionnaire takes approximately 15-20 minutes and all surveys will be completed prior to the Canada Summer Games. Regardless of whether you are selected to compete at the Canada Summer Games or not, we interested in hearing from you!

Athletes who decide to participate will be placed into a random draw after submitting the time 1 questionnaire for a chance to WIN 1 of 5 SportChek gift cards valued at $100 each or 1 of 10 iTunes gift cards valued at $50 each. An additional entry into the draw will be made for each participant that submits time 2 and time 3 questionnaires.

Please note there is no obligation for you to participate in this study. Your involvement would be much appreciated, but is completely voluntary. Your participation status and all information will remain confidential. In addition, your participation decision will NOT affect your standing during the Canada Summer Games tryout. Furthermore, while a coach or gatekeeper to your sport organization may have assisted in contacting potential participants, they will not be informed of your participation decision.

If you would like to participate in the study please follow the link below (you may have to copy and paste the link into your web browser):

https://survey.edudata.ca/es/czQ0OQ/YzQ0OA/

OR if you have any questions please contact Carolyn McEwen (carolyn.mcewen@alumni.ubc.ca).
Sincerely,

Carolyn McEwen, MSc
School of Kinesiology
University of British Columbia
Contact Number: [Redacted]
ca@alumni.ubc.ca
Appendix H: Demographic Questionnaire for Study Two Time One

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1: This first part of the questionnaire is designed to describe the people participating in this study. All information received is held in confidence.

Today’s Date: ________________________________

Date(s) of Canada Summer Games tryout(s) ________________________________

Date of Birth: ________________________________

Email address: (this is required in order to contact you at subsequent time points and to match responses from each time point)

Primary: ________________________________

Secondary: ________________________________

Please check one of the following…

1. What is your gender?
   □ Male  □ Female

2. How would you describe your ethnic origin?
   □ Aboriginal  □ White  □ Asian  □ Filipino
   □ Black  □ Arab  □ West Asian  □ Chinese
   □ Japanese  □ Korean  □ Southeast Asian  □ South Asian
Others (please specify): __________________________

3. First Language: ____________________________

   In reference to your first language, please check your ability to:

   □ Read    □ Write    □ Speak    □ Understand

4. Secondary Language (if applicable): __________________________

   In reference to your secondary language please check your ability to:

   □ Read    □ Write    □ Speak    □ Understand

5. What is your highest level of education? (circle one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some High School</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>Some College or University</th>
<th>Completed College or University</th>
<th>Other Education Certificate</th>
<th>Post-university degree (e.g. doctor, lawyer, dentist)</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6. What is your parent(s)’ highest level of education? (circle one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some High School</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>Some College or University</th>
<th>Completed College or University</th>
<th>Other Education Certificate</th>
<th>Post-university degree (e.g. doctor, lawyer, dentist)</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

7. Canada Summer Games sport: ____________________________________________

7. a) Event(s) (if applicable): ______________________________
8. Province or Territory representing: ________________________________

9. Have you **tried out** for a **previous** Canada Summer Games team?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

10. Have you been **selected** to represent your province/territory for a **previous** Canada Summer Games?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

11. Have you **competed** in a **previous** Canada Summer Games?

☐ Yes  ☐ No
12. Please indicate for all the levels of sport you have previously competed in a) the league and/or event associated with this level (e.g. Ontario Summer Games); b) if you were required to be selected to compete in this league or event:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>League or Event</th>
<th>Selection Required (yes or no)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Represented your high school at competitions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational</td>
<td>Competed in intramurals or in a recreational league</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club</td>
<td>Competed against athletes from your city/town or neighboring cities/towns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University/College Varsity</td>
<td>Represented your university or college varsity team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Competed against athletes from your province/territory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Competing against athletes from across the country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Championship</td>
<td>E.g. Represented your province at a Junior National Championship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>Competed against athletes from a country other than Canada</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Championship</td>
<td>E.g. Represented Canada at a Junior World Championship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. How many times have you **NOT** been selected to a team or league that you have tried out for?

- Never  
- 1 or 2  
- 3 or 4  
- 5 or 6  
- 7 or more  

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14. When will you know if you are selected to compete in the Canada Summer Games?

Date: _____________________________________________

☐ I don’t know
Appendix I: Demographic Questionnaire for Study Two Time Two and Three

CANADA SUMMER GAMES QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographic Information

Date of Birth: ________________________________

Email address: (this is required in order to contact you at subsequent time points and to match responses from each time point)

Primary: ______________________________________________________________

Secondary: ______________________________________________________________

Please check one of the following…

1. What is your gender?

☐ Male  ☐ Female

2. Canada Summer Games sport: ____________________________________________

2. a) Event(s) (if applicable): ____________________________________________

3. Province or Territory representing: _________________________________

4. Were you selected to compete in the 2013 Canada Summer Games? (Please circle)

a) Yes, I am going to compete in the Canada Summer Games

b) No, I was not selected to compete in the Canada Summer Games

c) I am an alternate to compete in the Canada Summer Games

d) Other. Please specify _____________________________________________________
5. Are you still participating in the sport in which you attended a Canada Summer Games tryout? (Please circle)
a) Not at all  
b) I am participating less  
c) I am participating the same amount  
d) I am participating more  
Please provide a brief explanation for your answer: ____________________________________________________________
                                                                                                           ___________________________________________________________________________________________
Appendix J: Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM) for Study Two Time One

Stress Appraisal Measure  
(Peacock & Wong, 1990)

This questionnaire is concerned with your thoughts about the Canada Summer Games Team Tryouts. There are no right or wrong answers. Please respond according to how you view the Canada Summer Games Team Tryouts right NOW. Please answer ALL questions. Answer each question by CIRCLING the appropriate number corresponding to the following scale.

<p>| 1. Is this a totally hopeless situation? | 1 Not At All | 2 Slightly | 3 Moderately | 4 Considerably | 5 Extremely |
| 2. Does this situation create tension in me? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Is the outcome of this situation uncontrollable by anyone? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Is there someone or some agency I can turn to for help if I need it? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Does this situation make me feel anxious? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Does this situation have important consequences for me? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Is this going to have a positive impact on me? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. How eager am I to tackle this problem? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. How much will I be affected by the outcome of this situation? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. To what extent can I become a stronger person because of this problem? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Will the outcome of this situation be negative? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Do I have the ability to do well in this situation? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Does this situation have serious implications for me? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Do I have what it takes to do well in this situation? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Is there help available to me for dealing with this problem? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. Does this situation tax or exceed my coping resources? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>1 Not At All</th>
<th>2 Slightly</th>
<th>3 Moderately</th>
<th>4 Considerably</th>
<th>5 Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Are there sufficient resources available to help me in dealing with this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Is it beyond anyone's power to do anything about this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. To what extent am I excited thinking about the outcome of this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. How threatening is this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Is the problem unresolvable by anyone?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Will I be able to overcome the problem?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Is there anyone who can help me to manage this problem?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. To what extent do I perceive this situation as stressful?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Do I have the skills necessary to achieve a successful outcome to this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. To what extent does this event require coping efforts on my part?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Does this situation have long-term consequences for me?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Is this going to have a negative impact on me?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix K: Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM) for Study Two Time Two and Three

Stress Appraisal Measure (SAM)  
(Peacock & Wong, 1990)

This questionnaire is concerned with your thoughts about the Canada Summer Games Team Tryouts. There are no right or wrong answers. Please respond according to how you view the Canada Summer Games Team Tryouts right NOW. Please answer ALL questions. Answer each question by CIRCLING the appropriate number corresponding to the following scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Was this a totally hopeless situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did this situation create tension in me?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Was the outcome of this situation uncontrollable by anyone?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Was there someone or some agency I could turn to for help if I needed it?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Did this situation make me feel anxious?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Did this situation have important consequences for me?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Did this have a positive impact on me?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How eager was I to tackle this problem?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How much was I affected by the outcome of this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. To what extent have I become a stronger person because of this problem?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Was the outcome of this situation negative?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Did I have the ability to do well in this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Did this situation have serious implications for me?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Did I have what it took to do well in this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Was there help available to me for dealing with this problem?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Did this situation tax or exceed my coping resources?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Were there sufficient resources available to help me in dealing with this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Was it beyond anyone's power to do anything about this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. To what extent was I excited about the outcome of this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. How threatening was this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Was the problem unresolvable by anyone?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Was I able to overcome the problem?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Was there anyone who could help me to manage this problem?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. To what extent did I perceive this situation as stressful?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Did I have the skills necessary to achieve a successful outcome to this situation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. To what extent did this event require coping efforts on my part?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Did this situation have long-term consequences for me?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Did this have a negative impact on me?</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix L: Sport Emotion Questionnaire (SEQ) for Study Two Time One, Two and Three

Sport Emotion Questionnaire (SEQ)  
(Jones, Lange, Bray, Uphill, & Catlin, 2005)

Below you will find a list of words that describe a range of feelings that sport performers may experience. Please read each one carefully and indicate on the scale next to each item how you feel right now, at this moment, in relation to trying out for the Canada Summer Games. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any one item, but choose the answer which best describes your feelings right now in relation to trying out for the Canada Summer Games.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Extremely</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uneasy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upset</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhilarated</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Irritated</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Pleased</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>A little</td>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>Quite a bit</td>
<td>Extremely</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apprehensive</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disappointed</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Energetic</td>
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<td>Happy</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Dejected</td>
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<td>2</td>
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</table>
Appendix M: Coping Inventory for Competitive Sport (CICS) for Study Two Time One

Coping Inventory for Competitive Sport (CICS)
(Gaudreau & Blondin, 2002)

Each of the items represents things that athletes can do or think about leading up to the *Canada Summer Games Tryouts*. For each item, you must indicate the extent to which it corresponds to what you did leading up to the *Canada Summer Games Tryouts*. Circle the answer that best corresponds to what you have done leading up to the Canada Summer Games Tryouts. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in what **YOU actually did or thought leading up to the Canada Summer Games Tryouts.**

1. Does not correspond at all to what I did or thought
2. Corresponds a little to what I did or thought
3. Corresponds moderately to what I did or thought
4. Corresponds strongly to what I did or thought
5. Corresponds very strongly to what I did or what I thought

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Very strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I visualized that I was in total control of the situation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I used swear-words loudly or in my head in order to expel my anger</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I distanced myself from other athletes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I committed myself by giving a consistent effort</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I occupied my mind in order to think about other things than the tryouts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I tried not to be intimidated by other athletes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I asked someone for advice concerning my mental preparation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I tried to relax my body</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>A little</td>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Very strongly</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I analyzed my past performances</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I lost all hope of attaining my goal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I mentally rehearsed the execution of my movements</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I got angry</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I retreated to a place where it was easy to think</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I gave a relentless effort</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I thought about my favourite activity in order not to think about the tryouts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I tried to get rid of my doubts by thinking positively</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I asked other athletes for advice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I tried to reduce the tension in my muscles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I analyzed the weaknesses of my opponents</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I let myself feel hopeless and discouraged</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I visualized myself doing a good performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. I expressed my discontent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I kept all people at a distance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I gave my best effort</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I entertained myself in order not to think about the tryouts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I replaced my negative thoughts by positive ones</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I talked to a trustworthy person</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I did some relaxation exercises</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>A little</td>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>Strongly</td>
<td>Very strongly</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I thought about possible solutions in order to manage the situation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I wished that the tryouts would end immediately</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. I visualized my all-time best performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. I expressed my frustrations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I searched for calmness and quietness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. I tried not to think about my mistakes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. I talked to someone who is able to motivate me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. I relaxed my muscles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. I analyzed the demands of the tryouts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. I stopped believing in my ability to attain my goal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. I thought about my family, my friends, or others to distract myself</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix N: Coping Inventory for Competitive Sport (CICS) for Study Two Time One and Two

Coping Inventory for Competitive Sport (CICS)  
(Gaudreau & Blondin, 2002)

Each of the items represents things that athletes can do or think about based on the outcome (e.g. making the team versus not making the team) of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts. For each item, you must indicate the extent to which it corresponds to what you did based on the outcome of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts. Circle the answer that best corresponds to what you have done based on the outcome of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in what YOU actually did or thought based on the outcome of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts.

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3. Corresponds moderately to what I did or thought  
4. Corresponds strongly to what I did or thought  
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<table>
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<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Very strongly</th>
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<td>1. I visualized that I was in total control of the situation</td>
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<td>I analyzed my past performances</td>
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<td>32.</td>
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<td>33.</td>
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Appendix O: Coping Inventory for Competitive Sport (CICS) for Study Two Time One, Two, and Three

Coping Inventory for Competitive Sport (CICS)  
(Gaudreau & Blondin, 2002)

Each of the items represents things that athletes can do or think about based on the outcome (e.g. making the team versus not making the team) of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts. For each item, you must indicate the extent to which it corresponds to what you did based on the outcome of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts during the last week. Circle the answer that best corresponds to what you have done based on the outcome of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts during the last week. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in what **YOU actually did or thought based on the outcome of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts during the last week.**

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Appendix P: Athletic Goal Progress for Study Two Time One

Athletic Goal Progress Scale
(Dugas, Gaudreau, & Carraro, 2012)

This scale consists of a number of statements about your athletic goals. Read each item and then circle the appropriate answer next to that statement.

Leading up to the Canada Summer Games Tryouts, please circle the number that represents the extent to which:

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very Very sl</th>
<th>Very slightly</th>
<th>Slightly</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Very Strongly</th>
<th>Very Very Strongly</th>
<th>Totally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1...you progressed towards your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2...you moved forward in pursuit of your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>3...you came closer to reaching your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4...you made progress towards the realization of your athletic goals</td>
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<td>5...you advanced towards your athletic goals</td>
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Appendix Q: Athletic Goal Progress for Study Two Time One and Two

Athletic Goal Progress Scale
(Dugas, Gaudreau, & Carraro, 2012)

This scale consists of a number of statements about your athletic goals. Read each item and then circle the appropriate answer next to that statement.

Based on the outcome of the Canada Summer Games Tryouts, please circle the number that represents the extent to which:

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<th>Statement</th>
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<th>Very Very Slightly</th>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4...you made progress towards the realization of your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5...you advanced towards your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix R: Athletic Goal Progress for Study Two Time One, Two, and Three

Athletic Goal Progress Scale
(Dugas, Gaudreau, & Carraro, 2012)

This scale consists of a number of statements about your athletic goals. Read each item and then circle the appropriate answer next to that statement.

Since the **Canada Summer Games Tryouts**, please **circle** the number that represents the extent to which:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Very Very Slightly</th>
<th>Very Slightly</th>
<th>Slightly</th>
<th>Moderately</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Very Strongly</th>
<th>Very Very Strongly</th>
<th>Totally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1...you progressed towards your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2...you moved forward in pursuit of your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3...you came closer to reaching your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4...you made progress towards the realization of your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5...you advanced towards your athletic goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix S: Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS) for Study Two Time One, Two, and Three

**Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS)**
(Brewer & Cornelius, 2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I consider myself an athlete.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have many goals related to sport.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Most of my friends are athletes.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sport is the most important part of my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I spend more time thinking about sport than anything else.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I feel bad about myself when I do poorly in sport.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I would be very depressed if I were injured and could not compete in sport.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix T: Sport Commitment Measure for Study Two Time One, Two, and Three

**Sport Commitment Measure**  
*(Scanlan, Simons, Carpenter, Schmidt, & Keeler, 1993)*

The following questions ask about your commitment to your sport. “Your sport” refers to the sport you tried out for to compete in the Canada Summer Games.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all/Nothing</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Very Much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> How dedicated are you to playing your sport?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> What would you be willing to do to keep playing your sport?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> How hard would it be for you to quit your sport?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> How determined are you to keep playing your sport?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix U: Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) for Study Two Time One, Two, and Three

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)  
(Pavot & Diener, 1993)

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your agreement with each item by circling the appropriate number. Please be open and honest in your responding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The conditions of my life are excellent.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am satisfied with my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>