MAJOR MOMENT: ALIGNMENT

OVERVIEW

November, also known as “The Alignment” phase of the season, is when athletes may experience a disconnect between their expectations and the reality of the season - this is often compounded by mental and physical fatigue. This is a good time for coaches to bring awareness to fatigue, revisit and adjust goals, and offer support for stressors outside of sport. By addressing these areas, coaches can help maintain athletes’ performance and well-being during this critical part of the season.

KEY POINTS

1. **Mental vs. Physical Fatigue**
   - Athletes may feel physically capable, but still struggle with mental fatigue, which can impact their performance
   - Mental fatigue can lead to sleep issues, mental health concerns, pain, difficulty in decision-making and maintaining attention.
2. **External Factors**
   - Consider external stressors (e.g. jobs and/or other responsibilities, etc.) that may impact athletes’ physical and mental states. Acknowledging that there are stressors outside of the sport is key
   - Provide support to manage these factors effectively
3. **Reflection on Goals**
   - Revisit individual and team goals to assess progress.
   - Discuss how the season has aligned with expectations and identify any necessary adjustments

PRACTICAL TOOLS TO HELP SUPPORT THIS TIME OF YEAR

MID SEASON GOAL CHECK IN

- Schedule one-on-one or team meetings to review goals and expectations
- Adjust goals as needed to ensure they remain realistic and motivating

BREAKS AND MENTAL RECOVERY

- Plan lighter training sessions or mental health days as needed to prevent burnout
- Incorporate mindfulness or relaxation techniques into practice routines

FATIGUE AWARENESS

- Hold discussions with athletes about recognizing and addressing mental and physical fatigue. Signs can be different in each person, so open conversation can help athletes recognize and validate what they are feeling
- Encourage athletes to share their experiences and coping strategies with each other

SUPPORT EXTERNAL STRESSORS

- Encourage strategies for managing stress outside of sport, especially as the holiday season approaches.
- Create an open environment where athletes feel comfortable discussing their challenges

Reach out to your Client Success Manager if you would like additional support

QUICK TAKEAWAYS

As fatigue increases during this time of year, performance of athletes may decrease

Prolonged fatigue may affect mental health

Fatigue affects athletes differently based on factors like gender, sport and personal situations