ATTITUDES OF YOUNG HOCKEY PLAYERS OF 6–7 YEARS TO COMPETITIONS

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Summary: The study was aimed at studying the impact of the first competitions on young athletes. The aim of the research was to study the subjective attitude of young hockey players of 6–7 years to participate in competitions. A total of 20 young hockey players took part in the study, where mostly projective methods were used. The study revealed the peculiarities of the emotional states of young athletes, which can be both positive and negative. It is established that the desire of young athletes to win creates a strong mental strain, causing frustration, which prevents children from fully using their skills during competitions. It is revealed that not all young athletes can correctly respond to failure, and also can not see the relationship between the training process and the competition. The data obtained can be put in the development of the strategy of the trainer's and parents' behavior in the preparation and participation of children aged 6–7 in competitions.

Keywords: Attitude, competition, hockey, young athletes

Introduction

In recent years, in a number of sports, such as hockey, football, figure skating, artistic gymnastics, there has been a significant decrease in the age at which sports began to take place (often from 4–5 years), which is associated with an early specialization in these sports. Participation in competitions of 6–7 year olds is becoming the norm, at the same time, the process of including pre-school children in competitions is not sufficiently studied.

Organization of classes often takes place under the guidance of trainers who have not received the appropriate psychological and pedagogical preparation for work with preschool children, are not ready to work with parents who have little idea about sports activities, but at the same time high ambitions and a desire to see as soon as possible successes of their children. Often, as the main criterion for assessing the success of young athletes after 2–3 years of playing sports, parents and coaches choose a victory in competitions or a high place in the standings. In this regard, it becomes evident the need to study more deeply the problem of forming a subjective attitude of young athletes to competitions. There are two aspects to studying this problem. The first is connected with the study of the condition of young athletes before, during and after the competition. According to a number of studies, the participation of young athletes in competitions is always a significant stress, which, without the correct psychological work of the trainer-teacher and

reasonable behavior of parents, can cause development of symptoms in children such as fear of defeat, fear of punishment, reduction of self-esteem and formation of self-doubt (Khvatskaya E., 2010, Weinbegr R., 2011, Sobkin V., 2006, Bomba T., 2000), and others. And as noted by Bomba Tudor, (2000) a stressful condition associated with competitive activity can manifest itself in children both before the start of the competition, during participation in them, and after their completion. The second aspect has applied significance and is connected with the psychological preparation of young athletes for the first competitions. It can be noted that both aspects remain not sufficiently developed, as indicated by the some authors (Rogaleva & Malkin, 2016, Shields D., 2005, Platonov., 2013, Sullivan O., 2013).

The aim of the research was to study the subjective attitude of young hockey players of 6–7 years to participate in competitions. Experimental base of the research of the school "Youth", hockey department of Yekaterinburg. The study involved 20 young hockey players of preschool age, an average age of 6.6 years, who have had an ice hockey experience of 3 to 4 years, as well as experience of participating in competitions for one to two years. According to our hypothesis, the knowledge of subjective perception by young athletes of competitions and their reaction to participating in competitions is a necessary condition in the organization of psychological and pedagogical work with young hockey players of 6–7 years. Analysis of the subjective experiences of

young hockey players arising in the course of and after the competition, the evaluation by children of the reaction of adults to their possible mistakes, the expectations of young athletes related to the forthcoming competitions, as well as the presence or absence of fears in children can contribute to the development of a correct strategy for the behavior of coaches and parents.

Methods

As the main methods of research, projective methods are chosen. To identify the experiences that arise during the competition, a technique was developed that includes 6 smiley pictures with positive and negative emotions (a cheerful smile drawing with a cup for the first place in the hands, a smiling smiley figure, an evil smiley pattern, a winking figure- smiley, frustrated smiley picture, crying smiley picture). To study the subjective attitude to the competition, we used the structured questionnaire method, the method of unfinished sentences, drawing tests ("I'm in training and I'm in competition)..

Results and Discussion

The results of the projective methodology of the emotional states of young hockey players associated with the competitions revealed that in most cases (45%) are positive emotions associated with the expectation of victory and a well-deserved award (cups, medals, etc.) or joy of 15%. At the same time, 30% of young sportsmen revealed states of anger, aggression or frustration, because hockey implies confrontation, the achievement of a result is always fraught with difficulties and struggle with the rival, which leads to the consolidation of negative experiences for young sportsmen. Conversations with the coach confirm the fact that young athletes often experience frustration, which manifests itself in the form of increased activity, excitement with equal rivals, or in the form of complete apathy when playing with a stronger opponent. The results of the questionnaire on the attitude of young athletes to the competition gave additional information about the reasons for the emotional conditions of young athletes arising during the competition (Table 1).

Table 1. Results of answers of young sportsmen of 6–7 years about the first competitions

Question	Answers
1/ The most complex and difficult part in participating in the competition? (2–3 answers)	I did not want to lose (75%), Not to fail the coach (50%), Not to fail the team (50%) Strong opponents 10% To play good 30% Not to let my parents down 15%
2/ Are the competitions different from training?	Yes, but not very different (67%), Yes, they are very different (33%) No, they do not differ 0%
3/ The most important thing in the competition, I think is... (2–3 answers are possible)	win (92%), to receive medals, certificates, prizes (67%), to earn something new, gain experience (67%)
4/ Who should always be present at the competitions?	Coach and players (100%) Parents (0%)
5/ The results at the competitions ...	made us happy, but there is much to strive for (67%) grieved us (33%)
6/ Would you like to participate in the competition in future?	Yes, I want to test my strength (100%)
7/ Choose one option	Competition with others is interesting (75%), Competition is just a holiday (7%), Competition with others is difficult (18%)

As can be seen from Table 1, for most young hockey players, there is a high desire to participate in competitions, while 33% of children note that the competitions are very different from training. This means that competitions cause young athletes strong emo-

tions and feelings, in contrast to training activities. At the same time, some of the young athletes perceive competition and training as different types of activities, while they do not associate the result in the competitions with training activities. Another obvi-

ous fact is the dominant attitude of young athletes for winning, win (92%), receiving medals and certificates (67%). It should be noted that this is a natural and unconscious attitude of children. At the same time, it is an attitude, as practice shows, that creates a strong mental tension in young hockey players, which leads to the fact that it destroys and disorganizes the activities of children on playground. At the same time, the difficulties of the competitions are not so much connected with rivals, with the game, as with the final result (we did not want to lose 75%).

Thus, the conclusion is natural that the actions of parents and coaches should be aimed at forming in young athletes the perception of competition from the standpoint of their technical and physical growth, increasing the desire to train.

With the help of the methodology of unfinished sentences, we have identified how the young athletes perceive the reaction of the coach and parents to their performances in competitions (table 2).

Table 2: The perception of young athletes on the reaction of coach and parents to their performances in competitions

Question	Answers of young hockey players
1/ If I'm wrong during the competition, then the coach ..	will make a remark, he will say: "I expected more from Zhenya" will scold me must teach us more will be upset
2/ If my parents find out that I lost in competitions, then they...	will be offended will scold me will be sorry will ask me: «Why?», will be upset will say that sometimes everyone can loose
3/ If I lose, then I ...	do not do anything They scold me I will train more will be sorry and upset will make my team fail will train better. will be more focused next time

The analysis of the results showed that young athletes associate their loss in most cases with the experience of negative emotions ("I will be sad" or "upset"), or with negative emotions from the coach and parents ("they scold me") that only 10–15% children have an adequate understanding of what they should do in case of a loss (for example, more and better to train, be focused and attentive).

Thus, our study proves the unavailability of coaches and parents to respond psychologically properly to the competitive activity of young hockey players, though it is adults who are responsible for the psychological support of young athletes, especially in the situation of loss, as well as the formation in young athletes of constructive attitudes to overcome the emerging difficulties in competitive activities.

Conclusion.

Proceeding from the conducted research, it is possible to draw the following conclusions:

1. Beginning with the first performances, young athletes develop attitude towards the competition, which is associated with both positive and negative experiences.
2. The leading motive for participating in competitions for most young athletes is to win, which creates a strong mental strain among young athletes, causes frustration and does not allow children to demonstrate their skills, so that most children do not associate the competition with the training process.
3. The role of the coach and parents is to provide psychological support to young athletes in situa-

tions of loss as well as in the development of adequate attitudes to overcome the situations of failure.

Further research involves the study of effective strategies for the behavior of the coach and parents in the preparation and participation of children aged 6–7 in competitions.

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