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THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PENALTY KICKS

The Influence of Emotions on Penalty Taker and Goalkeeper Performance

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Introduction and Review of Literature

The intense emotional nature of many sports contributes to explaining why millions of spectators watch such major events in front of the television or in fan arenas. Think, for example, of the quarter-final match during the 2018 Soccer World Cup between England and Colombia that was decided in a penalty shootout. Given England's history of unsuccessful performance in major penalty shootouts during World Cups, it was not surprising to see the nervous anticipation of players and fans in their bodily and facial expressions after the match had ended and they knew that the game would be decided by penalty kicks. This feeling of an entire English nation is nicely captured in the following quote:

However, after 120 minutes of intense soccer raised all our blood pressure to dangerous levels, a familiar sinking feeling crept up on England fans like a delegation of Dementors.

(www.bbc.com/sport/football/44705768; retrieved on the 29.08.18)

The shootout started well for England as both Harry Kane and Marcus Rashford scored with perfectly executed penalties. However, everything seemed to go "back to normal" when the Colombian goalkeeper David Ospina made the first save in the shootout, stopping Jordan Henderson's kick, leading to buoyant expressions of joy among Colombian players. These feelings were quickly changed, however, after Colombia's fourth penalty hit the crossbar and England scored. The emotions of the English players and fans then unloaded when England's goalkeeper, Jordan Pickford, saved Carlos Bacca's penalty in spectacular fashion and England's Eric Dier scored the winning penalty.

While a penalty shootout during a World Cup in soccer serves to illustrate the experience and expression of emotions that most people can relate to, science has struggled in dealing with the study of such emotions. Prominent emotion researcher Alan Fridlund stated, "The

only thing certain in the emotion field is that no one agrees on how to define emotion” (Beck, 2015, p. 1). Further, the scientific study of emotions is complicated by the fact that some sport performance emotions are difficult to induce under laboratory conditions. The complication of inducing emotions is exemplified by the fact that identical methods have been found to be both successful (Wilson, Wood, & Vine, 2009) and unsuccessful (Noel & van der Kamp, 2012) in eliciting an emotional response.

Further to such experimental complications are the challenges in measuring emotions; in sport, this has led to the development of an array of different questionnaires (e.g., Hanin, 2000; Jokela & Hanin, 1999; Martens, Vealey, Burton, Bump, & Smith, 1990; Smith, Smoll, Cumming, & Grossbard, 2006), observational (Jordet, 2009a, 2009b), and physiological (Laborde, Mosley, & Thayer, 2017; van Paridon, Timmis, Nevison, & Bristow, 2017) measures. Despite such development, a fair appraisal is that there is currently no consensus on how best to study and measure emotions. The controversy in the research literature on emotions led Paul Ekman—another pioneering scientist on emotions—to publish a recent article with the title “What scientists who study emotion agree about” (Ekman, 2016), in which he interviewed the leading experts on emotion research. Although, this paper revealed some consensus in psychology on emotional theory (e.g., on the emotions of anger, fear, sadness, and disgust), evidence-based guidelines for sports practitioners are still hard to derive from research. This is further complicated by the observation from Richard Lazarus (2000) on research in sport:

In the past, two almost separate research literatures have grown up, one centered on stress and coping, the other on emotion. [. . .] This is illogical and counterproductive. Stress is important in its own right, but emotion encompasses all of the important phenomena of stress. I believe the emotions provide a far richer understanding of the adaptational struggles of human and infrahuman animals.

(p. 231)

Unfortunately, most research findings in sports have narrowly focused on the emotions of anxiety or stress and have led to potential theoretical misunderstandings on the role of emotions in influencing peoples’ behaviour (Lazarus, 2000). Thus, the present chapter seeks to provide an up-to-date synthesis of emotional theorising and use this as background to integrate a selection of research findings in the context of soccer penalties. Subsequently, practical guidelines for goalkeepers, players, and coaches are extracted to inform evidence-based practice when preparing and performing soccer penalties.

Emotion Theory

It has recently been suggested that an evolutionary approach to emotions might help to address the lack of consensus in this field of study in the psychological literature (Al-Shawaf, Conroy-Beam, Asao, & Buss, 2016)—in particular in applied settings—as this perspective allows one to think about emotions from a broader perspective (Furley, 2018). Charles Darwin (1871, 1872) inspired this big-picture approach to emotions that has proven

to be highly fruitful to integrate piecemeal research findings into a bigger picture of life on earth. Darwin's general perspective regarded emotions as bodily adaptations (e.g., specialised brain networks) that transform sensory information into adaptive behaviour. This approach has been successfully applied to increase understanding of emotions in everyday life (Ekman, 2007, 2016; Al Shawaf et al., 2016). Evolutionary-inspired theories regard emotions to be specialised neuronal networks that evolved to prepare the organism for different categories of recurring situations/stimulus patterns in the environment and the body. More specifically, Ekman (2007) described emotions as a complex pattern of physiological and psychological changes that are adapted to meaningful situations. These changes include physiological arousal, feelings, cognitive processes, expressions, behavioural tendencies, and overt behaviour that prepare humans and other animals to respond adaptively to recurring problems and opportunities in their environment (e.g., threat or disgust).

Following Ekman (2007), an emotion is assumed to be a very brief episode and is typically experienced as happening to us, instead of chosen by us. Longer-lasting emotional experiences are not conceptualised as emotions but as moods. An important component of emotions are cognitive appraisal processes (e.g., Lazarus, 2000; see Moors, Ellsworth, Scherer, & Frijda, 2013, for a recent review), in which people automatically scan the environment for things that are of importance to them, even though they are not typically aware of this appraisal process. People only become aware of an emotion when this automatic appraisal process is complete. After people become aware that they are in the grip of an emotional experience, they can, if desired, reappraise the situation and potentially change the nature and intensity of the emotional experience. According to Ekman (1992), there are certain universal emotional themes (basic emotions; e.g., fear, anger, disgust, joy, sadness) that reflect our evolutionary history, in addition to many culturally learned variations that reflect our individual experiences. However, other emotion researchers have argued against distinct categories of emotions and advocate a dimensional approach that typically involves the dimensions of pleasant–unpleasant and low–high intensity (Gendron, Crivelli, & Feldman Barrett, 2018; Russell, Weiss, & Mendelsohn, 1989; see Cowen & Keltner, 2017, for a recent integration of these competing theories).

Emotions are accompanied by changes in physiological processes—mainly via the autonomic nervous system (e.g., Levenson, 2014, for a recent review)—and non-verbal signals that inform others in the social group of how an individual is feeling (Darwin, 1872; Ekman, 1992) and/or likely to behave in the immediate future (Fridlund, 1994; Crivelli & Fridlund, 2018). Emotions in general are assumed to serve two main functions: (i) to prepare the organism to respond adaptively to recurring stimuli and (ii) to communicate important social information (Darwin, 1872; see Shariff & Tracy, 2011, for a review). In the next section, we focus on research findings that show how individual physiological changes associated with emotions have the potential to affect behaviour and performance via arousal and attentional processes in the penalty situation. Further, the assumed social or expressive function of emotions is of relevance in the penalty situation given the interactive nature of penalty kicks or shootouts.

Selected Research on Emotions in Penalties

Individual Effects of Emotions in the Penalty Situation

Given the overwhelming amount of information that humans have to integrate to behave adaptively, it has been proposed that cognitive processes have evolved to guide goal-directed behaviour to orient and attend to subsets of information. In this respect, research on penalties in soccer has adopted the attentional control theory (ACT, Eysenck, Derakshan, Santos, & Calvo, 2007) as a theoretical background in explaining performance in high-pressure situations (e.g., Wilson et al., 2009; Wood & Wilson, 2010). The main tenet of ACT is that human behaviour is controlled by two attentional systems: a top-down system that is guided by activated contents in working memory (goals, expectations, knowledge) and a bottom-up system that is guided by salient stimuli in the environment. An assumption of ACT is that performance pressure can lead to the emotion of anxiety and this causes an imbalance between these two systems in favour of the bottom-up system, facilitating the detection and adaptation of behaviour towards threatening stimuli in the environment (Eysenck et al., 2007). That is, with increasing anxiety, attention to threatening stimuli increases in order to allow rapid behaviours to escape any potential negative consequences for one's wellbeing. Wilson et al. (2009) found evidence for this in the penalty context by demonstrating that anxious participants were more likely to focus on the goalkeeper in a penalty kick than less anxious players. The goalkeeper was deemed to be a "threatening" stimulus given that this opponent ultimately stood between success and failure in the penalty kick, a suggestion that is supported by the observation that the mere presence of a goalkeeper leads to a decrease in penalty kick accuracy (Navarro, van der Kamp, Ranvaud, & Savelsbergh, 2013). Of further relevance, the increase in attention to the goalkeeper has been shown to lead to performance decrements in both laboratory (Wilson et al., 2009) and competitive penalty kick situations (Furley, Noel, & Memmert, 2017). Subsequently, it has been demonstrated that if a goalkeeper attempts to distract a penalty taker by waving their arms, for instance, this has the potential to further orient the penalty taker's attention towards them and thereby impair performance (Wood & Wilson, 2010).

A related series of findings have shown that pressure-induced anxiety can lead to paradoxical or ironic effects (Wegner, 1994) in penalty situations (Bakker, Oudejans, Binsch, & van der Kamp, 2006). Bakker and colleagues (2006) demonstrated that the instruction "not to shoot near the goalkeeper" during a penalty kick had the ironic effect that penalty takers shot closer to the goalkeeper. The authors argued that anxiety can lead to the worrying thought of not wanting to place the ball close to the goalkeeper, which has the ironic effect that attention is drawn towards the goalkeeper, which in turn leads to shots being placed closer to the goalkeeper (cf. Wilson et al., 2009). Moreover, performance decrements in pressurised performance contexts have been attributed to paralysis by analysis (e.g., Baumeister, 1984; Gray, 2004). Baumeister (1984) suggested that pressure-induced anxiety raises self-consciousness and worry about performing correctly. Studies have shown that self-conscious thoughts induce an attentional shift to monitoring the step-by-step execution

of movement in an attempt to stabilise performance (Gray, 2004). Paradoxically, instead of stabilising performance by directing attention to skill execution, studies (e.g., Gray, 2004) have demonstrated that the explicit monitoring of well-learned skills disrupts skill execution, because step-by-step movement control is too slow to deal with the real-time control of otherwise well-learned, proceduralised skills (e.g., when a professional player executes a penalty kick).

As considered earlier in the chapter, laboratory-based manipulations that aim to affect emotions are not without their complications (e.g., Noel & van der Kamp, 2012). Thus, an alternative and highly fruitful line of inquiry has been to develop video analysis methods that enable researchers to systematically observe players while they participate in major penalty shootouts, under different pressure conditions. Collectively, results highlight a clear tendency that players score fewer goals under high-pressure conditions (e.g., Jordet, 2009a, 2009b; Jordet & Hartman, 2008; Jordet, Hartman, & Jelle Vuijk, 2012). Moreover, players respond with more avoidance-oriented behaviours (primarily speeding up their preparation times and, in some instances, diverting their gaze away from the goal) when they are under extra high-pressure conditions such as performing shots where a miss instantly would produce a loss (Jordet & Hartman, 2008); having high individual status and thus more pressure to deliver (Jordet, 2009a); playing for countries with high team status (Jordet, 2009b); or playing for countries with a preceding history of penalty shootout losses (Jordet et al., 2012). Generally, there is also a tendency that quicker, self-imposed preparation times come with lower performance; but, with externally imposed waiting times, the tendency is the opposite, longer waiting times are associated with lower performance (Jordet, Hartman, & Sigmundstad, 2009). However, with all these results, it is important to keep in mind that they at most indicate a probability that something might happen, as no causality has been established. This means, for example, that one should be careful to recommend players to just take longer preparation times, without also helping them buffer against or cope with some of those debilitating emotional processes through which pressure exerts a negative effect on performance. We will elaborate on this implication for applied practice in the case-study section.

Together, the literature shows how performance pressure, which can lead to the emotion of fear or anxiety in the penalty context, can negatively impact on the control processes that underpin skilled behaviour. It is theorised that the emotions of fear or anxiety originally served to prepare an adaptive response that helped early humans to avoid potential harm can actually have detrimental effects in the soccer penalty situation. Before giving practical guidelines on how penalty takers can avoid these negative effects of anxiety, we further review studies that have focused on social effects of certain emotions on penalty interactions.

Social Effects of Emotions in the Penalty Situation

As considered in the observational studies of Jordet and colleagues (e.g., 2009a; Jordet et al., 2012), waiting for stressful events has been shown to potentially lead to feelings of

discomfort and dread, which can lead to behaviour intended to get out of the situation as quickly as possible. Jordet and Hartman (2008) found evidence that this also seems to be observable in penalty shootouts. Penalty takers reduced the time they took preparing the penalty kick when the pressure was extraordinarily high. Moreover, penalty takers displayed hastening behaviour for negative valence shots, where a miss would lead to the team losing compared to positive valence shots, where a goal would lead to the team winning. In addition, negative valence shots resulted in a greater likelihood that penalty takers would turn their back towards the goalkeeper after placing the ball on the penalty spot before subsequently walking back to the spot prior to commencing their run-up. Jordet and Hartmann reported that such avoidance behaviour was correlated with negative penalty-taking performance. Furley and colleagues (Furley, Stendtko, Dicks, & Memmert, 2012) examined the communicative function of such hastening and hiding behaviour in penalty kicks. The study found that penalty takers showing hastening and hiding behaviours were perceived more negatively by both soccer goalkeepers and outfield players. Observers considered the penalty takers to possess less positive attributes, to have less accuracy in their penalties, and to be less likely to perform well in penalty situations. A further behavioural experiment provided initial evidence that goalkeepers who were confronted with hastening and hiding behaviours of the penalty taker during this preparation initiated their first movement attempting to save the penalty slightly later. This later movement may have been caused by the fact that the goalkeepers formed a negative impression of the penalty taker and anticipated a not very accurate kick. By waiting a little longer, goalkeepers could increase their chances of saving an inaccurate kick as the spatiotemporal demands would be less challenging, while, in contrast, a goalkeeper would have to move earlier if the kick was anticipated as likely to be highly accurate (Navia, Dicks, van der Kamp, & Ruiz, 2017).

These findings exemplify how the actions of a goalkeeper are based on the non-verbal information available from the penalty taker's behaviour. Indeed, an extensive body of research now exists that has examined which non-verbal information (cues) from a penalty taker is likely to be most useful to a goalkeeper. This literature indicates that penalty takers' use of deception ensures that early cues (e.g., approach angle) are incongruent with kick direction (Lopes, Jacobs, Travieso, & Araújo, 2014). However, if goalkeepers attend to later movement information such as the orientation of the non-kicking foot, this increases the likelihood of goalkeeper success (Dicks, Button, & Davids, 2010). Promising evidence indicates that training can be designed so that goalkeepers learn to attend to these later, more reliable cues (Dicks, Pocock, Thelwell, & van der Kamp, 2017). The application of such evidence has the potential to benefit goalkeepers who, when compared to penalty takers, are often said to have no pressure in shootouts because the likelihood of success is stacked heavily in the favour of the penalty taker. Despite such suggestion, Bar-Eli, Azar, Ritov, Keidar-Levin, and Schein (2007) have argued that due to the presence of pressure and social evaluation, goalkeepers do not adopt an optimal behaviour when facing penalties. They also argued that the optimal strategy for goalkeepers is to stay in the centre of the goal. Goalkeepers, however, almost always dive, a behaviour that was interpreted as evidence that a goal conceded following inaction (staying in the centre) elicits more negative

emotions and evaluation from others than following action (diving).

These findings exemplify how all players involved in penalty shootouts are likely to encounter some emotional affects that are likely to impact (negatively) on performance. Importantly, as considered in the social information displayed by penalty takers to goalkeepers, certain emotional expressions have the potential to influence social interactions in the penalty kick situation. That is, when soccer players feel a certain emotion, this tends to be expressed and observers recognise this and are subsequently influenced by such emotional expression (Furley, Dicks, & Memmert, 2012; Furley & Schweizer, 2018). Of importance to this line of argumentation, several theorists have proposed that emotional expressions can be both deliberately and unintentionally used to influence others (van Kleef, Van Doorn, Heerdink, & Koning, 2011, p. 154): “Emotion is not just a feeling. Emotion is for influence.” Increasing evidence suggests that emotions do not only affect those who experience and express them but also those who perceive them (Furley & Schweizer, 2014; Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008; Van Kleef, 2009). Moll, Jordet, and Pepping (2010) demonstrated that 80% of soccer players who celebrated a successful penalty by showing the positive emotion of pride (in comparison to those who did not show pride after a successful penalty) during penalty shootouts in the European and World Championships between 1972 and 2008 ended up winning the shootout. Similarly, a trend was evident indicating that players who showed non-verbal signs that are typical of the negative emotion of shame (i.e., gazing down) were less likely to win the shootout.

To explain interpersonal effects of emotions, the *emotions as social information model* (EASI model; van Kleef, 2009) was proposed and transferred to the penalty kick situation (Furley, Moll, & Memmert, 2015). The EASI model suggests two specific processes via which emotional expressions influence observers: inferential processes and/or affective processes. Inferential processes describe how an observer of emotional expressions is able to infer certain information about the internal states (e.g., feelings and attitudes) of other people. Observers use this information to better understand the situation, and it helps to inform an adaptive response (e.g., to initiate a later movement response as a goalkeeper when perceiving anxious non-verbal behaviour). In addition, observed emotional expressions can elicit affective reactions within the observer. One type of affective reaction occurs via the process of emotional contagion whereby individuals catch the expresser’s emotions through their facial expressions, bodily movements and postures, or vocalisations (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993). Importantly, the nature of the social interaction (i.e., whether it is cooperative or competitive) will influence if an observer of an emotional expression will be “infected” with the same emotion via emotional contagion or will have different emotional, cognitive, and behavioural reactions via inferential processes.

After having established that emotions can have performance-relevant effects on penalty shootouts and emotional expressions can influence opponents and teammates, the next section of the chapter provides practical guidelines to soccer coaches and players when preparing for penalty shootouts. While much has been written on emotion regulation (Gross, 1998, 2014), also with the specialised aim of stabilising performance in sports (e.g., Friesen et al., 2013; Lane, Beedie, Jones, Uphill, & Devonport, 2012), the next section does not intend to give an exhaustive review of tools and techniques used in this field but instead

to give broad behavioural recommendations that follow from the reviewed research. In this endeavour, we choose a case-study scenario to exemplify a strategic approach to the preparation of penalty shootouts. According to an influential process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 1998, 2014), emotions can be regulated at five points in the emotion generative process: (a) selection of the situation, (b) modification of the situation, (c) deployment of attention, (d) change of cognitions, and (e) modulation of behaviour. The chosen case study focuses on the behavioural aspect of emotion regulation and exemplifies behaviours that actors (players, staff, coaches) can employ across the five points of the emotion regulation model to help stabilise performance in penalty shootouts.

Practical Applications—Case Study

The following case descriptions are inspired by and built upon several applications and experiences of communicating with teams as they prepare for single games or entire tournaments that may lead to a penalty shootout.

Background and Context

Preparing for penalties presents a challenging circumstance for soccer coaches and teams, for a few reasons. Prior to a tournament, teams will never be able to establish with certainty that they will end up with a shootout. First, this presupposes the team will advance to the knockout stage where kicks from the penalty spot are a way to decide tied games and, second, that a knockout stage game will be tied after full-time and extra-time. Players and coaches can sometimes resist the mere idea of preparing penalties, as this necessarily implies that the team would not be able to win the game after full-time, which can be deemed by some as an overly pessimistic attitude.

Presenting Issue(s)

How can a team increase their chances of winning a penalty shootout? Further to this over-arching aim, coaches typically ask questions such as follows: (a) Which players should be picked to take a kick? (b) What type of kick is the best penalty? (c) Should penalties be practised? The studies considered in this chapter indicate that pressure can lead to anxiety and, in turn, can have a momentous impact on the outcome of a penalty shootout (e.g., Jordet & Hartman, 2008; Jordet, Hartman, Visscher, & Lemmink, 2007; Jordet & Elferink-Gemser, 2012). Thus, a penalty shootout, perhaps more than any other aspect of soccer, can be considered a psychological game. This necessitates a psychological approach to preparation, where a fundamental aim is to identify, get acceptance for, and prepare a strategy that helps the coach, the supporting staff, the team, and each individual player to effectively deal with pressure and the emotions accompanying it. Thus, the questions typically asked by coaches are better reframed

accordingly: (a) What should coaches and support staff do prior to and during a penalty shootout to help players better deal with the pressure/emotions of the shootout (which also includes addressing *how* should you pick players to take a shot)? (b) What should players *focus on* during a shootout? (c) *How* should penalties be *prepared and trained*? Interventions could be structured around these questions.

Intervention

Ideally, an intervention should be comprehensive, and this includes promoting a full and adaptive mindset and culture around pressure, emotions, penalties, and performance, as well as identifying concrete solutions to optimise management, communication, and individual coping/focus around these shots. Because of the wide-ranging nature of such an approach, it needs to start early and well ahead of the actual tournament or game. A recent real-world example of such comprehensive preparation is the England national team leading up to and during the 2018 World Cup. England had not won a major penalty shootout since 1996 (across five attempts), and English players exhibit more avoidance-oriented coping strategies in shootouts than any other players representing leading European soccer nations (Jordet, 2009b). In 2018, the England team was reported to prepare very differently for a penalty shootout (see media accounts, e.g., Lyttleton, 2018; Davis, 2018). England started preparing a long time before the actual tournament; they took a psychologically mature stance towards what constitutes success at penalties (it's not about luck but skill under pressure); there was an overarching aim ("Owning the shootout"); multiple meetings on this topic were conducted between players and staff; players trained frequently and repeatedly; they adopted a penalty shooting routine where they were encouraged to take more time than English players have done in the past; and the newly appointed psychologist had sessions and did psychometric testing with the players (Lyttleton, 2018; Davis, 2018) to identify players who would likely perform well under pressure. Fortunately for England, they won their first major tournament, senior penalty shootout in 22 years against Colombia.

Prior to a penalty shootout, you want to build competence and confidence in the team, the staff and each individual player's ability to perform under this type of pressure and keep debilitating emotions in check. In our experience, knowledge about what actually takes place in penalty shootouts can be very powerful, and one simple way to start to build competence and confidence is to educate everyone in and around the team about known success factors in these events. These factors (such as the ones referred to earlier in this chapter) can be communicated with some very simple key data, which are best presented with videos from actual penalty shootouts. Now, let us address some of the practical questions that come up when assisting teams with penalty shootouts:

How should the coaches identify and select which players to take a shot, and in what order? Often, coaches ask the players, who wants to take a shot? (For

descriptions of ways this can be played out, see Jordet & Elferink-Gemser, 2012.) A problem with this approach is that you, as a coach, do not know the exact reasons why a player will volunteer to take a shot. It could be because that player feels confident or that they should take responsibility. When a player puts up their hand in the spur of the moment, this in itself may add even more pressure on that player's shoulders—as this player not only just accepted responsibility but also asked to have the responsibility. A better approach is for the coach to make the decision and tell which players he or she wants to take a shot. But leading up to this decision, as much information as possible should be gathered—about each player's penalty kick skills, players' abilities under pressure, and also whether a player genuinely wants to take a shot or not.

Another popular question is that of whether penalty kicks should be trained or not. Logically, training penalty kicks is likely to make a player better at taking penalty kicks. It is also likely to increase players' confidence in these situations. Importantly, even though it will be hard or even impossible to practice these kicks under exactly the same emotional conditions as in a game, players should practice as realistically as possible. Specifically, there is a big difference between penalty training and penalty shootout training. Penalty shootout training means taking only one kick in a training session; performing the kick under conditions of intense fatigue, after a long and hard game-based training session; walking from the centre-circle to the penalty spot; being alone with the goalkeeper, not with all your teammates standing around the penalty area; and performing under competitive conditions, not while teammates are laughing and joking around you. Some of these conditions may indirectly add some pressure, but pressure can also be induced by having spectators and by creating different types of internal competitions.

Ultimately, each player needs to acquire and rehearse their own individual way to deal with these events. What do they focus on at different points in time? From the moment the referee has blown the whistle after extra time to the moment their foot contacts the ball on the penalty spot (for a detailed review, see Jordet & Elferink-Gemser, 2012). A complete psychological approach to helping each player prepare for penalties should take players through the event, step by step, to make sure each player knows what to focus on, what to do, and how to deal with complications, distractions, or anxieties—should any of these occur. A detailed account of this is beyond the scope of this chapter, but one aspect that briefly can be addressed is, what do you do in that moment that the referee signals (with a whistle and sometimes a hand movement) that you can start moving towards the ball and shoot. Back to the 2018 England–Colombia penalty shootout, much was said in English media about English players historically having been among the fastest penalty takers in the world and that Gareth Southgate's team this time was educated about this and then encouraged to take more time (e.g., Lyttleton, 2018; Davis, 2018). The English players indeed took longer time than they have before. However, taking time is not a guarantee that you will score more goals. We have worked with players who have felt that the recommendation to take time can actually add pressure, rather than taking it away, because it does not feel natural to

wait to approach the ball when all you want to do is to get the situation over and done with as soon as possible. A better translation of this research finding into practice (the finding that taking short time is associated with fewer goals; Jordet et al., 2009) is to help players find a strategy that will make them feel more in control of the situation right before and during the kick, so they're not just behaving in what sometimes seems to be a panic-driven frenzy. One way to establish this type of control can be to be in charge of the time and to use this time to take 1–2 deep breaths. We see many top players take these types of deep breaths right after the referee has given his signal, with some noteworthy examples being Cristiano Ronaldo, Neymar, and Harry Kane. However, it is imperative that the breath is diaphragmatic, thus deep and full—not just a short breath located high up in the chest. Ideally, you also want players to systematically practice this type of breathing far in advance (Vickery, 2007). An important part of this advice for a penalty shootout is that it also gives the players something to focus on at a stressful moment, which in itself will anchor a player's focus onto something different than their tension and anxiety.

How about the goalkeeper? The goalkeeper is obviously a foundational participant in all parts of the shootout, yet psychologically players in these roles are perhaps less obvious intervention targets than the penalty takers because the pressure to deliver is assumed to be more on the penalty taker than the goalkeeper. That said, a goalkeeper's task should stretch beyond that of being a shot stopper. They can effectively do a lot to distract and make the pressure even more palpable for the opponent penalty takers (Wood & Wilson, 2010), and they can effectively do a lot to support their teammates. Regarding the former, we considered above how the time interval where the shooter is waiting for the referee to get ready is negatively correlated with performance (from Jordet et al., 2009). This time interval can be heavily influenced by the goalkeeper's actions—if the goalkeeper takes his or her time to get ready, the referee will also take more time to blow the whistle and the player will therefore have to wait longer. About supporting your teammates, the England team against Colombia showed an interesting way to do this, where their goalkeeper Jordan Pickford held the ball after every single shot he faced from the Colombian players and then personally handed it over to his teammate as they made the walk from the half-way line to the penalty spot. In this handover process, Pickford would have been able to say some supportive words as well, making one of the final steps of the preparation for the English penalty takers a potentially more familiar and positive one than it typically is.

Finally, during the shootout, it is not just about what you do as a shooter or goalkeeper when you are involved with the ball, it is also about what you do as a team and staff to support the others. We considered earlier how teams in penalty shootouts sometimes either do not communicate or communicate in a potentially non-helpful manner (Jordet & Elferink-Gemser, 2012). In the phase right after extra-time, coaches need to already have a plan in place and then communicate this plan with clarity, focus, and confidence. For example, England in the 2018 World Cup were very mindful in this phase about who would speak to whom, to preserve their focus for the messages that needed to be heard and to minimise the amount of extraneous noise affecting the

players. Interestingly, when observing this particular penalty shootout, at one specific moment in time, one can see the Colombian goalkeeper being spoken to by five members of staff or teammates at the same time. Although positively intended, there is no way that the goalkeeper can effectively process all this information within such a limited time, and it is likely to distract him, rather than help. On the England team, the atmosphere around the goalkeeper was much more composed and seemingly more focused as he was approached by one staff member at a time. Furthermore, when in the centre-circle, one of our studies shows that this is the time where the pressure may be most intensely felt, as anxiety statements from this phase are plentiful (Jordet & Elferink-Gemser, 2012). We have experience with having very specific plans for how players can support each other at this stage. When a teammate scores, teammates' should take time to celebrate the shot (an indirect implication of the findings by Moll et al., 2010). When a teammate misses, the team can make sure they actively get that teammate back into the group again as soon as possible. Our experience with presenting these messages is that players and teams respond positively to them.

Outcome Analysis

Even though penalty shootouts obviously are crucial for the outcome of the game, one always needs to evaluate performance, not just the outcome of these events. With penalties, a player who simply closes his eyes and fires in the direction of the goal may still score, even if the ball placement was horrible, if indeed the goalkeeper happened to guess the other corner, as is possible due to inherent action biases likely to inform goalkeeper actions (Bar-Eli et al., 2007). Similarly, a player may execute a great penalty kick, with the ball headed for the bottom corner of the goal, but the goalkeeper's performance may be even better and the kick is saved. A thorough analysis of performance should include not only the outcome (goal/miss) of a shot but an analysis of the precise speed and placement of the ball, goalkeeper movement times (i.e., did he or she anticipate too early or late; Dicks, Davids, & Button, 2010), as well as the quality with which a player manoeuvres different types of goalkeeper-distracting behaviours.

Case-Study Reflections

In conclusion, teams should prepare a penalty shootout as a psychological game, and this requires comprehensive and detailed planning that focuses on not just the tactical and technical aspects of a penalty shot but different types of strategic decisions, communication, support strategies, and pre-shot routines. The next generation of penalty shootout preparation will almost certainly address all these issues, and perhaps somewhat ironically, the nation that has had more trauma than any others over the last 30 years in penalty shootouts, England, has led the way with their highly deliberate and holistic approach to their 2018 World Cup, culminating with their

penalty shootout win against Colombia.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter used the 2018 England–Colombia penalty shootout as an opening example to introduce contemporary theorising on the impact that emotions can have on behaviour and performance. Subsequently, a broad range of research findings from diverse methodological backgrounds on the effects of emotions in the soccer penalty situation (Jordet, 2009a) were described to set up practical recommendations for preparing penalty shootouts situated within the behavioural aspect of emotion regulation models (Gross, 1998, 2014). While there is still much to be learned about emotions in general (e.g., Beck, 2015; Ekman, 2016), and especially concerning their impact and regulation in high-pressure situations as soccer penalty shootouts, the present chapter was aimed at providing a timely review of relevant literature to inform evidence-based practice when preparing for penalties and inspiring new research in advancing emotional theory in performance situations.

Key Messages and Further Reading

- Emotions have an impact on soccer penalty kicks.
- Penalty shootouts are not a lottery, and training interventions can help to keep emotions in check.
- Emotion regulation strategies can target specific behaviours to help all actors (penalty takers, coaches, goalkeepers, and staff) in a penalty shootout scenario to be in control of the situation and perform well under pressure.

Recommended Reading on Emotion Theory

- Al-Shawaf, L., Conroy-Beam, D., Asao, K., & Buss, D. M. (2016). Human emotions: An evolutionary psychological perspective. *Emotion Review*, 8, 173–186. doi:10.1177/175407391456551
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Recommended Reading on Emotion Regulation (in Penalties)

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