



SCOTTISH INSTITUTE
OF SPORT

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athlete satisfaction survey 2004

sportscotland
LOTTERY FUNDED

Background and Introduction

The Scottish Institute of Sport's role is to nurture and support the very best of Scottish athletes. We are committed to the development of programmes to ensure that athletes can fulfil their potential on the world stage. The success of the Institute will be a reflection of the personal success of athletes which highlights the pertinence of the Institute's philosophy: 'performance focused - coach led - athlete centred'.

In 2000, the Institute commissioned TNS to undertake an initial programme of research among a sample of its athletes, and a second survey was carried out in 2002. A third study was commissioned towards the end of 2003 with the data collection being undertaken in the first three months of 2004. This study enabled us to identify the impact of any changes in the delivery of services to athletes and any significant variations in the levels of satisfaction expressed by athletes towards the Institute and the services we provide.

As in the previous two studies, the main element of data collection was undertaken by means of self-completion questionnaires distributed to 230 athletes within the Institute, including those retired or deselected in the last 12 months, with coaches being given responsibility for encouraging completion.

A total of 132 questionnaires were returned by athletes - a response rate of 57%, which compares to 51% in the 2002 survey and 53% in the 2000 survey. In comparison to the previous survey, there was a significant increase in the number of responses from swimming, curling, and track and field.

Action plan

Since 2002, the Institute has had in place an Action Plan to address the key issues raised in the survey. This has been updated to respond to the latest findings, and under each of the categories below, we include our proposed actions which we will undertake to improve the performance of the Institute in our objective of creating winners.

Services

Rating of Services

Athletes were asked to rate the services provided by the Institute using a 5-point scale, 5 being the highest score, 1 being the lowest.

Service	Mean Score
Physiotherapy	4.41
Massage	4.18
Sports Doctor	3.89
Strength and conditioning	3.87
Video and technique analysis	3.79
Sports psychology	3.76
Medical profile	3.68
ACE - Athlete Career and Education	3.61
Testing and monitoring	3.32
Nutrition	3.23

Overall the ratings are good, and at least half the athletes used all the services. There were no significant changes in the mean scores which could be directly compared to the 2002 analysis, although the 2002 figure of 4.04% for performance analysis decreased to 3.79% for video and technique analysis.

Open-ended questions on making Institute services more relevant to individual needs and on providing other services resulted in the following suggestions from a number of athletes:

- more individualised programmes
- improved communications between coaches
- more contact with adviser

Action Points

- More consultation with providers
- Training of staff and providers in understanding needs of athletes with disabilities to be investigated
- Appoint full-time sports dietitian to address the development of this service

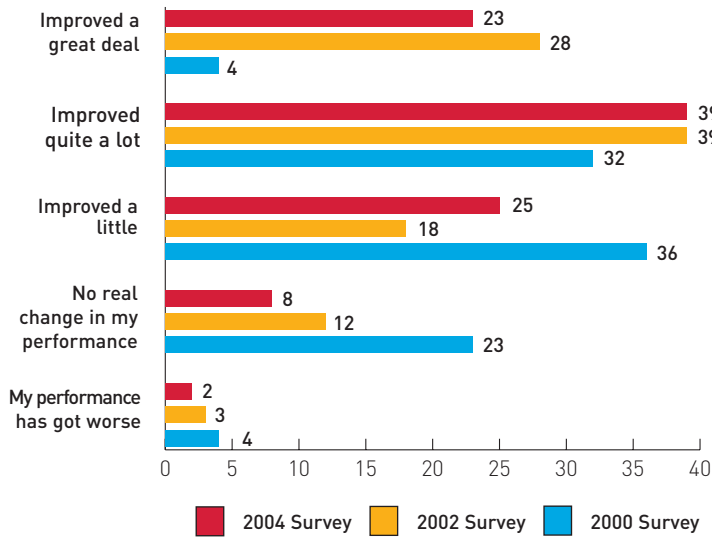


Stephen Payton

Personal Performance and Achievement

Athletes were asked to describe their own performance since becoming a member of the Institute.

Changes in performance (%)



The proportion selecting the top two options increased from 36% in the 2000 survey to 67% in 2002 and has decreased a little to 64% in 2004. **Combining the three 'improved performance' options gives a coverage of 87% of athletes in 2004, compared to 85% in 2002 and 72% in 2000.** Both the negative options have decreased in number.

Athletes who have been members of the Institute for more than two years are more likely than those with less than two years' membership to select the top two ratings (76% compared to 50%).

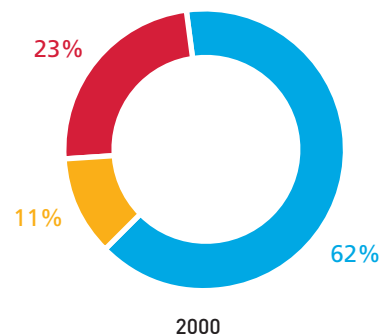
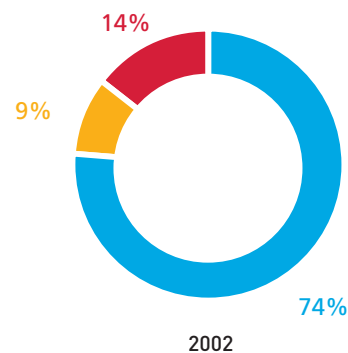
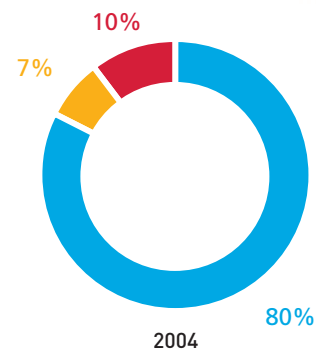
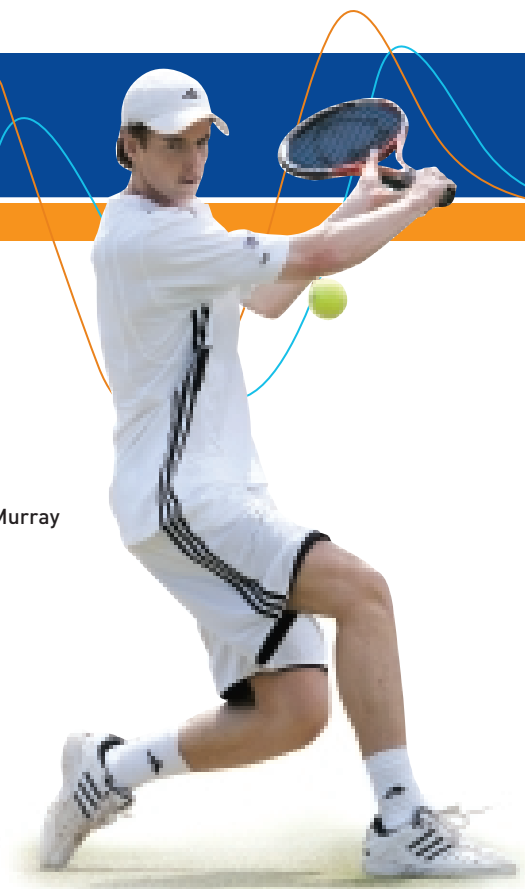
Level of achievement desired

The ambitions of Institute athletes have significantly increased over the last four years, as shown by the tables opposite which chart athletes' response to the question: what level of achievement do you see yourself ultimately striving for?

Action Points

- Everyone has a role to play to ensure athletes want to be best in the world
- Enable athletes to be better able to respond to the opportunities we give them
- Selection process of athletes to continue to be evolved
- Individual programmes to address issues
- Support personal coaches to assist athletes to fulfil their potential

Andrew Murray



Aim of athletes to be:

Best in the World

Best in Europe

Best in Scotland

Communication

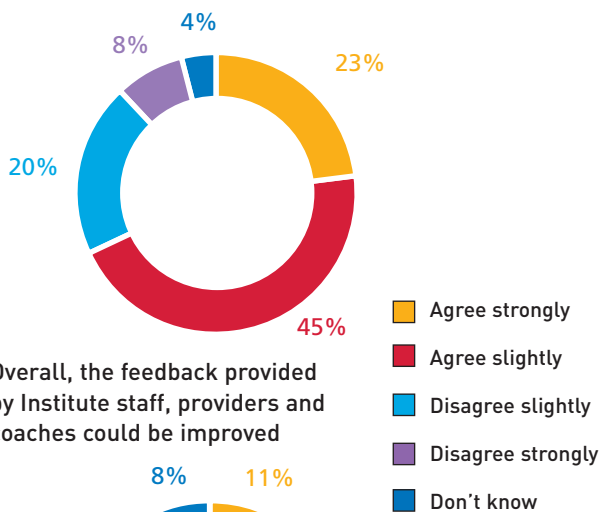
Level of contact

Asked if they thought that the Institute communicates with them too often, not enough or about right, 79% of respondents chose 'not enough'. Asked for suggestions on improvement, the single most mentioned factor (27%) was 'more communication in general'.

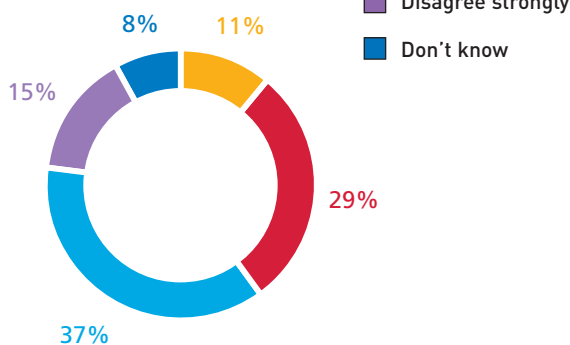
Perceptions of the Institute

Athletes were presented with the two statements below and asked to indicate whether or not they agreed with each.

1. I knew very little about the Institute before I joined.



2. Overall, the feedback provided by Institute staff, providers and coaches could be improved



Those who agreed with statement 2 suggested the following:

- more communication between staff in general (27%)
- feedback on test results (25%)
- feedback on competitions/testing/performance (23%)

Action Points

- Establish research focus groups with athletes, coaches, and staff
- Improve communication within each programme
- Communicate earlier to educate athletes and potential athletes
- Be pro-active through the Area Institutes on criteria for selection, goals etc
- Reinforce clear messages as to what the Institute provides

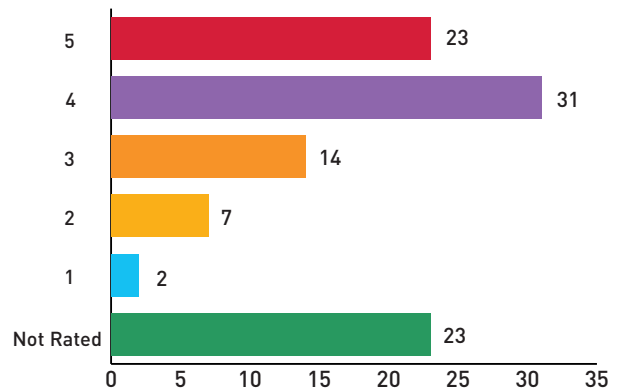
Strength and Conditioning

In the 2004 survey, athletes were questioned in detail about one of the Institute's main services, strength and conditioning.

Some 68% of athletes responded that their relationship with their strength and conditioning coach was either 'very good' or 'quite good', with a minority (12%) stating that the relationship was poor. Asked if the programme took into account advice and feedback from other coaches and service providers, 30% agreed to 'a major extent' and a further 33% agreed to 'a limited extent'. Some 7% disagreed that such input was taken into account.

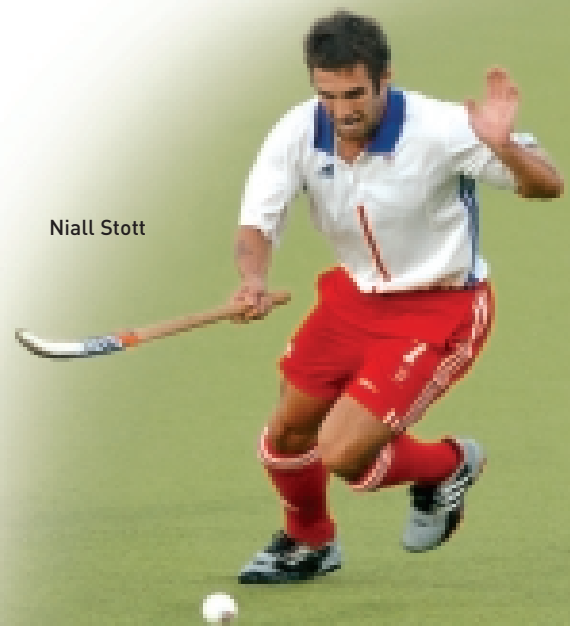
The following table shows how athletes rated the impact of the strength and conditioning programme on their performance, with 5 representing a major impact and 1 equalling no impact at all.

Impact on performance (%)



Action Points

- Number of full-time strength and conditioning staff increased with feedback from survey used in the recruitment process
- Specific issues to be addressed during programme review meetings



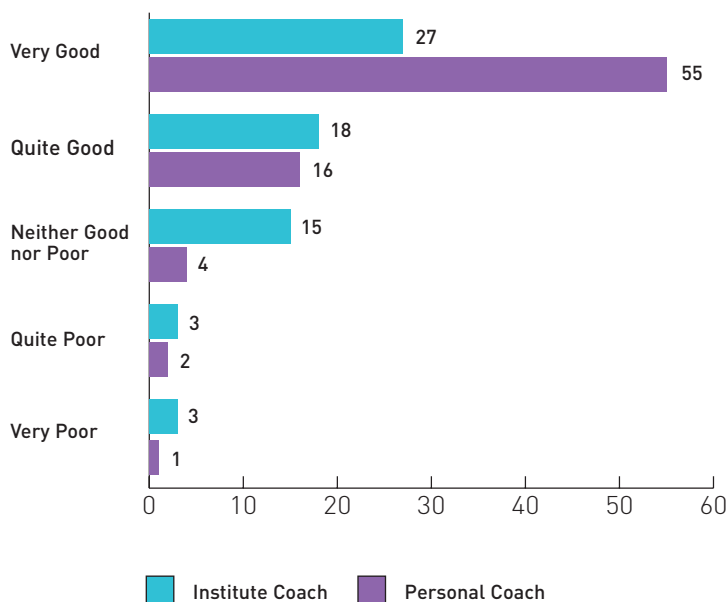
Coaching

Only those athletes whose sport was badminton, curling, hockey, swimming, rugby, football, golf, judo or track and field answered the various questions in this section. This amounted to 119 athletes or 90% of the overall sample.

Level of coaching

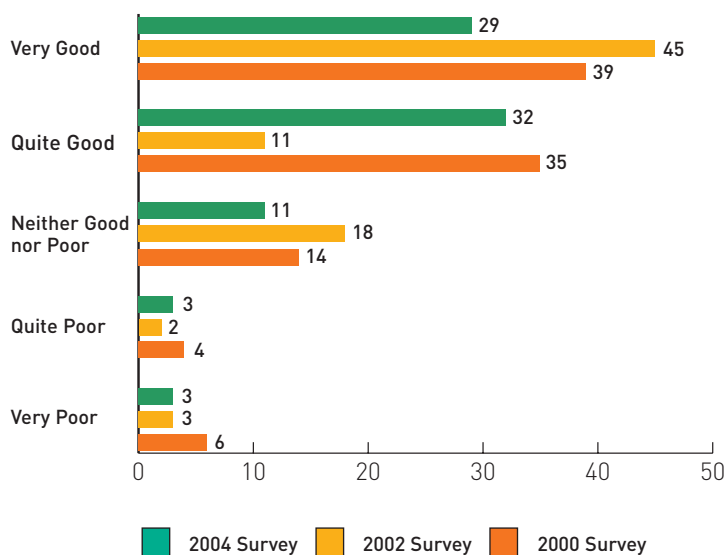
Athletes have a good opinion of the coaching received from their personal coach, with 55% choosing the top rating of 'very good' and a further 16% selecting the next rating of 'quite good'. For Institute coaches, 27% selected the top rating of 'very good' and a further 18% recording 'quite good'. However, some 34% did not give a response to this question.

Rating of coaching



Relationship with Institute coach

Relationships between athletes and their Institute coaches appear to be positive. Some 61% of athletes selected the 'very good' or 'quite good' ratings, compared to 56% in 2002 and 74% in 2000.



Relationship between Institute coach and personal/team coach

Asked how well their Institute coach worked with their own personal or team coach, 19% responded 'very well' (compared to 30% in 2002). A further 29% responded 'quite well' (26% in 2002). As in the 2002 survey, around one third of respondents did not answer this question.

Suggested improvements

Asked how the coaching system could be improved, 55% of respondents suggested more individual coaching.

Action Points

- Manage the perception of the role of the Institute coach
- Personal coaches to be involved more in review and induction processes
- Feedback to be reviewed during programme reviews

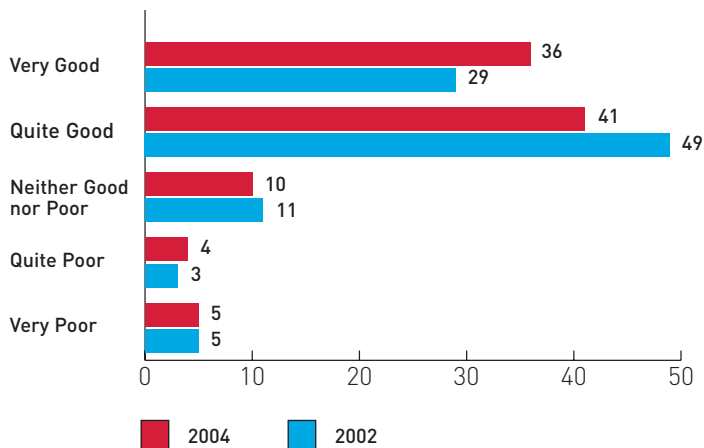


Chris Cusiter

Needs of the Athletes

As in 2002, athletes were asked to rate the performance of the Institute in providing for their individual needs on the programme.

Providing for individual needs of athletes (%)



Asked if the Institute was responsive to the needs of the athletes, 36% replied 'extremely responsive' and a further 48% replied 'quite responsive'. This is broadly in line with the 2002 results.

Questioned on the level of individual attention and support from the Institute, 78% stated that it was 'about right' (a decrease from the 90% figure in 2002). Some 20% stated that it was 'not enough'.

Action Points

- Discussion with staff and providers to ensure that needs are met
- More specific questioning required to identify any trends

Involvement with the Institute

Induction, Deselection and Review

Some 22 athletes in the sample had become members of the Institute within the past year. Almost all described their induction as 'very good' or 'quite good'.

On the re-selection or review process, 51% stated that it had been managed either 'very well' or 'quite well' (67% in 2002). A small minority (4%) responded 'not well' (12% in 2002).

Almost all of the 17 athletes who had moved up from an Area Institute within the past 12 months felt that the move had been well handled.

Other issues

Among other feedback, 55% would like to get more involved in training courses and events (46% in 2002); 33% would like more opportunities to meet other athletes (34% in 2002); and 20% would like more influence on the way things are done (26% in 2002).

On the Institute clothing, 87% rated this as either 'very good' or 'quite good'.

Action Points

- Documented approach for review is being implemented through the High Performance Co-ordinator
- Reinforce implementation of the review process and ensure that athletes understand the process
- Athlete transfer process from Area Institutes now in place
- Focus groups will research possible functions and events
- Media training now offered to all athletes
- Additional training needs, to be addressed by Performance Lifestyle

Front cover: Chris Hoy, Alison Sheppard, Campbell Walsh

Conclusions

From the 2004 survey, a number of key conclusions can be reached. These include:

- athletes believe that they do not have sufficient communication with the Institute
- there is limited knowledge prior to an athlete becoming an Institute member, and this may result in unreasonable expectations
- there is a high level of use of services and general satisfaction with them
- athletes are generally satisfied with strength and conditioning, which was reviewed in detail
- there is a higher use of services than previously
- athletes want better communication between coaches and more individualised coaching
- the vast majority of athletes believe that their performance has improved since joining the Institute
- there has been a significant increase in the number of athletes who wish to become the best in the world
- review survey approach to increase number of respondents.