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Addressing Voids in Knowledge Relating to Psychological Stress in Sport

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This symposium brings together four speakers, three of whom are early career researchers, to discuss recent developments in psychological stress research in sport. Stress continues to be a widely researched topic (e.g., Arnold et al., 2017; Didymus et al., 2021; Potts et al., 2021) but many lines of enquiry are yet to be explored. For example, compelling understanding of pivotal concepts (e.g., lifetime stressors exposure, appraising, well-being) remains elusive, knowledge of the interpersonal aspects of stress is infantile, and we are yet to fully understand stress among minority and marginalized populations (e.g., athletes with a disability). This symposium addresses some noteworthy voids in understanding by offering four presentations that each use qualitative methods to answer a pertinent research question. The first presentation showcases a creative non-fiction of lifetime stressor exposure, performance, and help-seeking behaviors; the second uses composite vignettes to explore the impact of primary appraisals on psychological well-being; the third focuses on interpersonal coping among coach-athlete-parent triads; and the fourth presentation details the impact and experiences of classification on the mental health and well-being of athletes with a disability. Collectively, the findings of these presentations highlight a need for collaborative, multi-level interventions that can optimize environments for adaptive stress experiences and, in doing so, minimize the impact of stress on athletes' health, well-being, and performance.