

ABSTRACT

Sport for Australians can mean many different things. For some it is a favourite recreational pursuit but for a small percentage of the Australian population sport represents a way of life or a career. It has become increasingly beneficial for the skills and talent of our athletes to be utilised as a natural resource (Woodman, 1985) and to be exported overseas, thus generating an international reputation via sport for Australia. To pursue the dream of 'eliteness', many individuals may often need to relocate to reach their goals. This often means moving away from their family and home and being housed in an environment unknown to them.

This research was concerned with investigating the environment that relocated athletes need to be housed in, while also identifying the issues that arise from the process of relocating an individual from their original home environment to 'new' surroundings. Two phases were employed in the research. The first phase was to identify the elements perceived necessary when establishing a suitable relocation environment for young male athletes. The second phase explored the participants' views on the identified elements and issues.

It was not the focus of this research to study the effect of the environment on athletic ability but to determine a suitable relocation environment for young male athletes. By achieving this, a small step may be made towards enhancing the influence of environment on the development of athletic talent.

ALTERNATIVE ENVIRONMENTS AND YOUNG RELOCATED ATHLETES

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AND YOUNG RELOCATED ATHLETES**

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STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

The work contained in this dissertation has never been previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any University. To the best of my knowledge, the dissertation contains no material previously published or written by any other person except where due reference is made in the dissertation itself.

Signature
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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Participation in sport is fast becoming a career pathway for athletes rather than merely a recreational pastime, as can be indicated by the diverse professional sports flourishing within Australian society. While recreational sporting opportunities are still available for those who wish to partake of them, there is now more opportunity for individuals to capitalize on their athletic ability through sponsorship and commercial deals. Consequently, sport now demands that more focus be placed on their sport career by athletes if they wish to seize for themselves the financial, physical and social benefits gratuitously bestowed upon Australia's sport champions (Roffey & Gross, 1991). However, this demand may also have generated some change in the direction that previous talent identification and recruitment had been following. Hoare (1995) suggests that progression in talent identification and recruitment has seen a number of benefits evolve from the implementation of focused scientific methods of identifying potential champions, such as the creation of a selective pool of young talented athletes (Woodman, 1985).

1.1 Background to the Research

The process of talent identification is not a new one, as coaches and teachers have been identifying talent for many years (Hoare, 1995). Previous methods of identifying talent have primarily relied upon the ability and experience of the coaches and teachers to recognise 'raw potential' through observation. These methods have been somewhat successful. Unfortunately, the individuals that have been selected have been limited to those already participating in that sport. Ultimately, this process

has often overlooked potential talent (Hoare, 1995). Guesswork has been replaced by systematic talent identification programs (Bloomfield, 1992), the primary focus being to identify Australia's next elite champions (King, 1994).

Woodman (1985) documents that through the identification of talent an opportunity arises which enables a more effective use and promotion of Australian sport resources to build upon for the future. The significance that Australians accord success in sport (Tumilty and Hahn, 1991) combined with achievements in the sport domain has generated the urge to identify potential champions (Woodman, 1985). This becomes more meaningful and beneficial to the Australian society when one reflects on the burgeoning international 'sport' reputation that arises from sporting achievements and often overshadows other non-sport related achievements (McElroy, 1986).

The identification of talent can be accomplished via procedures that are classified as either natural selection or scientific selection. The natural selection methods simply involve the identification of talent through observation and evaluation of the sporting performances of young children (Mato, 1977 & Bompa 1985). Scientific methods involve the selection of prospective athletes who have been assessed to possess the natural ability for a given sport based upon a scientific procedure (Bompa, 1985). In comparison to the natural selection process, the time required for the athlete to reach a peak in performance is potentially much shorter due to the physiological testing which determines if the athlete has the desired attributes (Bompa, 1985).

A number of benefits are believed to result from the implementation of a coordinated and effective talent identification program. These include directing young children toward a particular sport for which they are physically and physiologically suited. The young athlete will then have access to specialised coaching for that sport. The young athlete then often benefits in areas of personal development as there is the “opportunity to further develop his or her education; and due to the basic nature of the program the young athlete’s general health and well-being are enhanced” (Bloomfield, 1992, p. 188). To have a fully coordinated and effective talent identification program would benefit not only those young athletes chosen but strengthen Australia’s future participation in the sport arena.

Contemporary research indicates that several factors cause a direct effect on athletic performance and therefore present some implications for a talent identification program. These factors encompass the individual’s physical characteristics, psychological characteristics, skill levels, physiological characteristics, genetic factors, environmental factors and sociological factors (Woodman, 1985).

Ultimately, these elements also occupy a significant role in the individual’s performance after the athlete has been recruited. Crucial to this specific study are the environmental factors and, to a lesser extent, the psychological and sociological factors.

Traditionally, talent, or the manifestation of talent, has been attributed to an individual’s genetics, whereby exceptional abilities were presumed to be the product

of an individual's genes (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996). However, contemporary research challenges this theory by proposing that 'nurturing' demands more accountability in the development of individual talent. According to Durand-Bush & Salmela it has been an accepted view that exceptional talent is "innate and genetically transmitted" (1996, p. 89). However, modern research challenges this by providing evidence that demonstrates several peripheral, motor and cognitive proficiencies can be altered with practice. Research conducted by Bloom (cited in Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996) proposes that the development of talent requires years of commitment and that crucial to this process is the quality of extraneous support provided by significant others, such as parents, teachers and friends. While teachers and parents can strongly influence the development of an individual's 'talent' this process involves several elements of chance, which include:

securing positive initial learning experiences in a talent field, the support of a patron or sponsor when essential, and especially the extent to which an individual's physical, intellectual, and personal characteristics were matched with qualities that were of special value in a given talent field (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996, p. 93).

Research investigating the effect of environment on the development of talent has been conducted to some extent in the domain of human intelligence. The purpose of this research, however, has not been to determine the effect of the environment on the development or enhancement of athletic ability. However, it is important to recognise the benefit of determining such an influence. Ultimately, by identifying the elements essential for a suitable relocation environment for athletes, the athletes could then be maintained in a stable environment. Halsey (1977) suggests the more uniform the environment, of the population that the individual exists within, the larger the role

that genetics will occupy in creating individual differences. Mather (1966) suggests that all human characteristics are affected by an individual's environment and therefore would be open to change if the environment is altered appropriately. Revelle and Anderson (1995) build upon this further, suggesting that individuals shape their environment rather than being passively influenced by the environments in which they exist.

Durand-Bush and Salmela (1996) document Bloom's research on the development of talent. They emphasise that although children may have the appropriate genetic structure necessary to demonstrate a specific talent, if they are not committed to the development of that talent they will not succeed in their chosen arena. The qualities that are needed to sustain the individual in pursuit of their dream, qualities such as motivation, commitment and passion are, according to Bloom (in Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996) nurtured within the home environment.

The parents of identified 'talented' individuals demonstrated that they:

raised their children to believe in the importance of doing something well, to place work and duties before pleasure, to believe in the importance of hard work, and to strive for future goals (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996, 94).

1.2 Research Topic

The fundamental purpose of this research is to determine the type of environment that is best suited in which to relocate young male athletes. A secondary aim of the research is to identify the elements necessary for a suitable living environment for young male athletes. An investigation of the issues inherent in the relocation of

young athletes will also be undertaken. Identification of the perceived environmental needs, which will encompass the psychological, social and physical needs of a young athlete, who has been recruited by the Brisbane Broncos, will be the focus of this research.

1.3 Rationale

Tumilty and Hahn (1991) report that children need to participate in sports that are attractive to them. However, many Australian children are limited in the options available to them. Australian children often participate in a particular sport due to the locality in which they reside, the school they attend, or the aspirations of their parents. High drop-out or low participation rates prevail in school sports, after leaving school and in exercise programs (Tumilty & Hahn, 1991). Ultimately, the idea of recruiting young children to engage in the competitive atmosphere of a sports career must be examined, along with the significance that society places on success and failure in sport.

Contemporary research (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996) has yielded evidence that suggests the development of talent can be attributed to a 'nurturing' environment. This relates to the environment within which the individual resides (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996). This environment encapsulates the psychological, social and cultural values that shape the individual and at some stage would have encouraged the athlete to further develop their ability. Although there is evidence suggesting that without the necessary genetic make-up this 'talent' factor will not develop, contemporary

research challenges this by proposing that the interaction between an individual's genes and his or her environment is perhaps the most significant element in the acquisition of individual characteristics (Lefrancois, 1996). Azar (1997) reports that genetics accounts for approximately half of the variance in most human traits. Thus, environment could be perceived to account for the remaining trait variance. With environment accounting for such a significant part of individual trait variation, it may be proposed that establishing a suitable living environment for athletes would become an important component in the development of talent after the initial identification process.

This research is driven by a concern that many professional sporting clubs channel exorbitant amounts of funds into programs aimed at recruiting potential athletes. Crucial to this process are the numerous programs of talent identification implemented in the search for potential young athletes.

For the purpose of this research the sport of rugby league will be focused upon. These programs are aimed specifically at identifying and selecting young male athletes. Some of these athletes, once selected, are then removed from their own home environment and are placed into an alternative environment. This can involve the athletes being placed with another family, into a 'group' house, which consists of several other athletes, or being left to fend for themselves. A number of issues can arise from this situation. The primary focus of this research deals with the athlete's

needs. Specifically, do the athletes perceive their accommodation needs as being adequately addressed and satisfied by their relocation?

1.4 Introduction to Methodology

For the purpose of this research, collection of all necessary data was achieved via two inter-related processes. The first phase was concerned with identifying the elements essential to a suitable living environment for athletes. This was achieved through the process of a focus group meeting and several face-to-face interviews with key individuals. The second phase involved the collection of data from the sample groups. An athlete and a parent/guardian sample group were implemented for this research. A key club representative was also involved.

The second phase of the research required the formulation of a research tool investigating the participants' insight into what constitutes a suitable relocated environment. Information was collected for this purpose via a process of mailed questionnaires (Appendix D, pp 120 - 129). The interviewer attempted to determine the sample groups' thoughts on what they felt constituted a suitable relocated environment for their son or sons. Ultimately the aim was to determine what environment would benefit relocated young male athletes. All of the participants were encouraged to discuss their thoughts on several issues pertaining to:

- the club's role and responsibility in relation to the relocation and placement of recruited athletes into alternative living environments;

- the identified elements arising from the athlete and parent sample groups and the importance of these; and,
- the club's expectations of a relocated environment for their athletes.

Analysis of the data collected from phase one of the research involved a categorisation and elimination process of the elements identified. The elements were categorised or eliminated based upon several parameters. The categorisation parameters embodied elements that were perceived to be physical, social, psychological or general elements, while the elimination criteria comprised of those elements identified by the group that concerned the pre-recruiting environment, demonstrable characteristics and genetic factors. From this process a list of essential elements was formulated and applied to phase two of the research. During phase one of the research a number of issues were identified. These relate to the process of relocating young males to an alternative relocation environment. The issues were then utilised to develop the questions to prompt the parent and club sample groups.

The data that was collected in phase two of the research incorporated the two sample groups' and the club representative's views on what constituted a suitable relocation environment for young male athletes. Analysis of the data was primarily concerned with obtaining an overview of the participant's thoughts on the identified elements and issues raised in phase one.

This involved determining what each sample group perceived to be the elements significant and necessary to a relocation environment for young male athletes. The parent and club sample group's responses were analysed by the researcher to determine participant's views in relation to the issues involved in relocating young male athletes.

1.5 Limitations of the Research

Due to the distance of the researcher from the body of potential participants, as well as the parameters of the study, it was necessary to limit the research to a purposefully selected sample group. A member of the Brisbane Broncos Rugby League Club indicated they would be interested in participating in this study, it was decided by the researcher that they would be the sample group. Therefore, all the participants investigated in this research derive from athletes, parents and club officials associated with the Brisbane Broncos. Ultimately, it is hoped that the findings will provide insight into this issue for the many professional rugby league clubs throughout Australia.

This research does not involve female athletes, Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) funded programs, individual sport athletes and other team sports. However, the findings and results may have some relevance for these groups.

The research also does not take into account the views and perceptions of those individuals who have been accorded the opportunity to provide a living environment

for young athletes. That is, those families employed by the Brisbane Broncos to provide a 'home environment' for young relocated athletes were not involved in this study.

To maintain the focus of this research, it does not account for the influence that 'culture' may, or may not, have on creating a suitable relocation environment for young male athletes. It is not the intention of this study to highlight individual cultural differences between the athletes, nor assume any tangible effects that 'culture' may have on an athlete's level of satisfaction with the chosen relocation environment. However, identifying the influence of 'culture' on creating and sustaining suitable relocation environments for young male athletes is an area that could benefit from future research.

1.6 Key Assumptions

The athletes selected for this research are assumed to possess the necessary demonstrable physical, physiological and psychological qualities to perform at the elite level in the sport of rugby league. The research assumes that the athletes possess the genes and a personal 'sport' history to succeed in this sport, primarily due to the individual having been already selected by the Brisbane Broncos prior to the commencement of this study.

The parent sample group employed in this research were the parents/guardians of those athletes who have been previously recruited by the Brisbane Broncos. The club

representative is employed by the Brisbane Broncos and is a key stakeholder responsible for the health and well being of the young athletes before, during and after the relocation process.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

The research adopted the following key terms and definitions for the purpose of this study. The terms cover, ‘environmental needs’, ‘relocated athletes’ and ‘alternative relocation environment’.

- ‘Environmental needs’ refers to the elements that are perceived to be essential to the daily existence of relocated athletes. This term includes the physical, psychological and sociological needs of athletes.
- Those athletes that have made the transition from living with their parents or guardians to an alternative living environment are defined as ‘relocated athletes’.
- The term ‘alternative relocation environment’ relates to the environment that the athlete will be relocated to upon the commencement of his professional contract.

1.8 Summary

The purpose of this research was to determine what type of environment is best suited to house relocated young male athletes. Another purpose of the research is to identify what elements are important to create a suitable living environment for young relocated male athletes.

The rationale, therefore, arises from the need by the researcher to identify the elements that are deemed important for establishing a quality environmental setting for young athletes in an attempt to eliminate individual parameters created by the environment that would have a detrimental effect on the development of talent.

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A great deal of the literature used in this research highlights the role of genetics and environment on the development of talent, as well as promoting the process of talent identification and recruitment. Although this research is primarily concerned with what occurs after the young male athlete has been recruited it is necessary to recognise the process of identifying and selecting athletes for the arduous training programs involved in the pursuit of excellence in sport. The process of identifying all potential athletes is a long and often involved one that requires the athlete to successfully complete several stages of assessment. This is not without financial and physical costs to the athlete. However, determining a suitable relocation environment for athletes would ensure that these costs are minimised.

Impetus for following the direction taken arises from the researcher's need to highlight the inadequacy of literature concerning the effect of the newly acquired home environment on relocated athletes. As will be seen from this chapter, there is limited literature available relating specifically to young athletes and the influences of home environment on the development of talent.

2.1 The Genetic/Environment Controversy

Mather (1964) wrote that "every living creature receives from its parents an endowment of hereditary materials - its genes. Equally it must pass through all stages of its development in some environment or series of environments" (p. 10). Therefore, Mather (1964) suggests, every living organism is a result of the

combination of the genes it receives from its parents and the circumstances in which it develops and experiences life. Predominantly, research has found that all individual characteristics that have been studied possess genetically determined deviations. Any individual "trait of interest has a substantial genetic component" (Revelle & Anderson, 1995) as well as being environmentally affected (Mather, 1964). The raw genetic material enters into a dynamic relationship with the social, economic and cultural environment" (Woods & Grant, 1995).

Mather (1964) proposed that genetic variations will only evolve in particular environments or the manifestations of these variations of environment will be demonstrated in individuals of specific genetic constitutions. Therefore, the visible individual differences are the result of the interaction between the individual's genes and their environment (Mather, 1964). Revelle and Anderson (1995) support this further by suggesting that almost all of the major personality dimensions seem to have a substantial (50% +/- 20 %) heritability factor. Also, due to the genetic nature of the covariances between traits, the way in which one's environment contributes 30 – 70 % of the variance is interesting in how the phenotype evolves from the genotype (Revelle & Anderson, 1995).

Essentially, the debate between nature (one's genes) and nurture (one's environment), according to Lefrancois (1996) explores the interaction between genes and environment, which affects the development of the individual. Lefrancois (1996) presents two models further elucidating the geno-environment interaction. The

models are the Additive Model and the Interactive Model. The Additive model proposes that an individual's genes account for a certain percentage of their development and the environment accounts for the remainder. The Interactive Model acknowledges that there is a complex relationship involved and that neither genetics nor environment can account for anything individually (Lefrancois, 1996).

An individual's genes and environment are not isolated factors, but "dialectically fuse together to produce the individual and his or her unique characteristics" (Woods and Grant, 1995). Azar (1997) presents three types of genetic-environment correlations. They are; passive correlations; evocative correlations; and active correlations.

- A passive correlation may occur due to parents transmitting genes which nurture particular traits and because the parents shape the rearing environment.
- Evocative correlations occur because genetically distinct individuals innervate different reactions from their parents, peers and others.
- Active correlations result because individuals may sub-consciously select events that suit their genetically influenced differences (Azar, 1997).

2.2 Genetics and Talent

There is some support (Halsey, 1977; Bloomfield, 1985; Revelle & Anderson, 1995; Woods & Grant, 1995 & Azar, 1997) that indicates a genetic factor that determines the amount of talent an individual demonstrates. Thoday (1965), cited in Halsey (1977) documented that "every character is genetic; for to acquire a characteristic

during development in any particular environment the individual must have the necessary genetic endowment" (p. 30). Feldhuzen also saw talent as being genetically induced (cited in Pirrto, 1993). The genetic element is recognised as potential and talent being the product after further developing the 'potential' (Pirrto, 1993). Komadel, in Bloomfield (1992), also believed that there is a hereditary factor which influences talented athletes and though there has been no definitive research in this area, it is well documented that there is often a "strong genetic link between parents and siblings" (Bloomfield, 1992, p. 188). Berkowitz (1996) proposed that "our genes determine our abilities, our preferences, and our emotions". In fact, genes can determine the most complex behavioural and cognitive characteristics (Berkowitz, 1996). However, according to Halsey (1977), knowledge of the individual's genetic pattern is of no use without knowledge of the individual's environment.

An individual's phenotype (that is the characteristic that is visible) is the product of the genotype (the characteristic that is created) and the individual's environment (Mather, 1964). Halsey (1977) agrees with this and further identifies the genotype as determining the potential of an individual. Their environment, Halsey (1977) suggests, defines what or how much of the individual and how much of the individual's potential will manifest during development. Peele and DeGrandpre (1995) support this by documenting that the activity of genes is affected at the cellular level by the individual's environment(s). An individual's genetic evolution is influenced by conditions internal and external of the womb and, according to Peele and DeGrandpre (1995), constitutes an eternal give-and-take process with the

environment.

Antecedent research (Mather, 1964 & Halsey, 1977) indicates that not only are individuals unique, but the environment an individual exists within is unique as well. Mather (1964) suggested that the environment of an individual is comprised of particular properties, which depend upon the individual's family, and the society in which the individual grows. These properties, according to Mather (1964), determine not only the individual's physical environment but also the "education he receives, the ideas he imbibes, the conventions and customs to which he will conform and the activities he will pursue" (p. 11). This implies that the individual's environment is partially genetic and what the individual experiences may be passed on to future generations.

When evaluating individual differences, Thoday (1965) believed that this process involved the measurement of relations. That is, the process could indicate nothing useful about the individual except to place him/her on a scale in relation to the remainder of the population (Halsey, 1977). When considering the measurement of an individual characteristic the process involves the evaluation of a definite population. Halsey (1977) believed that the genetic or environmental factors that influence human characteristics are a reflection of the differences, or variances, within a specific population. Whatever is reported about an individual concerning the evaluation of human characteristics can only be a statement highlighting the differences between the individual and the remainder of the population (Halsey, 1977). Therefore, the

more uniform the environment of a particular population, the more significance genetics will occupy when assessing individual differences.

Peele and DeGrandpre (1996) maintain that heritability figures rely upon several elements of which the population that is studied is important. Perusse et al. (1987) suggested that "heritability estimates represent the average genetic effect for the population under investigation and, therefore, are specific to the population or samples from which they were derived" (p. 432). Heritability, according to Revelle and Anderson (1995), is a population value that reflects the amount of individual variability associated with the total genetic variation.

Mather (1964) emphasised that most human characteristics are affected by the individual's environment and are therefore able to be altered if the environment is changed appropriately. Additionally, if there are elements identified as essential to the properties of the environment, specific changes can be made via the manipulation of these elements (Mather, 1964). Halsey (1977) also suggests that over time, changes in the environment can alter the order of genotypes. Titus-Reid (1976) pointed out that heredity depends upon the stability of the environment and that alterations may, consequently, cause changes in the character of the individual.

Preliminary research (Halsey, 1977; Bloomfield, 1985) indicates that there may be a factor, or 'general motor ability', that enables particular individuals to perform well at physical activities. However when the diverse and extensive scope of physical

activity is taken into account it makes prediction based upon the correlation of competence between activities almost impossible (Knapp, 1964). Research data presented by Perusse, Lortie, LeBlanc, Tremblay, Theriault and Bouchard (1987) suggests that the role of heredity in athletic ability is "only moderate and definitely lower than what had been previously reported" (p. 433). There are many individuals who excel in many different physical activities however Knapp (1964) suggests that this is attributed to individual motivation and not necessarily innate athletic ability. Bloom (in Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996) emphasises when suggesting that despite the:

initial characteristics (or gifts) of the individuals, unless there is a long and intensive process of encouragement, nurturance, education, and training, the individuals will not attain extreme levels of capability in these particular fields
(p. 92).

2.3 Environment and Talent

Vernon (1979) theorised that the effect of environment on a specific characteristic, such as intelligence, was as a residual variable; implying that environment accounts for all the variance remaining after the genetic elements have been separated.

Environment, in the domain of human intelligence, is described as being 'out there' and an element that "provokes or inhibits the growth of intelligence" (Vernon, 1979, p. 212). An individual's environment encapsulates internal states and the individual's own experiences that affect their responses. The environment is also believed to encompass more than the individual's family. It also involves the cultural and parental environments (Revelle & Anderson, 1995) as well as the society into which the individual is born (Golomb, 1995). Azar (1997) proposes that there are two

major sources of environmental influence. They are shared environmental factors and nonshared environmental factors. Shared environmental factors include those experiences common to children raised together that generate similarities in their behaviour. Nonshared factors are those experiences unique to children raised together that produce differences in their behaviour. Azar's research (1997) indicates that nonshared factors account for most of the environmental influences on children's personalities and moods.

Csikszentmihayli's (cited in Golomb 1995) observation attesting to the considerable increase in artists in the sixteenth century, proposed that the increase was due to the social conditions at the time that generated a demand for such artists. This implies the important influence that environment can effect on individual characteristics. Csikszentmihayli further suggests that artists, such as Michelangelo, are not simply born.

An exceptional individual possesses special skills, but these skills alone do not ensure that a "creative contribution will be made" (Golomb, 1995, p. 33). These special skills need to be valued and recognised by the society in which they interact with, otherwise they will not fully develop (Golomb, 1995). Pariser, in Golomb (1995), encouraged Csikszentmihayli's suggestion that artistic ability is not solely caused by the individual's innate characteristics but is also a result of the "social and historical world into which they are born, and the cultural practices and performances that this social world values and supports" (p. 33).

Csikszentmihayli's contentions supports the research conducted by Titus-Reid (1976) on juvenile crime. Titus-Reid (1976) found that if an individual has little or no access to illegal or criminal activities within a specific social structure it is unlikely that an individual would adopt criminal means to solve their problems. Athletes are not exempt from this, according to McKay (in Rowe & Lawrence, 1990). McKay proposes that if sport is not ranked high amongst the leisure and career values of parents or significant others and if positive reinforcement for participation in sport is not received then it would be unlikely for an individual within this environment to become involved in sport regardless of their potential (in Rowe & Lawrence, 1990).

Contemporary research endorses this by introducing theories which challenge the societal belief that exceptional skills are genetically transmitted, offering that 'nurturing' can be held more accountable for the attainment of skill, or expert performance (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996). Ericsson, Krampe and Tesh-Romer (1993), cited in Durand-Bush & Salmela (1996), present an argument that demonstrates that many anatomical and physiological attributes, perhaps the most important for athletes being the metabolic properties of slow-twitch and fast-twitch muscle fibres, are able to be modified with training.

There has been some research that has provided evidence, which concludes that various cognitive, motor and perceptual skills, can be altered through intense practice (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996). This led Ericsson and colleagues to conclude that "the influence of innate, domain-specific basic capacities (talent) on expert

performance is small, possibly even negligible" (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996, p. 89). From this, Ericsson and Lehmann (1996) surmise that the attainment of expertise can only be achieved via persistent 'deliberate practice', or training, over a nominated minimum period of ten years (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996). Durand-Bush and Salmela (1996) define deliberate practice as a "highly structured activity performed with the intention of improving performance...It is not paid work, nor play...deliberate practice is effortful and is neither inherently motivating nor enjoyable" (p. 89).

Durand-Bush & Salmela further suggested that it is possible for an early indication of natural athletic ability to generate motivation to train and that, consequently, traits previously believed to originate from innate talent are the result of 'deliberate practice' (1996).

2.4 The Effect of Environment on Intelligence

Storfer (1990) reports that four factors determine the level of intelligence of an individual. They are:

- (1) their heredity...(2) the extent to which their pre-natal environment may have imposed limitations on this potential; (3) the ways in which their postnatal environment stimulated, stunted and shaped this potential and (4) so-called random factors related to IQ test-taking situation (p. 1).

Vernon (1979) documented that Hebb in 1949 divided intelligence into two distinct components. They are Intelligence A and Intelligence B. Intelligence A, according to Hebb is the genetic potentiality of the individual to learn and adapt to the environment while Intelligence B involves the interaction between the genetic

potential and environmental stimulation coupled with the level of ability of the individual (Vernon, 1979). Vernon (1979) proposed that "intelligence does not develop in a vacuum" (p. 10). This axiom could be applied to athletic talent and therefore it could be proposed by the author that athletic ability does not develop in a vacuum.

Much of the research regarding the effect of the environment on intelligence has investigated the relationship between the post-natal environment and the individual's level of intelligence, or more specifically, their intelligence quotient (IQ) (Gottfried, 1984). This post-natal environment incorporates all experiences that an individual deals with from the time of his or her birth. This includes the home environment, the education environment, the socialisation environment and so forth. Gottfried (1984) documented the results of a seven-year longitudinal study that investigated the relationship between the home environment and cognitive development in young children. Gottfried's (1984) research investigated the quantity and quality of the home environment and compared young children across race, gender, birth order, age and developmental status. The study found that "environmental variables within the home correlate significantly with cognitive development, and this was demonstrated as early as 1929" (Gottfried, 1984, p. 1).

The research tool employed for Gottfried's research was the Home Observation for Measurement of the Home Environment, or the HOME Inventory. This inventory measures the quality of the environment available to the young child. It is a

combination of observation and interview aimed at families with infants and families with pre-schoolers. The interview is usually undertaken with the primary caregiver of the child (Gottfried, 1984).

Other factors emphasised by this research to define the home environment include family cohesion, family configuration and socio-economic status. Family cohesion involves the two variables of crowding (the ratio of rooms to people) and the child's ordinal or birth position. In Gottfried's (1984) research, it was found that crowding is negatively correlated with the organisation of environment, play materials and maternal involvement, which could be due to having to compete for material and emotional resources. Also, the position that the child maintains in the family is related to the HOME Inventory scores. First-born children usually receive more "verbal, social and object stimulation from the caregiver and higher levels of achievement are expected from them" (Gottfried, 1984, p. 323).

2.5 What is Talent?

The word 'talent' originated from the Latin language as the term for a sum of money. However, it eventually came to signify an "inclination, a learning, a desire, a wish" (Pirto, 1993, p. 15). Talent may be regarded as any "specialised skill or ability in a particular field of endeavour, such as the creative and performing arts or sports, where the behaviour involves some physical component of muscular coordination, visual acuity, manual dexterity and so on" (Ehrlich, 1982, p. 5).

Ginzberg and Herma (1964) suggested that talent could have many meanings. It is often used to designate the “competence or skill that sets an individual off from the majority” (p. 1). Pirto (1993) proposes that to be talented acknowledges that an individual possesses the ability to perform an activity well and further suggests that talent, or the manifestations of 'talent', can take many forms.

The concept of skill is often alluded too when discussing 'talent'. When used in this sense it can be defined as the, "learned ability to bring about pre-determined results with maximum certainty of them with minimum outlay of time or energy or both" (Knapp, 1964, p. 4). This then implies that people can be more or less skilled (Knapp, 1964).

Csikszentmihayli, Rathunde and Whalen (1993), in Durand-Bush & Salmela (1996), argue that talent is essentially comprised of three elements. They are individual traits, cultural domains and social fields (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996). Csikszentmihayli *et al.* documented that individual traits are partly genetic and partly developed as the individual matures. Cultural domains constitute the parameters that values specific performance characteristics. Social fields incorporate the people or social institutions that are responsible for deciding if particular performances are to be considered valuable or not (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996). Talent is viewed as a “dynamic process rather than a trait that is inherited and remains unchanged for the rest of one's life” (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996, p. 98).

2.6 Talent Identification (TID)

Some research (Mato, 1977 & Bompa, 1985) suggests that identifying potential sport talent is accomplished via procedures defined as either natural selection or scientific selection. Natural selection methods simply identify talent through observation and evaluation of sporting performances by young children (Mato, 1977). Athletes are assumed to participate in a particular sport due to other influences. However the performance of these athletes depends upon, along with other elements, whether the individual has chosen a sport for which he/she demonstrates talent (Bompa, 1985). Scientific selection procedures involve proceeding through three phases. An initial phase inviting identified children to participate in specific training groups, the next phase involves the 'grouping' of the most 'suited' individuals according to several parameters, and the final phase involves specific criteria. The specific criteria comprise the individual's psychological characteristics, the individual's ability to learn and to adapt to specific skills, and their work capacity (Mato, 1977). The use of scientific data in such a program has many benefits. These include taking less time for individuals to achieve high performances; increasing the competitiveness and self-esteem of the selected athletes; and reducing time, energy and work for the athlete's coach (Bompa, 1985).

Georgescu, in Mato (1977) discusses the concepts of inheritance, biological age and optimal age in relation to talent identification. Essentially, inheritance allows that certain inherited characteristics, like body weight, limb size, endurance and strength can be shaped by environment. However, extraneous influences, such as training, are

not enough to alter the genetic structure of the individual. Therefore, “if you are not born a champion, you will never be one” (Mato, 1977, p. 26). Biological age, Mato (1977) suggests, may contribute to the achievements of young athletes in that the superior performance of these athletes are not necessarily the result of “hard training, determination, desire to win, etc. but due solely to biological advantages” (Mato, 1977, p. 27). Children who are often taller, bigger or more mature will often dominate at sport but it is generally the late maturer, who through hard work and diligence will make dramatic advances towards much higher levels of achievement (Woodman, 1985). It has also been suggested that each sport has an ‘optimal age’, which is reached when the individual's body measurements and the maturation of physical skills has reached a point where a prediction can be made (Mato, 1977).

Woodman (1985) describes talent identification as the process involving the “screening of young athletes to determine those most likely to succeed in sport and directing them towards the sports to which they are most suited” (p. 49). In order to gain optimum benefits from talent identification an operational model needs be implemented that incorporates a demonstrated selection process and information pertaining to somotyping and training indicators (Ghita, 1994). Screening procedures involved in this process investigate several elements in relation to the individual and the sport (Bloomfield, 1992). These elements relate to the individual's health status, genetic basis, time spent in the sport, maturity, physical capacities and the psychological characteristics of the individual (Bloomfield, 1992). Significantly, competition plays an important role in this selection process (Ghita, 1994). Ghita

(1994) proposes that the principal components of a talent identification program should include the:

continual improvement of standards; model characteristics of the most suitable athletes; selection processes aimed to find specific talent; methods of training and competition and technical and financial support of participants (p. 39).

2.7 Goals of Talent Identification

Fundamentally, talent identification is expected to detect those individuals that have the most potential for a particular sport (Bompa, 1985). McElroy (1986) suggested that the central aim of talent identification is prediction and that only very general predictions can be made for young children, though prediction for some sports would become more successful after certain ages. Tumilty and Hahn (1991) offered that talent identification is implemented to direct individuals to a sport, or group of sports, that they are best suited to with the primary objective being to produce elite athletes. The same researchers argue that talent identification involves the selection of athletes that have demonstrated the necessary skills essential for success at the highest levels of particular sports.

2.8 Process of Identifying Talent

There are two components involved in the process of identifying potential talent and they are talent detection and talent selection (Salmela & Regnier, 1983; Roffey & Gross, 1991). Talent detection involves a long-term prediction, based on an individual demonstrating the raw abilities or skills necessary to perform at an elite standard (Roffey & Gross, 1991). Talent selection is the short-term prediction of an

athlete within a group of athletes. The athlete demonstrates the essential physical capabilities as well as the necessary levels of training, maturity and an ability to achieve higher levels in the immediate future faster than other members of that group (Salmela & Regnier, 1983).

Selection is primarily used for the attainment of potential athletes for the immediate participation in competition and games, that is, the athletes have demonstrated the necessary developmental skills to perform the sport (Roffey & Gross, 1991). The process of talent identification is:

but window dressing if it does not occur within an integrated developmental program in sport that has the necessary preparatory infrastructure which contains the elements of adequate installations, equipment, coaching and competition (Salmela & Regnier, 1983, p. 1).

Russell (1989) presented a theoretical model of talent identification that included three incremental components. The model includes talent detection, talent selection and talent perfection. Russell further suggests that for the successful implementation of this model, the talent selection phase requires the collection of information from three sources. Data is collected via natural talent, performance talent and coach subjective information. The detection process provides sufficient information for the natural talent category which is then employed to select athletes into long-term programs. Performance talent comprises of sport specific performance evaluation of the athlete's results from several tests including skill performance and competitive performance. These results are then combined to provide the athlete with a consistency score on repeat performances. Other information relevant to performance

talent considered is actual competition or game statistics. The coach's subjective evaluation is then added to the performance talent and natural talent scores to provide sufficient information to make a selection. In the final process of perfecting talent, coaches are able to utilise the information and focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the athlete as identified by the battery of tests performed to provide a balanced training program.

2.9 Potential Benefits of Talent Identification

Bloomfield (1992) suggested that there are a number of perceived benefits arising from talent identification programs. Apart from the benefit of having access to a pool of talented individuals, other benefits involve the guidance of young athletes toward a sport, or group of sports, for which he/she has a talent. This would possibly ensure positive results and the athletes should therefore enjoy their training. In addition, due to the basic nature of the programs, the athlete's physical health and well-being is enhanced. Finally, with concern being placed on the opportunities for athletes on conclusion of their competitive careers, the young athlete is also provided with access to high quality secondary and tertiary educational institutions (Bloomfield, 1992).

Fundamentally, the objective of a talent identification program is to produce elite athletes. Due to the nature of these programs a number of potential benefits are presumed to transpire. As Hahn and Gross (1990) report, there are many ways in which an effective talent identification program can generate improved sporting performances. Williams, cited in Roffey and Gross (1991), proposed that elite

athletes tend to have higher levels of self-confidence, better concentration, maintain a task-oriented focus, are more positively occupied with their sport, generally feel less anxiety prior to and during competition and also have a greater personal ability to deal positively with mistakes. It would appear that an effective talent identification program encapsulates a number of positive consequences that not only benefit the individual but can also have positive effects on the society in which they exist.

2.10 Criteria Involved in Screening for Talent Identification

Information is collected from several criterion employed when undertaking talent identification. Data was collected via specific criterion groups including scientific, health, physiological, psychological and sociological criteria. A genetic factor is also taken into account (Bloomfield, 1992). These criteria provide information regarding the individual, which can then be employed to develop profiles of each athlete (Bloomfield, 1992).

Scientific Criteria

Kunst and Florescu (1971) determined that there were three areas for identifying scientific data to identify potential talent. They are motor capacity, psychological capacity and biometric qualities (Bompa, 1985).

Health Criteria

The information collected for this involves a general medical examination with the focus on the individual's musculoskeletal and cardiovascular system (Bloomfield,

1992). Muscle biopsies are often performed to determine the individual's muscle fibres, which then assist in identifying a particular sport that best suits the individual (Bompa, 1985).

Physiological Criteria

Several factors are addressed in this criterion. Anthropometrical measurements of height, body mass, limb measurements and body composition are obtained (Bloomfield, 1992) along with the physiological traits of endurance, speed, strength, power and flexibility which all affect the performance of an athlete (Woodman, 1985).

Psychological and Sociological Criteria

Woodman (1985) determined that the socialisation of an athlete, which involves the assimilation of certain values, beliefs, norms and traits have a significant influence on the athlete's potential performance. A social environment that encourages and values sport participation and provides the opportunities for participation will greatly influence the individual to associate with sport and to strive to achieve in the sport domain (Woodman, 1985).

Numerous psychological factors have been identified as significantly impacting on athletic performance. These need to be assessed in talent identification programs (Woodman, 1985; McElroy, 1986; & Bloomfield 1992). A general psychological profile of a successful young athlete indicates that emotional stability, in conjunction

with a low anxiety level, allows the athlete to handle extreme amounts of training (Bloomfield, 1992). Woodman (1985) proposed that each athlete has an optimum level of performance. Intelligence, decision-making abilities and motivation levels of the athlete are also investigated to provide further insight into their potential (McElroy, 1986).

2.11 An Australian Perspective

In Australia, assessment is available to all young individuals, although not all take advantage of this opportunity. If they are identified as having potential talent for a particular sport, participation in a program to develop their potential is optional (Hoare, 1995). Participation of children in a particular sport can be attributed to tradition, popularity of that particular sport, parental pressure, access to sport facilities and the expertise of coaches and teachers in the particular sport (Bompa, 1992). Carmichael (1986) identified that young children participate in any sport or physical activity for "fun, fitness, the satisfaction of contributing to a team, competition, to make new friends and to make key plays" (p. 42).

In preparation for the Sydney 2000 Olympics funding was made available through the Olympic Athlete Program to address the need for a national talent identification and development program. What resulted from this was the implementation of the Talent Search Program. Talent Search has been operational since late 1994 with the paramount objective being to identify and prepare potential athletes for the 2000 Olympics (Hoare, 1995). The Talent Search Program involves three distinct stages;

talent identification (including school screenings), sport specific screening and talent development. The school screenings involve the assessment of students aged between 14 - 16 years based on numerous anthropometric variables, including height, body mass, vertical power, sitting height and multistage fitness tests (Hoare, 1995). The results of these screenings are then forwarded to the State Talent Search Coordinator (STSC), usually based at the State Sporting Institutes or State Academies of Sport. The information is analysed and the results determine which individuals are then invited to progress to the second stage of the program. Those who have been invited to go on further would have achieved results within the top 2% of at least one of the tests conducted (Hoare, 1995).

2.12 Individuals with Special Needs

Housing specific groups of people is not exclusive to sport. Diversified housing and accommodation programs are implemented throughout Australia to accommodate individuals with special needs. These programs have various objectives but each recognise the special environmental needs and the individual requirements for special needs groups.

A basic need has been defined as comprising two factors (Richards & Thompson, 1984). Firstly a basic need involves:

certain minimum requirements of a family for private consumption: food, shelter and clothing, as well as certain household equipment and furniture. Secondly, they include essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport and health, education and cultural facilities (Richards & Thompson, 1984, p. 1).

Tully (1986) reports that the manner in which the living environment is structured is perhaps the most influential factor on the quality of life in residential accommodation for individuals with special needs. The living environment affects, and perhaps determines, the daily experiences of the individuals and the level to which their basic needs are being met. It also influences the quality of their relationships with others, their level of independence and the degree to which their lives are 'normalised' (Tully, 1986). Tully (1986) outlined a number of requirements for residential accommodation based upon a setting in which to live and grow. This included elements for great independence, for meaningful relationships and for normal daily life. A home-like environment should provide safety, protection and security, small group living, a daily life pattern and should provide the avenue for the individual to develop feelings of belonging and group identity (Tully, 1986).

The physical living environment and individual is placed into has significant influence on substantiating their quality of life. According to Tully (1986) a poor physical environment often:

reflects low regard for them; prevents them acting independently; reduces their privacy; makes it difficult for them to attain a sense of belonging; creates stress as a result of overcrowding or inadequate facilities; prevents normalised living; and limits options for developmental experiences (Tully, 1986, p. 102).

2.13 Summary

Environment, as indicated by the literature, is a residual variable. Research now suggests that the individual's environment accounts for at least half of the variation in individual characteristics and individual development. This would then have many

implications for an athlete and does suggest that if the athlete is not exposed to sport from a young age and the environment the athlete exists within does not 'nurture' that talent, then they will most likely not develop that athletic expertise. Csikzentmihayli, Rathunde and Whalen (1993) acknowledge that there is a genetic component to talent. They state that:

inevitably we are born with genes that direct the development of our abilities to a certain degree – however they believe that although some people are born with greater gifts, such as perfect pitch or superior spatial visualisation, it is not the size of the initial gift that counts, but what an individual makes of it (in Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996, p. 107).

The literature review presents some interesting views on the development of individual characteristics. The review also provides insight into the process of identifying, selecting and recruiting athletes. The crux of this research is encapsulated by Ziwan (1991) who stated that "the success of an athlete is the result of the scientific talent identification, scientific training, individual efforts and favorable environmental factors" (p. 16). The research attempts to fill the gap in the literature by concentrating on the environmental factors as they apply to the development of athletes identified as having the talent to become performers at the elite level.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Much of the literature (Mather; 1964; Komi, 1983; Revelle & Anderson, 1995; Woods & Grant, 1995; Lefrancois, 1996; Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996) suggests that individual characteristics, skills, abilities or 'talent' could be the product of the interaction between the individual's gene structure and the post and pre-natal environments in which the individual exists. The literature did not identify particular elements vital to the individual's environment that would nurture the development of talent in the individual. Hence, the purpose of this research is to determine the elements essential to a suitable environment for young relocated male athletes.

Contemporary research (Woods & Grant, 1996; Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996) demonstrates that the development of exceptional abilities and skills can be primarily attributed to the combination of the individual's genes inherited from the parents and the physical, social and cultural environments in which the individual exists. This implies that each individual in a specific environment will have distinct experiences whilst there would also be some commonalities shared between siblings.

This research is concerned with determining those qualities and characteristics that comprise a suitable home environment for young male athletes. The research is not concerned with determining whether the athletes are 'talented' or how much 'talent' they possess. It has been assumed by the researcher that the athletes involved in the research have demonstrated the necessary physical, psychological and physiological characteristics or qualities required to have the potential to perform in the sport of

rugby league at the elite level. It will focus upon those athletes who have relocated to commence a professional contract.

The research conducted involved two processes. Firstly, it was imperative to identify the desired elements perceived to create a suitable living environment for relocated athletes. Secondly, these elements were then investigated to determine how they could contribute to devising a suitable relocation environment for young athletes that would enhance their potential.

For the purpose of this research three definitions were adopted (as per page 12). They relate to 'environmental needs', 'relocated athletes' and the 'alternative environment'.

- 'Environmental needs' refer to those elements that are essential to the daily existence of the athletes. It includes the physical, psychological and sociological needs of these individuals.
- The term 'relocated athlete' concerns those athletes that have made a transition from living with their parents or guardians to a new residential setting to commence a legal contract with the Brisbane Broncos club.
- 'Alternative environment' incorporates the structure in which the athlete will inhabit upon the commencement of their professional contract. This alternative environment could be in the form of an alternative family environment, an environment that is shared with either athletes or other individuals, and/or a dormitory environment.

3.1 Phase One - Identification of Elements

Phase One of the research involved the participation of seven key staff members within the Rockhampton Campus of the Central Queensland University. The participants were invited to participate via a group discussion to identify what might represent the desired elements to create a suitable living environment for relocated athletes. Those who could not participate were invited to be part of informal face-to-face interviews. The participants involved in this phase of the research were chosen based upon their expertise, professional or personal experience and area of research interest. The group discussion encompassed participants with expertise in the field of sports, sport management and sport research. The additional face-to-face interviews involved individuals who had research experience in the fields of mental health, alcohol and drugs, international students studying in Australia, youth and the housing of these special needs groups. Phase One comprised 10 participants.

All participants in this stage of the research were made aware of the purpose of the research and the researcher's objectives for this particular phase. The participants were informed via email of the impending group discussion and were invited to participate. The five participants who were unable to attend the group discussion were invited to then participate in the informal interview process. There were five individual interviews. Participants in the group discussion and interviews were informed that this procedure was to determine the elements desired when establishing a suitable living environment for relocated athletes.

The elements proposed by the group during the discussion were recorded using butcher's paper. This provided the opportunity for the participants to further discuss and assess their ideas. Notes were taken from the interviews. The group discussion was taped via tape recorder. The notes collected from the group discussion and the interviews were collated and then presented to each participant for their evaluation and feedback.

The findings were then added to those elements identified by Gottfried (1984) in the literature review (Chapter 2, pp. 23- 25). Then together all the elements were examined to identify common elements and were sorted according to their association with a particular group. The elements were determined as being either physical, social, psychological and general. The elements were then formulated into a list of perceived factors considered essential for a suitable relocation environment. This list can be found in Appendix B (pp 112 –115). Several criteria were devised that aided in the categorisation or the elimination of identified factors and they are discussed in the next chapter.

3.2 Phase Two – Investigating Elements

Three sample groups were identified for this phase of the study. The sample groups involved were a relocated athlete group (Athlete), a parent/guardian group (Parent) and a club representative (Club).

Athlete Sample Group

The Athlete Sample Group comprised 14 male athletes between the ages of 16 and 20, with a mean age of 18. At the time of commencing this study the Athlete Sample group had relocated to play with the Brisbane Broncos within the last three years of when this research was conducted.

Parent Sample Group

This group comprised the parents (mother and/or father) of five male athletes that were known to have relocated to commence a contract with the Brisbane Broncos. To maintain confidentiality it is unknown if these athletes participated in the study. The participants in the Parent Group were invited due to their personal experiences that were generated when their sons had relocated to play with the Brisbane Broncos.

Club Representative

This individual was invited to participate as the key stakeholder involved at all levels of the young athletes' relocation. This participant was the only person in the club that possessed intimate knowledge of the relocation circumstances and backgrounds of the athletes involved in the study.

3.2.1 Instrument

The instrument employed for the purpose of this research was formulated in a questionnaire format. This particular research tool was chosen, as it was felt to be an effective method to gather the participant's perceptions. A questionnaire was

formulated for the athlete sample group. From this, the questionnaire for the parent group and club representative was developed. This questionnaire was modified to a schedule format before being administered to the parent group and club representative. A Likert Scale was integrated into the questionnaire. This particular scale "presents a statement and the respondent indicates his or her level of agreement with the item" (Gething, 1995, p. 104).

3.2.1.1 Athlete Sample Group

To investigate the athletes' perceptions on what constitutes a suitable relocation environment a questionnaire was designed to collect the relevant data. As the research is concerned with determining the athletes' particular attitude or perception on specific elements, and would therefore require a qualitative approach to the collection of data, the questionnaire was deemed to be the best method to identify the individual athlete's perceptions at a predetermined stage in his career. The guidelines for the design, construction and implementation of a questionnaire as proposed by Babbie (1989) and Dane (1990) were adopted for this research.

Question Structure

Babbie (1989) believes that the use of both questions and statements in a questionnaire provides flexibility in the design of questionnaire items and ensures that the instrument is interesting. Items in a questionnaire should also be clear, unambiguous and relevant to the participants (Babbie, 1989; Dane 1990 & Gething, 1995). Babbie (1989) emphasises the provision of clear, short items and highlights

the need to avoid the use of negative questions and biased terms. A questionnaire item has two components. It contains a “statement or question that is designed to trigger the respondent's thinking, and a response format, which the respondent uses to indicate his or her reaction to the statement” (Babbie, 1989, p. 101).

Every questionnaire should also contain appropriate introductory comments and precise instructions (Babbie, 1989). The instructions accompanying the questionnaire can be employed to eliminate some of the participant bias via the assurance of anonymity or confidentiality. Introducing precise instructions on how to answer question items placed throughout the questionnaire can also help to reduce response bias (Dane, 1990).

Open-Ended and Closed-Ended Questioning

A questionnaire consists of both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions involve the participant choosing a response from a list provided by the researcher. This type of questioning generally provides more uniformity in the responses from all participants and is usually easier to process. According to Babbie (1989), when using closed-ended questions, there are two guides. Firstly, the responses provided should be exhaustive and secondly, they should be mutually exclusive. Open-ended questions usually ask the participant to provide his or her own answers to the questions asked. These types of questions have to be coded prior to the processing of the data. This then entails the researcher interpreting the participants' responses. Consequently, there is an opportunity for misunderstanding,

researcher bias and the attainment of responses irrelevant to the research (Babbie, 1989).

Questionnaire Construction

The general format of a questionnaire is just as important as the nature and structure of question items. Babbie (1989) documents:

that an improperly laid out questionnaire can lead respondents to miss questions, can confuse them about the nature of the data desired, and in the extreme, may lead them to throw the questionnaire away (p. 145).

To avoid this, Babbie (1989) points out that the questionnaire must be uncluttered and spread out. The use of well-placed boxes is suggested to be the best technique to employ in questionnaires.

Question Order

The order in which questions are asked will affect the responses given by participants (Babbie, 1989). This may also be employed as a method to reduce response bias or the amount of ineffectual data collected (Dane, 1990). Dane (1990) also reports that the first set of items in a questionnaire should include the most interesting and the least threatening topic, and should be related to the fundamental purpose of the research.

Pretesting the Questionnaire

Pretesting, according to Dane (1990), or the administration of “research measures under special conditions, usually before full-scale administration to participants” (p.

127), is perhaps the most important stage of any research. Feasibility of data is not possible unless the participants have completely understood the questionnaire and have provided the appropriate responses. The objective of pretesting is essentially to test the measures employed and to determine how well the instructions are understood (Dane, 1990).

Pilot Study

Prior to collecting any data from the identified sample groups, two pilot studies of the questionnaire were conducted. The first pilot study was implemented to determine the proficiency of the questionnaire format and question structuring. This involved a group of 15 university students who agreed to participate in the pilot study. The students were chosen based on their willingness to participate and were not required to possess an affinity to sport. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire, paying particular attention to the structure and wording of the questions. They were also asked to provide feedback about the questionnaire on whether the questions and instructions were understood and if the questionnaire 'flowed'.

The second pilot study involved four young athletes with the Brisbane Broncos who had relocated to commence a contract. The responses collected from this pilot study were not included in the final data. This pilot study was conducted with the participation of the athletes to determine the effectiveness of the question items and whether the instructions were easily understood. The athletes were invited to

participate by a representative of the Brisbane Broncos management. They were then asked to follow the instructions and to answer each question as honestly as possible and to give feedback regarding the questionnaire. They were asked to comment on the 'flow' of the questionnaire and whether the questions made sense.

3.2.1.2 Parent Group & Club Representative

The research instrument was based upon and adapted as a result of responses gained from the athlete questionnaire. The questions were concerned with ascertaining the parent sample group and the club representative's observations on what constitutes a suitable home environment for relocated young male athletes. The participants in the parent sample group were identified by the club and were contacted to determine their interest in participating in the research. When a positive affirmation of interest was obtained the questionnaire was forwarded to them for their perusal. The researcher then followed this up with an informal telephone-interview that asked the participants to discuss their perceptions on what comprises a suitable home environment for relocated young male athletes. For the purpose of this research a schedule instrument was adopted. Schedules are "survey instruments that are essentially orally administered questionnaires" (Dane, 1990, p. 128) and will often demand there be a high degree of structure during the interview. However if rapport is not established with the interviewees then, as Dane suggested, this type of interview may have higher response rates if administered via a telephone or a mailed questionnaire. Participant's responses need to be accurately recorded to avoid bias, that is, "if the respondent says it, write it down, and write it verbatim" (Dane, 1990, p. 131).

This particular instrument, much like the athlete's questionnaire, was divided into two components dealing with the environment and the athlete's individual needs. The first group of questions presented by the interviewer involved the type of environment for athletes. It required them to choose between a range of environments, such as the alternative family environment, a group home environment living with other athletes, a group home environment living with other people and the environment of a dormitory situation. The participants were then asked to indicate what they felt were important elements of that environment and what accoutrements were needed to ensure that the athlete was satisfied with their surroundings. They were also asked if they felt it is important for the athletes to have a role model or adviser, and if so, what personal attributes would this role model/adviser possess. The questionnaire also prompted the participants to discuss what they believed the roles and responsibilities would be for this role model/adviser.

The second group of questions dealt with the consultation process between the athlete, the parent or guardian and the club. The participants were asked if they had been involved in the relocation of their son and how they were involved in this process. They were also asked what role the club played in the athlete's relocation and what the club's responsibility in this process was. The participants were invited to comment if they felt the club had a moral obligation to relocate the athlete to an environment suitable to their needs. This was then followed up by inquiring how they felt this could be achieved and how the Club might identify a new living environment as being suitable for the athlete. The respondents were also asked for their

suggestions to make the relocation process more effective. The final group of questions dealt with the issue of role models for the athletes, a conflict resolution process and matching the environment with the athlete.

Questions relating to the issue of role models for the athletes addressed the appropriateness and applicability of this individual. Participants were asked:

1. What responsibilities should be expected of role models?
2. What type of relationships would exist between the athlete, the role model and the club?
3. What process could the athlete or athlete's parents undertake if there were any problems with the new environment?
4. What could be done to improve these processes?
5. What is the club's responsibility or moral obligation and role in overseeing this process?

The final group of questions concerned the issue of matching the environment to the athlete and whether the participants agreed or disagreed that this was important. They were also asked how this could be achieved and their perceptions of whether the club has any obligation to ensure that the athletes were satisfied with their new environment.

3.3 Validity of the Research

Research validity refers to how well the research measures what it claims to measure.

A research experiment can have internal or external validity. Tables 1 and 2 aim to address the threats to the internal and external validity of the research.

Internal validity is the degree to which the research is measuring what it intended to measure while external validity is the level to which the research can be generalised and applied to other populations and settings

(<http://www.sci.monash.edu.au/psych/subject/1998/psy1011.rdapsyla.htm>, accessed 3rd August, 2001).

Table 1 reflects how threats to internal validity in the research were addressed. It can be seen that attempts were made to address all potential threats. Table 2 indicates that all threats to the external validity of the research were monitored.

Table 1

Threats to Internal Validity

Threat	Controlled	Explanation
Instrumentation	Partially	Home Environment Questionnaire was completed once by each participant
Selection Biases	Partially	Selection was based upon length of time with Club
Experimental	Partially	Most of the selected participants completed the questionnaire
Interaction with Selections	Yes	Research was conducted via club representative
Causal-Time Order	Partially	Questionnaires were administered at approximately the same time
Demoralisation	Yes	The research participants were in no way treated negatively

3.3 Analysis & Collation of Data

The data was analysed and collated in two stages. The first stage of the research was to determine suitable elements of an alternative environment for young athletes.

During the process of the group discussion and personal interviews a number of issues were also identified. The information collected in this stage was then analysed and developed into a list of elements recommended by the participants as well a list of issues inherent in the process of relocating young male athletes. In an endeavour to either eliminate or categorise these elements into sections, depending upon their attributes, several criteria were implemented. This is discussed further in the following chapter.

Table 2

Threats to External Validity

Threat	Controlled	Explanation
Reactive/Interactive Testing	Yes	The pretest/pilot testing was effectively completed by athletes and students
Interaction of Selection	Partially	Interaction of groups was not based upon a single characteristic
Reactive Effects Experimental Setting	Partially	Research was conducted within the confines of the club or the home

The second phase of the research was concerned with identifying the sample groups' perceptions on which environment is suitable to relocate young male athletes and the issues which were identified from phase one of the research. The participants were invited to complete a questionnaire and the information collected from this process was then analysed and common themes were identified. Prior to analyzing the data collected from phase two of the research, the participants' responses were numbered

from one to twenty, with the athlete sample group numbered from one through 14, the parent group numbered from 15 through to 19 and the club representative numbered 20. A correlation analysis was performed on the responses to identify relationships between particular elements identified from phase one of the research. This process provides an avenue to “make inferences about relationships between variables” (Dane, 1990, p. 239). These relationships are discussed in the following chapter.

3.4 Summary

This research was conducted in two phases. The first phase determined the elements necessary for establishing a suitable relocation environment for young male athletes, and also identified issues specifically in relation to relocating these individuals. This involved conducting a group discussion and personal interviews with identified individuals. The data collected from this process was then collated into a list of elements for an alternative environment and was then employed to formulate a questionnaire for the next phase of the research. The second phase was concerned with the sample groups’ perceptions regarding these issues. They were invited to complete a questionnaire and the results from this process were then collated and analysed. The findings are reported and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR FINDINGS & RESULTS

Due to the nature of this study, the following chapter is divided into two sections documenting the results and findings obtained by the research. The first section will present the findings obtained from the first phase of the research, that included the group discussion and interviews. This process identified the desirable elements that will assist the creation of a suitable home environment for young relocated male athletes. The following section will report on the findings obtained from the second phase of the research, which investigated:

- the elements of a suitable alternative home environment as identified in phase one, and;
- the issues and concerns inherent in relocating young athletes to a new living environment.

4.1 Phase One – What was Identified?

Data collection in phase one was achieved via two processes. The first process involved the implementation of a group discussion with targeted individuals while the second process incorporated four face-to-face interviews. The participants in this stage of the research were either employed or studying at the Rockhampton Campus of Central Queensland University.

4.1.1 Data Collected from the Group Discussion

Several issues arose from this phase of the research that were considered to be

important in the removal of young male athletes from their original home setting to a relocation environment. These issues, along with the identified elements, were investigated in the second phase of the research. Four principle issues arose that could signify concerns inherent in the relocation and placement of young male athletes into new homes. The issues identified in this phase of the research could be summarized as a nurturing versus a supportive environment, role models for the athletes, a consultation process and the club's role during the relocation of the young athlete.

A Nurturing Vs. Supportive Environment

An interesting issue identified by the group was their suggestion that the environment the athlete existed within prior to relocation, that is the original home environment, can be placed along a continuum. This continuum delineates the type of environment previously experienced by the athlete. The group established that this continuum incorporates three levels, which were identified as nurturing, supporting and spoiling. The group determined these continuum levels, which they suggested define the environment in which an individual was born into and raised within. A nurturing environment was defined as an environment in which an individual is able to make their own decisions but one where he/she is also encouraged to develop life skills and cultivate an individual knowledge base. The supporting environment was suggested to be an environment that basically ensures that the athlete's physical needs were being met. In this respect, physical needs are those needs neither psychological nor emotional, and are therefore tangible. A spoiling environment was defined as 'spoon-

feeding' the athlete. That is, the family or individual assigned to look after the athlete fully satisfies all of his needs.

The question was then raised as to how the athlete's original home environment can be positioned along this continuum. That is, how is the home environment assessed to determine if it is nurturing, supporting or spoiling the athlete? A general discussion regarding what elements could define the home environment in terms of spoiling, nurturing or supporting the athlete then arose. It was particular elements that were identified during this discussion that the group perceived as desirable when creating a relocation environment for young male athletes. These elements are located in Appendix B (pp. 113 – 115).

The group argued that this environment should be used as the mechanism through which the elements of the alternative environment would be devised. Another issue raised by the group was the club's role, and whether the club could take this opportunity to 'nurture' the athlete. Consequently, they may encourage the athlete to learn and develop new 'life skills', such as cooking, cleaning and basic house skills, or reinforce that, which was learned in the original home environment.

According to the group, the continuum levels relating to the athlete's original 'home environment' can be applied to the alternative environment. The relocated home environment would need to incorporate the club's objective when relocating the

athletes to alternative environments. That is, whether the club seeks to provide a nurturing, supporting or spoiling environment for the athlete. Implications of the parental and familial attitudes towards participation, competition and success are inherent in the assessment of the home environment. The group proposed that the home environment could be positioned at some point along the continuum. However, changes to the athletes' environment may occur, which would create a need for further assessment of the relocated home situation. The group felt this was an important issue, emphasising that as the athlete's needs change the environment should change with him.

Role Models for the Athlete

The issue of utilising an appropriate role model for the young athletes was introduced during this phase of the research. The group raised questions concerning the appropriateness of the role model and what their function would be within the team environment. Also, the gender, responsibility, power and authority of the individual chosen needs to be investigated to determine what characteristics would best define an appropriate role model.

Consultation Process

The group proposed that the identification of their needs be a consultation process actively involving the athlete, the athlete's family and the club's representative/s. This would be to discuss the relocation of the young athlete and to determine the most

appropriate alternative environment to place the athlete. It is important to note here, that while the research is aimed at identifying the elements and issues pertaining to relocating young male athletes from their home environment to an alternative environment, it needs to be recognised that athletes have individual needs. This applies to the environment in which they live and what is required for them to create a suitable living environment. That is, will the athlete prefer to be relocated with an alternative family or in a group home situation with other athletes? There was much conjecture that the alternative environment needs to be 'matched' with the athlete's individual needs, which would aid in creating an environment best suited to the athletes' needs.

The group identified that the club needs to be involved in an active partnership with the athlete. However, though the final decision may rest with the club, the athlete and to some extent the athlete's family, would need to be satisfied with final relocation arrangements. This questions the amount of control the athlete has over the decisions made regarding his relocation and placement into an alternative living environment. It also encompasses the parents' role and involvement in the process.

One issue identified by the group, which could be incorporated into the consultation process, is that of conflict resolution. There needs to be a process established whereby the athlete is able to address any grievances or problems that he may encounter. The athlete and his parents need to be aware of this process prior to relocation. It was

unclear, from discussions with the club, of whether there was such a process in place and how effective this had been in the past.

The Club's Responsibility

Concerns were raised in the group discussion as to what the club's responsibility is to the athlete, and how they ensure that his needs are being met. Issues of power and empowerment were also highlighted. The group suggested that one of the club's responsibilities is to provide all of the athlete's physical needs, so that everything would be done for the athlete. This would include the fulfillment of their nutrition, washing, ironing, and other such tangible needs. This was felt to be an important aspect of the athletes' daily life. Another suggestion was that the relocation process could be applied as a technique to encourage the athlete to develop his living skills. In the situation where the athletes would be renting together, a concern was raised as to what responsibilities the club should adopt. Issues of concern were expressed about whether the club should be responsible for the up-keep or maintenance of the athletes and their relocated environment. Hence, the club's objective of relocating the young athletes would need to be assessed. That is, what is the outcome the club wants to achieve when relocating these young individuals? Is the relocation environment to be an environment where the athlete spends his spare time when not in training or involved with the team, or an environment where the athlete will be nurtured and encouraged to grow and develop personally? Ultimately, the club must decide between providing an environment which nurtures and encourages the

personal development of their athletes, a supportive environment that generally provides the athletes with the basic minimum requirements to meet their needs or an environment which 'spoon feeds' the athlete.

Elements of an Alternative Environment

A fundamental aim of this research was to identify and investigate the elements perceived to be essential to an alternative environment for young male athletes aged between 16 and 20. The findings were then examined to identify common elements and were sorted according to their association with a particular category, which were identified as being either physical, social, psychological or general. The categorised findings are listed in Appendix B (pp. 113 - 115). These elements were further grouped into sub-categories and, via a process of elimination and categorization, were formulated into a list of elements considered to be essential to an athlete's alternative environment. Several criteria were devised to aid in this categorisation and elimination process.

Categorisation Criteria

Physical Elements.

These elements were categorised in this group due to their being associated more with the actual physical environment, and were divided into sub-groups under family, house, individual and other. This section incorporated such elements as the health

and training needs of the athlete, his security and sleeping needs, his age and

crowding (how many other people living in the same environment).

Social Elements.

This section is comprised of three sub-sections which are elements relating to the alternative family, the individual or the house. Identified elements pertaining to this particular category involved the family values on participation, competition and success, social skills, personal space, socioeconomic status, role models, and the flexibility of the environment.

Psychological Elements.

Elements placed into this category involved three sections, which were family, individual and house. It consisted of such elements as mentoring, motivation and control.

General Elements.

This category comprises those elements identified as having no connection to any of the above-mentioned groups and these were also sectioned into family, individual and house. The elements embodied in this group were demographic factors, community awareness, rent, phone access (including long distance calls), yard maintenance and conflict resolution.

Elimination Criteria

Three criteria were implemented to eliminate numerous elements from those identified by the group. The criteria encompassed the pre-recruiting environment, demonstrable characteristics and genetic factors.

Pre-recruiting environment.

Elements were eliminated based upon their association with the athlete's environment prior to recruitment and therefore having no effect upon the athlete's relocated environment. Elements such as birth order, access to leisure materials and access to parental time were eliminated via this principle.

Demonstrable Characteristics.

This criterion eliminated factors based upon them being physical characteristics. This involved elements such as speed and biological age. These factors are detected during the identification and recruitment stage and therefore would have no significance on the athlete's relocated environment.

Genetic Factors.

Genetic factors such as height, blood group and somatotype were eliminated as they did not fit within the parameters of this research. Genetic factors were already accounted for as the research assumed that the athlete had demonstrated those

physical and physiological characteristics necessary to perform optimally in his chosen sport.

4.1.2 Data collected from Interviews

There were five face-to-face interviews conducted during the period, July 1997 through to December 1997. Four of the five interviewees were asked to provide their thoughts on what elements that believed desirable for a suitable environment for young relocated athletes. The fifth interview involved a representative of the Brisbane Broncos and the information collected in this interview related to the recruitment process of the club.

Data collected from Face-to-Face Interviews

Four of the interviews obtained information relating to the group discussion and the issues that arose from that process. The two issues that arose from these interviews concerned a nurturing or supportive environment and role models for the athletes.

Nurturing or Supportive Environment

One interviewee (Interview No. 3, Aug, 1997) emphasised that when placing the individual into an alternative environment there are specific needs involved. These needs encompass health and safety issues, the need to be part of a warm and caring environment, the needs arising from various age groups and diverse cultural backgrounds as well as individual needs. Another issue is the general neatness and

tidiness of the environment that becomes important if the athlete abhors untidiness.

It was emphasised that the alternative environment needs to encourage the discipline or guidance of the athlete while also allowing the freedom to develop. It was also suggested that this environment should also promote an understanding of, or adopt, a sports culture and participate in recreational or family activities. The alternative environment should be in close proximity to the training and support facilities for the athlete. The environment should also be created to provide somewhere for the athlete to apply himself and not be distracted. (Interview, No. 2, Aug 1997).

The environment would need to be assessed to determine who would conduct or facilitate the learning of 'daily living activities', as well as whose responsibility it would be to ensure that all of the athlete's needs are being met. This environment should have 'house rules'. The athlete and the family should have consensus over what these rules are. These rules would cover the 'boundaries' as to what is acceptable and what is not acceptable behaviour, conflict resolution and how to deal with problems before they arise. This would also apply to the 'partners' of the athletes and their involvement with the new environment (Interview No. 2, Aug, 1997).

A suggestion, introduced from Interview No. 2 (Aug, 1997), was that the club 'match' the athlete with the environment and to determine whether they intend to create a

home, a place to live or 'just a house' for the young athlete. However, it was also suggested a wrong match with an alternative family would be more detrimental to the athlete's well being than if they were originally relocated to a dormitory or domicillary environment. To avoid a 'bad match' there needs to be consultation with the athletes and their parents. To do this the club needs to be involved in active partnership with the athlete and his family. The alternative environment should allow some control as well as empower the athlete to develop other skills and abilities. This alternative environment, much like the home environment, needs to address the overall well being of the athlete while encompassing a 'holistic approach' to meet the athlete's needs (Interview No. 1, Aug, 1997).

When assessing an alternative environment for the athlete it should be affordable, accessible and appropriate as well as secure for the individual. Transition issues and men's issues are of significant importance when placing young male athletes into new homes (Interview No. 3, Aug, 1997). The club also needs to recognise that while the athlete excels in sport their social skills may also need to be developed. The athlete needs to be provided with an educational or work system so that they are able to develop skills outside of their sport commitments.

Role Models for the Athletes

Another issue, which arose from the interviews, pertaining to the placement of athletes in suitable living environments is the utilization of appropriate role models.

This was highlighted due to the understanding that the athlete's emotional development is still occurring and the influence of the role model needs to be appropriate. There also needs to be continuity and balance to the environment as well as the maintenance of relationships. The fostering of a good relationship between the athlete's own family and the alternative family was also identified as being important as there is a need for the 'foster family' to acknowledge the athlete's family and the role that they perform. All of the interviewees felt that the alternative family is the most suitable environment in which to place athletes compared to alternative possibilities. A concern was then raised that with other environments, such as the athlete sharing with other athletes, that they may not be able to provide a suitable environment for each other. Negative behaviours, that is, behaviours that would be defined as having a negative effect on the athlete's well being and/or athletic performance, could eventually become prominent in this type of environment. The participants identified that an alternative home environment may provide some guidance and support in this regard.

Data collected from Interview with Brisbane Broncos Representative

The following information was obtained from the interview conducted with the club representative in December of 1997. The aim of the interview was to identify the process the Brisbane Broncos undertake when they relocate a young athlete.

The Brisbane Broncos devote an amount of funds each year for the purpose of

recruiting new players. This incorporates funding for scholarships for young athletes.

This amount is then broken down into funding available for young athletes in school and for those that have left school or completed their secondary education. The athletes recruited are usually between the ages of 16 and 20, and the scholarships are for two years as the athletes are contracted to the club for that period of time. The Club's previous experience has indicated that one-year contracts are not effective. The Broncos also have identified recruiting officers who are provided with funds to be used for recruiting young athletes. In one year the Brisbane Broncos may conduct three recruitment camps. They may also conduct elite camps that involve the best of the scholarship athletes and talented individuals that have been identified by the recruiting officers. There is very little recruiting done via encouraging established players from other teams to relocate to Brisbane. The Broncos tend to rely upon recruitment of new talent.

The young athletes, upon commencement of contractual arrangements, are required to spend six months in a family home designated by club officials. They are also required to study or work as the Broncos aim is to ensure that their athletes develop a skill or career that will benefit them upon completion of their football career. The Broncos also maintain a registry of homes and families where their young athletes are billeted, as well as conduct development nights for their new recruits that aids in developing their social, personal and media skills. The Broncos choose to utilise families for initially housing their athletes upon relocation from the home

environment. It is recognised by the club that the young athlete is at a vulnerable stage in his life and needs the stability of a family home to aid in his adjusting to the alternative environment.

In conjunction with the registry form, which can be found in Appendix A (p. 111 - 112), the prospective family is invited to attend an informal activity conducted by the club to allow the family to meet club officials. There is also the opportunity for prospective families to meet other families already billeting athletes. This informal activity presents an opportunity for the club to determine if the prospective family meets the 'unofficial' requirements of the club. That is, if the family appears suitable to the club and provides an environment that adopts a 'sports culture'. The families need to be aware of the athlete's training needs as well as the late hours the athlete can maintain. The Brisbane Broncos provide the family with a set fee as well as tickets to games to show their appreciation for the family's contribution to the athlete's well being.

The families that are selected by the Brisbane Broncos to accommodate athletes remain on the registry for the year they billet an athlete and the one following that. There are no definitive pre-requisites for selecting a particular family, though it is preferred that the athlete has his own 'space'. The club needs to be informed of the size of the household, as they do not intend to place an athlete into an already crowded environment.

4.2 Phase Two - Sample Group Data

The data collected from the sample groups was collated and analysed. It will be reported here as it relates to the issues identified in phase one of the research. The issues documented in this section incorporate the elements necessary for establishing a suitable alternative environment for young male relocated athletes. These include the following:

- a nurturing versus a supportive environment;
- the relocation process;
- the club's responsibility to the relocated athlete;
- the conflict resolution process; and
- the use of appropriate role models for the athletes.

A Pearson's Correlation Analysis was conducted over several elements incorporated into Phase Two of the research and these results are recorded in Tables 3 - 5, documented on pages 73 - 76.

4.2.1 Elements of a Suitable Environment

Various elements were identified, by participants in phase one of this research, as essential to establishing a suitable alternative environment for relocated athletes.

These elements were then classified into distinct categories or were eliminated based upon their pertinence to this research. As discussed earlier in this chapter (pp. 59 - 62) the elements were classified into physical, social, psychological and general

categories (Appendix B, pp. 113 - 115) according to their association with that particular category.

Of particular relevance to this research are the elements identified in the physical and social categories. The physical category (refer to Appendix B) was further divided into family, house, individual and other. Under family, elements such as crowding and the structure of the alternative family were grouped. The individual elements of the physical category encompassed elements relating to health and training. This involved nutrition, recovery, rest, sleep, access to facilities, public transport, proximity and access to training and competition venues. Classified into the house category were 'physical housing' needs such as security, an independent or shared bedroom, and/or separate toilet and bathroom. Elements such as the flexibility of the environment, job/education, preparation prior to leaving home and the individual's living skills were grouped into the other category.

The social category comprised of sections relating to the family, the individual and the house. Social family elements incorporated the needs of the athlete pertaining to the alternative family which included family values, the emotional climate of the home, the employment of the billeting parents, parental characteristics, the quality of home relationships, family cohesion and the expectations of the relationships between the foster family and the athlete. The group identified that the most important issue in relocating young athletes is to ensure that the athlete is 'matched' with what they

had experienced in their home environment. These elements were classified into the individual section of the social category along with emotional development, empowerment issues, cultural, regional, racial, ethnic, and religious issues, expectations of new relationships and the appropriateness of role models. The social house category encompassed such issues as group environment, whether a 'home' or a 'house' environment was to be established for the athlete, determining common interests between the athlete and the alternative family, and the establishment of house rules.

The psychological category was divided into family and individual. The family group comprised of mentoring and control. These two elements addressed the questions raised about who has control over the athlete and what form of mentoring does the club have available for the athlete. The psychological individual sub-category incorporated elements dealing with individual issues such as emotional stability, motivation and control.

Elements in the general category encompassed demographic factors, conflict resolution, the flexibility of the rules, community awareness, and house issues pertaining to rent, telephone access and yard maintenance.

4.2.2 Matching the Athlete to his Environment

Overall, all of the participants identified that the alternative family option was the

most suitable environment for young relocated athletes. One parent described this environment as being 'more like home' than the other identified environments, such as the 'dormitory environment' and a 'house environment that involved sharing with other athletes or individuals outside the team' (Parent, Participant 17, May, 1998). All of those respondents that felt that the alternative family environment was the most suitable indicated that this was due to the alternative environment providing the athlete with all his physical needs such as washing, cleaning and cooking, and was also perceived as being in a position to meet other emotional and psychological needs.

The alternative family environment was believed to be the most suitable as it can also feel "more like home" (Parent, Participant 16, May, 1998) as well as providing the athlete with the time and space to "concentrate on his work and sport" (Club, Participant 20, June, 1998). The respondents from the club and parent sample groups felt that this type of environment is advantageous as it can aid the athlete in adjusting to his new environment faster as well as dissipate feelings of loneliness that can lead to a pervading sense of being homesick. The club respondent felt that the athletes need to be in this environment for at least 6 - 12 months as they "require a stable environment early in their relocation".

All of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the following elements

were important in establishing a suitable alternative environment for young male

athletes. These elements include:

- the size of the household (73.7%);
- the characteristics (age, gender, etc) of the alternative family (89.5%);
- ensuring that the athlete 'gets on' with the new family (100%); and
- the emotional climate of the alternative home (94.7%).

All of the participants strongly agreed that the alternative family should have similar participation values and that the environment should be supportive of the athlete (84.2% and 100% respectively). The education qualities of the alternative family was also thought to be an important factor with 57.9% agreeing it was so, however a number of respondents (26.3%) indicated that the education background of the alternative family was not an important factor in providing a suitable environment for relocated athletes.

The Pearson's Correlation Analysis employed on these elements resulted in establishing several relationships, of which can be noted in Tables 3, 4 and 5 (Table 3, p. 73, Table 4, p. 74 & Table 5, p. 76). Table 3 documents the relationships obtained between several key elements that relate to the athlete's socio-cultural environment. Significant correlations (refer to Table 3, p. 73) were obtained between the education background of the alternative family and similar participation values (.490); the athlete's relationship with the alternative family and the emotional climate

of the home (.474). From Table 4 (p. 74), which analysed the variables relating to the alternative environment, it can be noted that a supportive environment correlated significantly (0.560) with similar participation values, as well as with an environment, that encourages athletes to develop life skills (0.472).

Table 3: The Socio-Cultural Elements of the Athlete's Relocated Environment.

	Size of Household	Family Characteristic	Education Of Family	Athlete Relationship with Family	Emotional Climate	Supportive Environment	Similar Participation Values
Size of Household	1.000	0.448*	-0.150	0.490*	0.448*	-0.022	0.055
Family Characteristics	0.448*	1.000	-0.048	0.469*	0.689**	-0.135	0.092
Education of Family	-0.150	-0.048	1.000	0.345	0.257	0.634**	0.490*
Athlete Relationship with Family	0.490*	0.469*	0.345	1.000	0.474*	0.382	0.386
Emotional Climate of Household	0.488*	0.689*	0.257	0.474*	1.000	-0.072	0.096
Supportive Environment	-0.222	-0.135	0.634**	0.382	-0.072	1.000	0.560*
Similar Participation Values	0.055	0.092	0.490*	0.386	0.096	0.560*	1.000

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Both the parent group and club representative felt that the success of the alternative environment would depend on the age of family members of the new home and how suitable the environment was for the individual. The club respondent also suggested that if the alternative family is carefully selected then there would be no disadvantages to this environment. One parent respondent pointed out that the club

has “an investment in this athlete”, and that he will “perform better if happy and contented” (Parent, Participant 18, 1997).

Other elements indicated by all respondents to be pertinent to the suitability of an alternative environment included;

- that the athlete be involved in all decisions regarding his relocation (94.7% agreed or strongly agreed);
- a flexible living environment (100% agreed or strongly agreed)
- an environment which nurtures the independence of the athlete (57.9% strongly agreed & 42.1% agreed); and,
- that the athlete is provided with the personal space and time within the environment to recover from training and competition (78.9% strongly agreed).

Table 4: Variables related to the Athletes Relocated Environment.

	Matching the Environment to the Athlete	Athlete should have Interests Outside the Team	Athlete Should have a Role Model	Encourages the Athlete to develop new Skills	Athlete has friends outside the Team
Matching the Environment to the Athlete	1.000	-0.170	-0.311	-0.059	0.148
Athlete should have Interests Outside the Team	-0.170	1.000	0.506*	0.454	0.805**
Athlete should have a Role Model	-0.311	0.506*	1.000	0.042	0.381
Encourages the Athlete to develop living skills	-0.059	0.454	0.042	1.000	0.472*
Athlete has friends Outside the Team	0.148	0.805**	0.381	0.472*	1.000

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

A Pearson's correlation analysis of the questionnaire items relating to the issues

identified in phase one of this study yielded several significant correlations. The analysis indicated that a flexible alternative environment (Table 5, p. 76) would nurture the independence of the athlete (0.685) as well as providing the athlete with the necessary space and time to recover from training and competition (0.286). It was also indicated that an environment, which provides the athlete with the necessary time and space to recover from training, is significantly related (0.484) with the importance of the athlete receiving nutritional meals (Table 5, p. 76).

The parent and club participants made a number of suggestions on how the athlete could be satisfied with the alternative environment. The parent sample group suggested that all three parties, that is the athlete, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the club, meet prior to the athlete's relocation. The participants felt that this would be beneficial as a way of a 'getting to know you type of activity' (Parent, Participant 16, May, 1998). The parents also suggested that the club selects the athlete's alternative environment and the parent(s)/guardian(s) are able to meet the alternative family for their own peace of mind. The club representative supported this view by offering that there be careful selection and matching of the athlete to his new environment and family.

4.2.3 Consultation Process

Questions pertaining to a consultation process related to the club's responsibility during this process and what has to be done to ensure the athlete's satisfaction with his new home environment. These questions also involved a desire for the athlete to be involved in the decisions made regarding his relocation experience.

Table 5: Variables highlighting the Relocated Environment.

	Flexible Environment	Nurtures Independence of Athlete	Personal Space and Time to Recover
Flexible Environment	1.000	0.685**	0.286
Nurtures Independence of Athlete	0.685**	1.000	0.083
Important the athlete receives nutritional meals	-0.122	-0.077	0.484*

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Several of the athlete and all of the parent respondents felt that the club had a number of responsibilities or roles that they could embrace throughout the relocation of the young male athlete. Incorporated in this is the proposal for the club to locate an individual or family in an environment similar to their previous home environment. There needs to be more consultation regarding this process involving the three parties to advise the athlete and his family what is happening and what is to happen. It was also suggested by one parent that the "club choose the family or guardian, then parents and guardians meet for suitability" (Parent, Participant 16, May, 1998). Other respondents who felt that it was important that the young athlete was introduced to his alternative family prior to the relocation supported this process.

The respondents also felt that the athlete should be involved in an active role in the decisions made regarding his relocation. Encouraging the athlete to take part in the discussions between the club and the parents could do this. The parent sample group felt that it was important that the athlete is satisfied with where he will be placed. It can also be beneficial for both families, that is the athlete's family and the 'alternative' family, to be introduced to each other prior to the relocation.

4.2.4 Role Models for the Athletes

The implementation of appropriate role models was an issue raised early in the research. The data relating to this issue incorporated the suitability of the potential role models and what characteristics should a potential role model demonstrate. It was felt that the athletes could learn from an appropriate role model. It was indicated from the results that the gender of the role model would not be an issue.

Most of the athlete respondents felt that they would benefit from the utilisation of an appropriate role model. The reasoning for this was that the role model allows the athlete to "gauge oneself against something" (Athlete, Participant 6, November, 1997) or can be "someone to strive to be like" (Athlete, Participant 3, November, 1997). A role model, it was indicated, would assist the athlete to set achievable goals and help to provide some direction for them. The role model would be able to offer advice to the athlete. If the athlete is having problems they can approach the role model for guidance, comfort and support. One athlete suggested that the athletes were

too young and inexperienced to make decisions for themselves. Therefore the role model can provide another avenue for information, counseling and advice for the young athlete.

The athletes suggested that there were a number of individuals they felt would be appropriate role models. They identified a number of characteristics they perceived to be essential for an appropriate role model. The athletes indicated several well-known individuals connected to the sports arena, including Allan Langer, Wayne Bennett and Michael Jordan. Ultimately, the athletes felt that a potential role model needed to be someone the athletes could respect; someone they could look up too; and a mature person. The role model could “also be a neutral party” (Athlete, Participant 9, November, 1997), not necessarily an individual involved in the sport. The parent sample group and the club representative identified a role model as someone who could be a mature individual within the club. Someone that had successfully negotiated the same sports career path as the one chosen by the young athlete was felt to be an ideal example.

All of the participants were asked what roles and responsibilities the role model would have with the athletes. They identified a number of responsibilities. These responsibilities incorporated providing a good example, guidance, experience, a ‘strong hand’, to provide advice and to allow them to have their own opinion. A ‘neutral judge’, and to be a friend were also indicated to be important characteristics

for the role model to have. The role model should “always be consistent in his attitude and decision making” (Athlete, Participant 2, November, 1997), be able to guide the athlete in making the right decision, (especially relating to contractual agreements) and to be organised, calm and easygoing.

Respondents indicated that there were a number of ways the athlete could learn from an appointed role model. This included watching what the athlete ‘did’ and to ‘do’ it the way it was supposed to be ‘done’. Learning from the role model can be achieved via the ‘way’ in which the role model conducts him or herself. That is the manner in which “he or she looks after themselves” (Athlete, Participant 7, November, 1997). Also the athlete can learn from the role model’s own experiences and how they handled problems that may arise and how he, or she, prioritised responsibilities.

4.3 Summary

The research yielded some issues that are inherent in the relocation of young male athletes, as well as identified elements perceived necessary to establish a suitable alternative living environment. These issues incorporated the type of environment deemed suitable for young male athletes, the advantages of a role model, the consultation process and the Club’s responsibility to the athlete. Several important relationships between these elements were also highlighted and will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

As previously discussed, there were two focus points that shaped the process of this study. However, as identified in the results a number of issues arose from this study that provided further insight into the role that the new home environment plays in the relocation of young male athletes. The two focal points for the crux of this research involve determining a suitable home environment for young relocated athletes and to identify those elements that help create such an environment. Other issues to be discussed in this chapter relate to the desired characteristics of the new environment and the issues that are inherent in relocating young male athletes.

5.1 A Suitable Alternative Environment

It was the intention of this study to determine the home environment that is perceived as being the best suited to house young male athletes on completion of the relocation process. This study identified that an alternative family home environment was the best suited setting to re-locate young males athletes. A secondary objective was to identify and then investigate the elements desired as part of this new home environment. Ultimately, these elements that were identified determined the physical, cultural and social environment that the young athlete will exist within during a vulnerable stage of his sports career. The results yielded that this 'new' environment the athlete is placed in, needs to be stable and on a comparative level to that which he existed within prior to the relocation process. Notably, this study reveals that the relocation environment needs to address and, wherever possible, meet

the athlete's needs, thus allowing the young athlete to concentrate on his performance during training and competition.

Criteria were developed that enabled the elements identified in phase one of to be categorised or eliminated from this second phase of the research. The elements that were not eliminated from this study were separated into categories based upon whether they could be defined as being a 'physical' or 'social' requirement. The elements grouped into the physical categories were identified as being responsible for determining the athlete's quality of life in a 'physical' world while the social category elements encapsulated the athlete's cultural, social and educational environments. The psychological elements identified in the social category relate to either the family or individual differences of the athlete, which according to Revelle and Anderson (1995) are involved in the influence of environment on the development of talent. The family elements encompass mentoring and control issues. The research highlighted that there needs to be a mentoring process in place that provides the athlete with the necessary support whenever he needed or desired such assistance. Control issues become important when determining who has authority over the athlete.

A key issue raised was whether or not it was necessary to provide an environment in which discipline, or disciplinary measures, were carried out by the alternative family to the athlete when it becomes necessary. This then presents an issue for the individuals involved. Who is ultimately responsible for the athlete? A simple answer

to this question is to determine responsibility of the athlete prior to relocating, as it is important that the boundaries pertaining to the alternative family and the athlete are made clear.

5.2 An Environment for Relocated Athletes

The literature, of concern to this research, was unable to clearly define the role that environment maintains in the development of individual characteristics, particularly that of athletic ability. There was some indication (Vernon, 1979) that 'environment' can invoke or promote the development of individual characteristics. The literature (Mather, 1967; Woods & Grant, 1995; & Revelle & Anderson, 1995) also identified that it is the combination of the individual's genes and the physical, social, emotional, and cultural environments they exist within that can create individual talent. Bloom, in Durand-Bush and Salmela (1996), then adds to this by suggesting that it is through 'deliberate practice', for a minimum period of at least 10 years, that individuals achieve a level of expertise, whether it's in sport or another field of talent. It is this theorem that is of most significance to athletes who are relocating to enhance their individual talent in a sport career. Bloom (in Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996) further recommends that this period of 'deliberate practice' needs to be supplemented with nurturing, encouraging, and education to reach the 'extreme' levels of ability that creates an elite individual. This also has significance for the relocation environment, as it provides support for the important role that this new alternative environment can have on the development of individual athletic ability.

Ultimately, an athlete that is satisfied with their new environment is one who can freely concentrate on his training and competitive performance. If the athlete is still in a formative stage of his athletic development, such as during the period of ten years of deliberate practice as suggested by Bloom (in Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996), then any dissatisfaction experienced by the athlete is likely to have a detrimental effect on the nurturing of their talent. It then is easy to understand how important creating a satisfactory relocation environment, particularly when combined with the various physical and emotional changes the athlete experiences during this time. Of utmost importance during the relocation process is the athlete's final satisfaction with their placement in a new home.

Mather (1964) proposed that genetic variations, or unsurpassed talents, would only evolve in certain environments. When this is applied to the theory that individual characteristics are a result of the combination of their genetics and environment, it would suggest that the genetics of the person and the environment are not isolated factors but two agents fusing together to create unique individuals. This is of particular importance for this research. If an individual's environment, in combination with their heredity elements, is responsible for the creation of his or her athletic ability, the original home environment then becomes more important for being the catharsis that may activate the 'talent' in athletes for this particular sport. Thus, depending on the characteristics of the original home environment, such as the sports culture and participation values, access to particular sports, sports training, coaching and education would then cause the individual's talent to manifest

according to these contributing factors. This then makes sense for those individuals who sometimes 'follow in their parent's footsteps'.

It was noted by Mather (1964), and supported by Halsey (1977), that as each human being is unique, so too is their environment unique. A specific environment is made of individual properties that will generate distinct reactions for any person who inhabits this domain. Azar (1997) refers to this as the genetic-environment correlations. These correlations would explain why one sibling might attain a higher level of expertise than others, as individuals take from similar environments different experiences. For example, one sibling may demonstrate more athletic ability than another sibling, even after having been raised in the same environment. It is the combination of one's genetic information and his or her environment that creates individual talent (Revelle & Anderson, 1995). However, by attempting to establish the athlete in an environment similar to that which he originally experienced may continue to nurture his athletic ability.

All of the above mentioned factors would play an important role in the development of an individual's talent. It is unclear how environment would affect their performance once the talent has been identified and allowed to develop further, although it would be important to determine such an effect. The relocation environment, being a new environment that the athlete would need to acquaint himself with, could significantly add to the burden that the athlete would need to adjust to, particularly if he is not satisfied with the new environment. Taking into

account Bloom's (in Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996) postulation of 'deliberate practice', and adding to this that an individual's reaction to a specific environment is unique could raise some issues for the club. These issues relate to the new environment that the athlete is being relocated to, as the club would want to place their athletes within environments that would nurture and enhance the talent as well encourage the athlete to learn and develop new skills.

This research identified that the club needs to ensure that the relocation environment and the athlete are compatible. The elements that were identified in this study will aid in defining an environment suitable to the athlete's needs. To identify an environment that is similar, or superior, to the athlete's original home environment would ensure that the 'nurturing' of the athlete's talent is maintained. It would be important, due to the factors discussed above, to locate the athlete in an environment similar to the original home environment where the talent was first encouraged to development. This would encourage the continual development and promotion of their talent. It would also aid the athlete in adjusting quicker to the relocation environment and therefore allow him to concentrate on his performances on and off the competition field.

The alternative family environment, as identified in phase one of the study, was supported by the respondents in phase two as the most suitable environment to house young athletes within when they relocate from their families to begin their professional sporting career. Justification for this was provided by the participants'

assertion that the alternative family environment should closely replicate the environment the athlete would have been relocated from. Therefore, the participants believe that it may reproduce many of the aspects to be found in the original family environment where the athlete first developed his talent for the sport. This recognises the role of the original environment in developing the individual's talent. As indicated by some researchers (Mather 1965; Halsey, 1977; Revelle & Anderson 1995 and Woods & Grant 1995) the original home environment contributes significantly to the creation and development of the individual's talent. This implies that an alternative environment, which maintains similar values and culture of sport participation comparable to that which the athlete experienced prior to relocation, would be beneficial to the athlete's continued success. It would also benefit the athlete in aiding his adjustment to his new home as well as enhancing the individual's contentment and satisfaction with the relocation environment.

The research highlights that the emotional climate of the alternative environment, along with the characteristics and size of the alternative household appears to play a significant role in creating a suitable alternative environment for a young relocated athlete. The results also suggest that the alternative environment impacts significantly on the athlete. This emphasizes the need for the athlete to be comfortable with the people with whom he will be living with while in the relocation environment. Any uneasiness or dissatisfaction with the environment was identified as generating negative feelings on the part of the athlete, which according to the respondents, impacts negatively on the athlete's performance during training and competition. The

eventual satisfaction of the athlete was highlighted as being an important component of the relocation process.

An interesting finding within the results was the relationship identified between the size of the household (i.e. the number of people in the home) and the athlete's relationship with the alternative family. As can be seen from Table 3 (p. 73) there was a positive relationship between these two elements indicating that an increase in the size of the household would result in an increase in the athlete's relationship with the family. This is contrary to the research on talent, particularly in relation to intelligence, as crowding (or the size of the household) was identified as an inhibitor on the development of intelligence (Gottfried, 1984).

There also appeared to be an important positive relationship with defining characteristics such as religion, culture, work, education, interests and values of the alternative family and the athlete 'getting on' with the family (refer to Table 3, p. 73). The family characteristics element also positively correlates with the emotional climate of the home. This implies that the more 'alike' the alternative and original family are the more likely there will be a positive emotional climate with in the new environment. This could also apply to the athlete being relocated into this home. As indicated by the results the more the athlete has in common with the alternative family the more likely he will 'get along' with them, hence creating a more satisfactory environment for the athlete, and enhancing his overall contentment and subsequent athletic performance.

It was also identified within the results that it was particularly important for the athlete to feel satisfied with this new alternative environment. One suggestion was for the athlete to be 'matched' to the alternative environment. This would involve consultation with the athlete prior to relocating to determine his perceived needs, as well as identifying key elements of the original home environment. This process would help to determine personality traits and type so that they can be matched to a family that would best suit the young athlete's personality and needs. The respondents suggested that careful selection and placement of the athlete into this alternative environment would ensure that the athlete was satisfied with that environment. To do this, it was suggested, the club would need to consult not only with the athletes but also the athlete's family.

Another avenue open to the club to aid the young athletes to settle into their role within the team is to identify or nominate individuals who could be involved with the athlete in a role model, mentoring and/or advisory capacity. This role model or mentor need not be involved in the sport arena or of the same sex as the athlete, though it appears that the person or people identified by the club should be someone the athletes can respect and seek counsel with when needed. The athlete can benefit from an appropriate role model through the provision of guidance, as a 'good example' and the mentor's own life experience.

Also identified within the research was the need for the athlete to have interests/contacts 'outside' of those directly related to training and competition. The

role model could possibly be a way to ensure this was occurring in a positive way for the athlete. Referring to Table 4 (p. 74) it can be seen that there was a high correlation (a result of 0.506) between the role model and the athlete having interests outside the team, indicating very well that the role model would not necessarily have to be an internal arrangement. One other significant (Table 4, p. 74) correlation was between the athlete having interests outside the club and also having social contacts outside the team (a result of 0.805 significant at the 0.05 level) suggesting that this may play an important role in the athlete's overall satisfaction with the relocation process.

Ultimately, it is beneficial to be aware of the individual athlete's needs. An effective consultation mechanism involving the three related parties, the athlete, the athlete's parents and the club would aid in the identification of these needs. This would also ensure that there is careful selection and placement of athletes with prospective families. An important issue raised by the parent sample group of this study was for the athlete to be satisfied with his new 'home'. The findings suggest that more consultation is needed to ensure that the athlete takes an active role in the decisions made regarding his relocation and placement into a new home environment.

An issue of particular importance when selecting a suitable environment for a young athlete is to consider the 'type' of environment the athlete was living in prior to his or her relocation. As determined by this research, an athlete's original living

environment (the environment he was residing in prior to relocation) can be graded along a continuum that encompasses nurturing, supporting and spoiling categories.

The research findings emphasise the necessity to determine the athlete's original home environment according to this continuum that will then provide a mechanism to aid the Club in identifying suitable new living arrangements for the individual. Continual identification of individual long term goals needs to be undertaken, as well as identifying what it is the athlete needs from this living environment. An environment that encourages the athlete to develop new skills and abilities, such as the 'nurturing' environment, would offer the opportunity for the athlete to develop independently and become self-sufficient. For this particular study, an alternative nurturing and supportive home environment was recognised as the most beneficial for it incorporates the club's goal for the athlete to be provided with every opportunity to become self-sufficient and self-reliant.

The findings highlighted some important relationships (refer to Table 3, p. 73) between the level of education of the alternative family as perceived by the respondents, similar participation values and a supportive home environment. It can be seen that there was a positive relationship obtained between obtaining a supportive home environment and the education level of the alternative family as well as there being a positive relationship between the perceived education level of the alternative family and similar participation values. These significant relationships can provide the club with a pattern for selection of potential families to 'foster' young athletes

who require relocation. It must be understood, however, that the proceeding relationship must be viewed tentatively as there will always be exceptions. The education levels of prospective 'foster' families may provide the club with an indication that the family has similar values pertaining to sport and the needs of athlete. Consequently, it may provide an insight into a potentially suitable environment for the young athlete. According to McKay (1990), if an individual is not exposed to an environment offering similar participation values and a sports culture that positively reinforces their efforts they are not likely to want to be involved in the sport. Ultimately, this may not always be the case and judgements based solely on the education level of prospective families alone may result in the club making an invalid and inappropriate decision.

5.3 Implications for Future Research

Greater attention must be placed upon the alternative housing environments for young relocated athletes on contract. The environment in which these young athletes are housed has direct implications for the level of life satisfaction for the individual and their level of attainment in their chosen sport. Alternative housing environments for young relocated athletes will have significant effects the overall quality of his life. A poor physical environment for individuals often "reflects low regard for them; prevents them acting independently; reduces their privacy; makes it difficult for them to attain a sense of belonging; creates stress as a result of overcrowding or inadequate facilities; prevents normalised living; and limits options for developmental experiences" (Tully, 1986, p. 102). Therefore, identification of the key issues relating

to the new housing environment, which the young male athletes are relocated within, is a particular area of research that should be pursued further as it would generate supplementary proactive measures to address the athlete's level of satisfaction with his new surroundings. These measures may then be adopted by other sporting bodies.

Additionally, the continual increase in the commercialisation and commodification of sport is generating new pressures on young athletes. Not only are athletes being developed at an earlier age, as the result of increased specific talent identification programs, they are being 'packaged' in such a manner that bears considerable personal stress is frequently generated with major consequences for those individuals not sufficiently capable or mature enough to handle such stress. Ultimately, any future research in this area needs to focus on the changing culture of professional sporting organisations and the impact of the intrusive nature of organisational activities on the individual. While player performance on the field is of paramount importance it will always be necessary for the club to accept a large degree of responsibility for the general well being and support of the athlete.

According to Vernon (1979) environment incorporates all the factors remaining after the genetic elements have been identified. Additionally, it encompasses more than just the individual (Revelle & Anderson, 1995). Environment, also imparts a nurturing or inhibiting effect on the development of individual characteristics (Vernon, 1979). Thus, the relocation environment will play a significant role in the athlete's development and daily life experiences. As, proposed by Tully (1986), the

living environment determines the individual's daily experiences and their relationships with others, while ultimately determining the extent to which their basic needs are met.

The literature indicates that the level of material elucidating the role of an individual's home environment and how it influences athletic performance is quite limited. In fact, there has been no published material to the best of the author's knowledge that directly looks at the issues of relocated athletes and the impact of home environment on their level of satisfaction regarding lifestyle and the implication this has for individual athletic performance. Ultimately, the suggestion presented by the respondents to 'match' the athlete to an environment that will best suit him, is perhaps the most important find of this research. In conjunction with the respondent's suggestion that the alternative family is best able to provide supportive and nurturing surroundings, it could be suggested that the new relocation environment should be one that is another home/family environment that best matches the athlete's needs.

The participants of this study believed that an alternative family was best positioned to provide a supportive environment for young male athletes. The respondents offered that this environment 'nurtures' the athlete, which brings to mind connotations of the 'nurturing' concept raised by Bloom in Durand-Bush & Salmela (1996). 'Nurturing' is the element believed by the authors to be significantly responsible for developing an individual's talent or ability. Based upon this, it would

then be plausible and beneficial to relocate young athletes to an environment that will 'nurture' their talent, such as the alternative family environment identified in this study.

'Matching' the athlete with a suitable alternative home environment would aid in stabilising that individual in an environment in which he not only feels comfortable with but also allow him to feel supported in his endeavour to further develop his athletic ability. It would become necessary for the continuation of that individual's talent that he be normally relocated to an environment similar to that of his immediate family. It is this environment that originally generated this individual's talent for sport. According to some researchers (Mather, 1964; Revelle & Anderson, 1995), genetic variations will only evolve in particular environments or the variations of environments will be demonstrated in individuals with specific genetic attributes. It is important to remember that environment, as indicated by Durand-Bush & Salmela (1996), is largely responsible for the development of individual talent and that environment can contribute from 30% to 70% of individual variance (Revelle & Anderson, 1995). The environment the athlete is placed within should maintain the same values and goals as the athlete. An environment, which does not pursue a 'sport' oriented culture, may not fully understand and respect the athlete's individual and sport needs.

The research findings suggest that there is a need ensure that the relocated environment is similar to the original home environment that the athlete first

developed his talent for the sport. Support for this is Ericsson and Lehman's argument that "expert performance is achieved through enduring deliberate practice carried out for a minimum of 10 years" (Durand-Bush & Salmela, 1996, p. 89). They suggest that it is this period of 'deliberate practice' in which the athlete hones his athletic ability so the relocation environment will then play a significant role in the further development of the athlete's ability.

5.4 Summary

Two components were addressed by this research however a number of issues were raised in the second phase of the research that provides further awareness into the process of relocating young male athletes. This study incorporated determining that environment best perceived to provide a nurturing influence on the athlete, the elements that are deemed desirable when attempting to create a suitable new home and the issues inherent in relocating young male athletes. The issues and elements adopted from Phase I of the research were investigated via formulated questionnaires administered to the sample groups. The data collected from the questionnaires was supported by a correlation analysis conducted across several elements identified from Phase One of the research. Significant relationships were identified and discussed. An important finding of the research was the identification of the alternative home environment as being the best-suited environment to re-establish young relocated male athletes within. Significantly, there were a number of desired elements and characteristics that will aid in the formation of a suitable home environment for young relocated male athletes. These elements were also investigated and discussed.

CHAPTER SIX SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

The fundamental aim of this research was to identify the elements and investigate suitable relocation environments for young male athletes. The study also highlighted the issues inherent in the process of relocating young male athletes from their original home environment to new environments. This process resulted in identifying that an alternative home environment that involves sharing with another family, as opposed to a dormitory environment or renting with other athletes or individuals, as the best suited environment when needing to relocate young athletes.

The research process involved two phases. The first phase investigated the elements that were perceived essential to a suitable relocation environment. This phase also identified the issues inherent in the process of relocating young athletes that were then incorporated as part of the second phase of the research. The elements, some of which include proximity to training facilities, a participative attitude and family cohesion, are located in Appendix B (pp. 113 - 115). The issues identified during this phase were in relation to the type of environment in which to re-establish the athlete, the use of appropriate role models for the athletes, consultation involving all relevant parties during the relocation process and the club's responsibility to the athlete. The literature review also highlighted several elements that were identified as significant in a home environment. The factors of family cohesion (or crowding and birth order), family configuration and socio-economic status, which were indicated by Gottfried (1984) to be important environmental factors on the development of intelligence, were also believed to be important in creating a suitable environment for young male athletes. These

factors were included in the study along with the elements identified in phase one of the research.

Some of the elements, such as height and weight, that were identified in phase one of the research were eliminated due to their not being related to the home environment while the remaining elements were categorised based upon several criteria. The elimination process involved elements being removed based on criteria such as the pre-recruiting environment and demonstrable characteristics. The categorisation process involved components being placed into groups according to whether they were physical, social, psychological or general elements. These elements and the issues identified from phase one were then investigated via a questionnaire process in the second phase of the research. This phase introduced the athlete and parent sample groups and the club representative who participated in the research. The participants were questioned in this phase to discuss their thoughts regarding the elements of a suitable environment and the issues identified in phase one of the research.

The questionnaire items related to the identified issues introduced in phase one, such as a nurturing versus a supportive environment and appropriate role models, were analysed to find commonalities. A correlational analysis was performed on the findings and several key relationships were identified from this procedure. The key relationships identified in this process incorporate the following.

- A supportive environment was found to encompass similar participation values to those maintained by the original home environment, which may

well encourage the young athlete to develop new life skills. This would be of benefit to the individual as this environment would understand and nurture his athletic abilities, be sympathetic to his needs as an athlete, while also encouraging him to undertake and develop new skills and abilities. This type of environment would also correspond with the Club's intention of creating a self-sufficient and independent individual as suggested in the interview with the club representative.

- The characteristics of the new family, such as religion, culture, work, education, may significantly influence the athlete's relationship with them and also affect the emotional climate of the home. The education characteristics of the new family appeared to be related to sharing similar participation values with the athlete.
- A flexible environment would nurture the athlete's independence and encourage the development of other skills and abilities. A 'flexible environment' would be one in which it would provide the athlete with the space to develop while also establishing clear boundaries of what was acceptable and not acceptable behaviour. This would be a more effective environment than one in which there are no clear boundaries for the athlete as well as no flexibility. An environment with no flexibility or boundaries would create stress and discontent in the athlete that could eventually affect his performance.
- The emotional climate of the home was significantly important when considering how well the athlete relates to the new family. The relationship between the athlete and the family can be influenced by the size of the household. Thus, the larger the numbers of the new family the

more contentment the athlete may feel towards his new surroundings.

This was contrary to the research conducted by Gottfried (1984) on home environment and intelligence that identified an increase in the size of the home, or crowding, would create a decrease in the individual's satisfaction. This research identified that a larger family might result in the athlete 'settling in' with the new family much easier or just as well with a smaller family depending on the size of his original home environment (refer to pp. 86 & 87)

6.1 Recommendations for Future Research

This research focused upon determining a suitable environment for young relocated male athletes. While it was concerned with investigating suitable relocation environments for young male athletes, it should be recognised that this research did not determine the effect of the home environment on athletic performance. Such research would enhance this study. Determining such an effect could also aid in allowing for the control of the impact of environment thus offering an opportunity to influence the development of athletic ability. Even if this is possible there will always be exceptions, as the effect of environment on an athlete is unique to that individual. More importantly creating a suitable relocation environment would nurture the athlete's individual talent while ensuring satisfaction and contentment, thus it would be important to replicate the individual's original environment as closely as possible.

This research focused primarily upon the relocation environment and the athlete. It did not investigate input from the families that 'house' the relocated athletes as

the research was concerned with identifying elements of a suitable environment. Hence research from this alternate perspective may need to be undertaken. This particular group can provide an insight into some of the problems or issues that might occur while an athlete is residing in their home. This would be significant in being able to match new athletes to suitable environments, while providing an idea of the role of these 'new' families in the further enhancement of the athlete's talent.

Primarily the findings of this research pertain to the type of environment the athlete should be relocated within, however, levels of satisfaction experienced with this new home will influence the outcome of the relocation process. Thus, it has become apparent on completing this research that there is a need to further research the satisfaction levels of an athlete on completion of the relocation process and how this then affects his athletic performance. This research may provide further insight into the influence of environment on the nurturing of athletic ability. An athlete's satisfaction level will be influenced by a number of things. Primarily, his relationship with the new family will influence how well he adapts to a new environment. Other factors that will contribute to the athlete's satisfaction encompass individual issues such as his level of maturity and young men's issues. It would be of some significance to delve into these particular issues to not only identify the relationship between athlete satisfaction levels and his performance but also determine the specific influence that environment has on these elements.

6.2 Summary

A nurturing environment, perceived from this research to be best provided by an alternative family, appears to be the most suited to providing a new home for the athlete. This environment was also perceived to be the best suited in being able to ‘meet’ the athlete’s needs, including his physical and psychological needs. It is also the environment that is on a comparative level to the original home environment where the athlete first demonstrated a talent for this sport. Thus it appears reasonable to suggest that an alternative family environment would nurture and enhance his athletic talent.

Ultimately, the athlete’s level of commitment to the sport is his or her responsibility however the establishment of a suitable home environment would ensure that the individual is comfortable in that environment. This would also enhance the individual’s quality of life and ensure that he or she is not stressed about other aspects of their life impacting on their sports career. Identifying a suitable home for athletes would provide an environment in which their talent was not only nurtured but would hopefully also challenge and encourage to develop other life skills and abilities.

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APPENDIX A
Brisbane Broncos Family Registration Form

BRONCOS FAMILY BOARD REGISTRY

APPLICATION FORM

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: (W) _____ (H) _____

To assist us with suitable player placement, please complete Section 2 below.

Age and Name of Family members currently living at home:

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

5. _____ 6. _____

Do you have reliable Public Transport? Yes / No

If yes, please list? _____

Do you currently have a spare bedroom? _____

Please list below any further information you may feel is relevant to placement of a Broncos player?

Please forward this Application Form to:

Recruitment Department,
Brisbane Broncos Football Club,
Fulcher Rd
RED HILL Q 4059

APPENDIX B
Identified Elements of a Relocated Environment

Results from Phase I: Identified Elements and issues in Relocating Young Male Athletes to a Suitable Alternative/Relocation Environment.

Physical Elements / Issues

Family	House	Individual – Health	Individual – Training	Other
Crowding Structure of alternative family	Security Spare bedroom Separate toilet & bathroom / 2 bathrooms	Nutrition Recovery Sleep Rest	Access to facilities Public Transport Proximity: training/access/transport Access to competition venues	Living skills Preparation to leave home Flexibility of environment No distractions Age Independence Job / education Free time Balanced environment

Social Elements / Issues

Family	Individual	House
Alternative family characteristics Alternative family education & professions Quality of home relationships Alternative family income Cohesion of alternative family Participative attitude Family values; participation, competition & success Supportive attitude Parent role: nurturing vs. supportive Socio-economic status Social support	Matching new environment to the athlete Personal growth Personal space Social skills Men's business Respect Maintaining own family relationships Emotional development Empowerment & Control Expectations of new relationships Outside contacts Time Management Financial Management Contact with local / outside groups	Group environment Group rules Home vs. House environment Determine common interests Supervisors / role models Expected relationships Flexibility of the environment

Social Elements / Issues cont'd

Family	Individual
Social support networks Expectations of relationship with Athlete by Alternative family Father figure vs. Mother figure Father figure vs. Mate Gender roles / gender figures Gender relationships Role models: who, how, what?	Cultural, racial, regional, ethnic and religious issues Positive influence of appropriate role-models

Psychological Elements / Issues

Family	Individual	House
Mentoring Control	Emotional Stability Motivation Control	Mentoring Control

General Elements / Issues

Family	Individual	House
Demographic factors Conflict resolution Flexible rules	Community Awareness	Rent Conflict resolution Security of tenure Affordable, accessible & appropriate Phone access / STD Yard Maintenance

APPENDIX C
Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

Investigators: Natasha Lamb

1. Background:

This research project is being conducted in partnership with the Brisbane Broncos and the athletes, the athlete's parents and officials associated with this sport organisation. The purpose of the research is to determine a suitable home environment for relocated professional athletes. This will be achieved via investigating the necessary physical, sociological and psychological needs of the individuals that are recruited by the identified professional sporting clubs. The research will involve the participation of three sample groups that will comprise the athletes, the parents of recruited athletes and individuals within the organisation whose responsibility is to address the needs of athletes.

2. Research Procedure:

Research participants will comprise one of the three sample groups according to the following:

Athlete Group

Participants will be professional male athletes that have been recruited to the Brisbane Broncos within the previous two years.

Parent Group

This group will involve the parents of recruited athletes who have experienced the relocation of their child from their home to an alternative home environment.

Club Officials

This group will involve the participation of club officials responsible for recruiting and relocating athletes. These participants will also be responsible for the general care and welfare of recruited athletes.

The research will require approximately 1 - 2 hours of the participant's time. The participants will be required to answer questions provided by the researcher via a

2 of 3

Relocated Athletes and Home Environment

Natasha Lamb

questionnaire or informal / formal interviews. The questionnaire or interview will ask for the participant's perceptions on what an athlete's physical, social and psychological needs are, in relation to the environment that the athlete will reside in. It will also determine the constituent's expectations from the process of relocating athletes.

3. Risks:

The possibility for unforeseeable risks exists in any research. However, there are no evident risks or drawbacks to participation in this research.

4. Benefits:

There may be direct benefits by being involved in this research. Such benefits include an improved and enhanced home environment for recruited athletes to reside in which may result in correlated increases in the individual's athletic performances.

5. Confidentiality:

All information will be kept confidential. Participants will not be identified by names, therefore no one will know which forms were completed by what participant. Arbitrary identification numbers will be assigned to each participant and all information will be organised using these identification numbers. Interviews will be recorded via a tape recorder but only in accordance with the participant's consent. Names will not be used to identify interviews instead they will be organised according to the date when the interview is conducted.

6. Persons to Contact:

Any questions regarding this research project should be directed to one of the following individuals who are associated with this study:

Natasha Lamb
Faculty of Health Science
Central Queensland University
Phone: (079) 306 809
email: lambn@topaz.cqu.edu.au

Relocated Athletes and Home Environment

Natasha Lamb

Professor Trevor Arnold
Faculty of Health Science
Central Queensland University
Phone: (079) 309 706
email: t.arnold@cqu.edu.au

7. Human Ethics Research Review Panel:

Please contact the Central Queensland University's Research Services Office (tel 079 309 828) should there be any concerns about the nature and / or the conduct of this research project.

8. Investigator (s) Rights:

The investigator(s) have the right to remove participants from the study if it becomes necessary for some reason.

9. Costs to Subjects:

There are no costs to the participants involved in this study.

10. Voluntary Participation:

If you decide that you do not want to participate in the study, that decision will not hurt you in any way. If you decide to participate, you may choose to withdraw at any time, with no penalty whatsoever.

11. Consent:

By signing this statement, I am indicating that I have received and understand the information contained in this consent form and have agreed to participate.

Participant: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D
Relocated Environment Questionnaire

Relocated Environment Questionnaire

The following questionnaire is concerned with the environmental needs of recently relocated professional male athletes. The questions have been designed to identify the physical, psychological and social needs of male athletes in a new living environment.

The questionnaire is to be conducted in strict confidence and in no way will your name or any other identifiable means be used in this study. The questionnaire will take approximately 20 mins to complete. You are asked to read each question carefully and to answer each question as honestly as possible.

Before completing the questionnaire please read the Participant Consent Form. The consent form is signed prior to starting the questionnaire.

The following key terms will be adopted for the purpose of this study.

Environmental needs: This term will refer to the elements that are essential to the daily existence of relocated athletes. The term will include the physical, psychological and sociological needs of athletes.

Relocated athletes: This term concerns those athletes that have made a transition from living with their parents or guardians to a relocated environment.

Relocated environment: This term will refer to the environment that athlete will live in upon commencement of professional contract. This relocated environment could be in the form of either an alternative family environment, a shared unit with either athletes or other individuals and a dormitory environment.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

SECTION A: The Environment.

The questions in this section relate to the athletes relocated environment. Please try and answer all questions in this section as honestly as possible.

1. Beside each of the identified elements listed below, please indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD), or don't know (DK) if these elements belong in a relocated environment for athletes.

	SA	A	D	SD	DK
Own bedroom for each athlete	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Security Screens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locks on Doors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal use of a separate toilet and bathroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A washing machine and dryer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A television, video and stereo (entertainment system)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture - lounge chairs, tables, beds, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A phone with STD access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Whose responsibility would it be to supply and maintain the items listed below?

(Please indicate which is best suited for each element)

	Athlete	Parent / Guardian	Club	Combination of 2 or more
Security Screens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locks on Doors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A separate toilet and bathroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A washing machine and dryer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A television, video and stereo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture - lounge chairs, tables, beds, etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A phone with STD access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Own bedrooms for athletes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Listed below are some elements that are considered as being important to a relocated environment for athletes. Please indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD) or don't know (DK), with the importance of each item.

	SA	A	D	SD	DK
a. Size of new household.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The characteristics of new housemates/family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The education level of new housemates/family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Quality of relationships with new housemates/family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. The athlete 'gets on' with new housemates/family.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. The emotional climate of the home.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Housemates/family have similar values on participation, competition and success.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Housemates/family are supportive of each other.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. An environment that encourages me to improve my 'life skills' like cooking and washing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4(a). Is it important that the 'house' has house or group rules?

	Yes	No	Both	Unsure
(b). What would these rules cover? (Please circle your answer)				
Cleaning of House	Yes	No	Unsure	
Cooking of meals	Yes	No	Unsure	
Television access	Yes	No	Unsure	
Phone access	Yes	No	Unsure	
Friends at house	Yes	No	Unsure	
Partners at house	Yes	No	Unsure	
Noise	Yes	No	Unsure	
Parties at house	Yes	No	Unsure	
Paying rent	Yes	No	Unsure	
Paying electricity &/or phone	Yes	No	Unsure	
Others:				

5 (a). Who should establish these rules?

Athlete/s []	Parent / []	Club []	Combination of 2 []
	Guardian		or more

(b.) If you chose a combination of 2 or more, which combination?

6 (a). Who should enforce these rules?

Athlete/s []	Parent / []	Club []	Combination of 2 []
	Guardian		or more

(b). If you chose a combination of 2 or more, which combination?

7(a). Do you think that the house needs to have a 'supervisor' in residence (living in the house)?

Yes

No

Unsure

(b). If yes, what would the supervisor do?

8. Of the following items which do you think is the most suitable environment for athletes living away from home? (Please tick only one)

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1. Alternate Family environment | [] |
| 2. Home environment renting with other athletes | [] |
| 3. Home environment renting with others | [] |
| 4. Dormitory environment | [] |

9. Several statements are listed below, please indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD) or don't know (DK) with each statement.

It is important:	SA	A	D	SD	DK
a. to match the environment to the athlete.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. to encourage the athlete to develop 'living' skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. for the athlete to have interests / hobbies outside the 'team'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. for the athlete to have contacts / friends outside the 'team'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. for the athletes to have a role model.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Who do you think should be responsible for the items listed below?

	Athlete	Parent	Club	Combination of 2 or more	Please Specify
a. to matching the environment to the athlete.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
b. to encouraging the athlete to develop 'living' skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
c. for the athlete to have interests /hobbies outside the 'team'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
d. for the athlete to have contacts / friends outside the 'team'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
e. for the athletes to have a role model.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

11. Beside each of the statements listed below, please indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD), or don't know (DK).

	SA	A	D	SD	DK
a. The athlete must be involved with all decisions regarding his relocation and placement into a new living environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. The environment the athlete is placed into should be 'flexible'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. The environment should nurture the independence of the athlete.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. How could this be done?

13(a). Do you think it is important that the athletes have a role model or adviser?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

13(b). If yes, why?

14. Who would be your ideal role model or adviser? _____

15. What roles and responsibilities would be expected of the role model or adviser?

16. In what ways could you learn from your role model or adviser?

17. Could you learn from this role model or adviser regardless of whether they were male or female?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

Please explain. _____

Section B: Athlete Needs

This section contains questions relating to the athlete's individual needs. It covers questions dealing with the individual's health, training and relocation needs. Please answer each question as honestly as possible.

Health

1. Please indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD) or don't know (DK) with the following:

SA A D SD DK

It is important that:

a. the athlete receives good nutritional meals. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

b. the athlete is given the personal space and time
within the home to recover from training

and competition. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

2. Do you think that someone should be appointed to make sure that the athletes
nutritional, sleep and recovery needs are being met?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

3 (a). Whose responsibility do you think it is to ensure that these needs are being met?

Athlete [] Parent [] Club [] Combination of 2 or more []

(b). If you chose a combination of 2 or more, who would this be?

Training

1. Competition and training will be a large part of the athletes routine; please indicate whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD), or don't know with the following statements.

	SA	A	D	SD	DK
The house the athlete resides in:					
a. should be close to training and competition facilities.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
b. should be close to public transport.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
c. should be close to shopping centres.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
d. should be close to entertainment venues.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
e. should be close to school, university, TAFE, or work place.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
f. should be close to other athletes.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
g. should be close to Club and Club Officials	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
h. should be close to your role model or adviser.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Prior to relocation

1. Would it be beneficial to prepare the athlete on what will happen before leaving his own home?

Yes [] No [] Unsure []

If yes, what do you think needs to be discussed with the athlete before he relocates?

2. Do you think this may help the athlete to adjust to his new living environment?

Yes [] No [] Unsure []

3. What would the club need to do to aid in this transition process?

Personal Information:

AGE: _____

NO. OF YEARS WITH CLUB: _____

NO. OF YEARS AWAY FROM PARENT'S HOME: _____