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# THE TRAINER

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**THE MAGAZINE FOR  
SPORTS PARENTS,  
COACHES AND YOUNG  
PARTICIPANTS.**

**Stephen Green fitness consultancy**



**The trainer  
magazine**

# IN THIS ISSUE

- **How do you cope with the pressure of watching your child compete ?**
- **The retro coach**

I recall working with a family who had three children all competing to a good national level. The mother had the task of taking them to competitions. She coped with the stress by knitting. I was able to determine how things had gone by the number of hats and scarves she had produced and the colours that they were knitted in.

We all employ coping mechanisms to deal with high stress situations. Many parents have talked with me about how best to cope. My advise as both a coach and a sports parent is as follows;

- 1 Make sure that you are well prepared the night before a competition. Journey times, report times, etc.



2 Check equipment, prepare food. Go to bed knowing that when you get up in the morning you are all ready for the day.

3 Take time to get some light exercise, stretch, walk. Ten minutes for yourself whilst your child is warming up. Bring a book to read. Social media can raise anxiety levels considerably.

4 If possible, set up camp in one place and make yourself comfortable.

5 Try not to consume too much coffee. Herbal teas keep you calm.



During the match, where you place yourself can have a considerable influence on the young sports person. You know yourself and your children best. Some young people are reassured by being able to see their parents all the time, others prefer not to view their parents reactions.

What happens directly after the competition can have long lasting consequences. My advise would be to let your own emotional response to the outcome of the competition take time to pass before discussion with your child. This will allow for an

objective talk to take place when the time is right.

As a sports parent I fully understand the emotions involved in watching your child compete. As a sports coach I must look at the long term development of the young sports person. Junior sport is only a stepping stone, the start of a very long and tough journey. As with any form of education many of the key lessons are learnt by failure. How defeat is managed by those people closest to the young sports person is key to their long term development.

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I recently developed a weight lifting room in an old disused store cupboard at a school where I am contracted to deliver fitness and conditioning. The state run school struggles for funding, decorating the room was low on our list of priorities. Whilst rummaging at a local boot fair I came across an old sports book which contained enough iconic sports images to paper the room and teach the students a little bit about the history of sport. The book was a pound. The kids love the room as they think it is very retro ( they also think the same about me.)

