

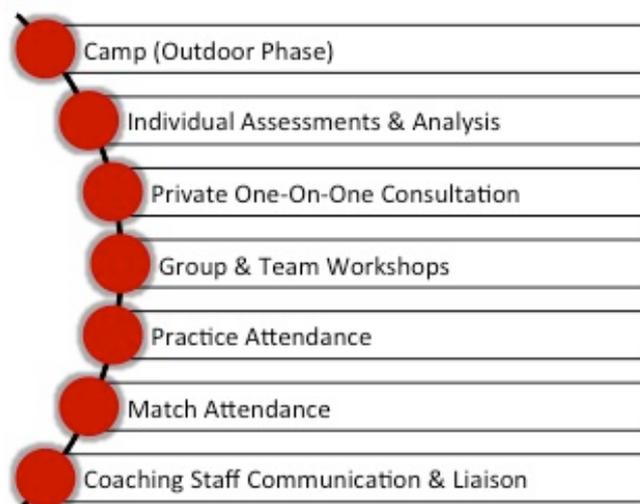
The WPRA prides itself on providing a professional and holistically planned programme for young athletic development. Since its conception in 2014 the WPRA have occupied a well established strategic partnership with Wellbeing and Sport and Performance Psychology professionals from **Headstrong Consulting (Pty) Ltd.** Both WPRA and Headstrong recognise the importance and necessity of providing structures, education, and professional guidance beyond just the physical and technical development that is needed for aspiring young rugby players. Headstrong and its team of Sport, Performance, and Counselling Psychologists therefore provide the WPRA athletes with a specialised wellbeing and sport psychology conditioning programme that compliments and integrates into the mainstream programme developed by the WPRA.

The Headstrong team aim to assist these young athletes in developing a better understanding in the application of sport psychology, assist with specialised mental skills training aimed at improving levels of performance, and to further help provide the platform for these athletes to further develop their level of mental toughness potential. The Headstrong team achieves this by providing their support and presenting their specialised programme through a variety of different methods.

Within the first 2 weeks of each years WPRA programme the Headstrong team attends the **outdoor phase** whereby they present a series of “kick-starter workshops” aimed at building relationships, laying down the fundamental foundations to sport psychology development, and to assist with preparing the athletes for the rigorous rugby programme that will follow.

Following on from the outdoor phase the Headstrong team unfolds a **10-month long Wellbeing, Sport and Performance Psychology** programme presented through a variety of different means. Each week the players attend an indoor **Psycho-Education Workshop** where the Headstrong team tackles various topics of athletic development. In addition to these workshops, the athletes undergo a **Sport Psychology Assessment** process whereby each athlete is individually assessed and is presented with a comprehensive **Assessment Report** highlighting various mental strengths, weaknesses as well as professional recommendation and guidance. In addition to this Headstrong provides specific **One-On-One Session** time slots for the WPRA athletes to work with the psychology professionals, allowing for a more individualised and private focus of development.

Complimentary to the above, the Headstrong team attends selected **Practices and Games** for observation in order to gather important information about player performance and the management thereof. Finally, the Headstrong team looks briefly into the area of **Career Development** whereby the professionals assist the athletes in identifying and unpacking certain components of their intended future and assists them in laying down the necessary foundations and preparation for taking positive steps in the right direction for a bright future.



Headstrong Wellbeing, Sport and Performance Psychology Programme Outline

Through the methods stipulated above and using a varied means of delivery the Headstrong teams covers the following considerations:

- Personal Expectations of our time with the WPRA (Promises to ourselves)
- Understanding the MIND
- Breaking down the functions of the brain
- The mind and Learning, the art of Flow (Zone), the Impact of Pressure
- Arousal regulation and performance
- Barriers to high performance (Verbal Overshadowing)
- Overcoming barriers to high performance
- Defining / understanding a champion athlete
- Making (how) of a champion athlete
- Understanding our very own WHY factor (WHY are we here?)
- Understanding the WP DISA tradition / representation
- What does the DISA mean to WP and its representatives?
- How can we "live" what the DISA represents?
- Making the most of our opportunities with the WPRA
- Individual Performance Profiling
- Selecting our own "HERO" players
- Identifying our own influences and motivations
- Analysing IDEAL player characteristics and performance traits
- Self-Analysis / Awareness (Critical Reflection)
- How to stay focused and concentrate
- How to overcome mistakes / failures (Fear of failure)
- Finding a comfortable way to prepare
- Feeding the "positive wolf"
- Controlling (redirecting) aggression / temper
- Mental training with injuries
- Staying positive (attitude, talk, body language)
- Getting out of your comfort zone
- How to deal with missing family
- Learning to be in competition with yourself
- Understanding the values and principles of the WP Provincial Union
- Being a better representative of the Provincial Union
- Trusting people on the field
- Developing character
- Effective goal setting and learning to prioritise
- Areas of motivation
- Overcoming fatigue / criticism / negativity
- Daily reflection / mindfulness / self-awareness
- Managing expectations and pressure
- Encouragement and positive self-talk
- Leadership (not only as a captain)
- Developing humility
- Building confidence and self-belief

- Taking ownership of your actions
- How to deal with bad influences
- Dealing with a personal loss

Useful Contact Details

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