

'Angry' extroverts should do best in the ring

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Boxers are renowned for upping the ante by trading slurs and insults at pre-fight weigh-ins or press conferences - but research by sports psychologists suggests that the role goes beyond showmanship. If effectively harnessed, venting your anger can actually improve your performance in certain sporting tasks.

Sports psychologists at Bangor University's School of Sport, Health & Exercise Sciences were interested to find exactly what effect emotion had in [sports](#) performance.

Participants who recreated [anger](#) improved their performance by up to 25%- this was the most dramatic result- but was only achieved in actions such as kicking or striking out - activities that reflected a natural expression of anger- as opposed to more complex tasks.

The hope of success also increased the performance of semi professional football players who were recruited in a football related task for the trials.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, happiness was not found to improve performance- as happiness itself suggests contentment with things as they are.

"It has long been established that an individual's performance will be affected by their emotional state, but little research has been done; other than in the effect of anxiety on performance," explains Dr Tim Woodman, lead author of a paper on the subject published in the *Journal*

of Sport & Exercise Psychology.

"We found that effort and performance both increased when we induced a sense of hope of success or anger in our participants. Anger didn't help people perform any better in mental tasks, but was very effective in movements that reflect the natural anger tendency to 'lash-out' at something. For anger to be effective as a performance tool, it needs to be harnessed and then released into a high energy task such as kicking or punching."

"Interestingly we found that only the performance of people with an extrovert personality benefits from expressing their anger in these channelled activities- this may be because they find it easier to express their emotions in public."

Provided by Bangor University

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