

SHOWCASING SPORTS AND EXERCISE NUTRITION

This highly successful sport nutrition event took place in April in Brentford. The event was a joint venture between the BDA, the Sport and Exercise Nutrition Register (SENr) and the BDA's Sports Nutrition Specialist Group. **Rosanna Hudson** provides a review of the day

One of the event highlights was the venue itself, the GSK Human Performance Lab. This unassuming building houses a wonderland of high specification technology and delegates were treated to a tour of the laboratory which is used to test and improve the performance of some of the UK's elite sportspeople. Prior to the tour, Brad Sanderson, Principle Scientist (GSK HPL), provided an update on current research being carried out by the GSK team.

The event was opened by Professor Clyde Williams OBE who in 2014 was named by the Science Council as one of the UK's 100 leading practising scientists¹ and who is the long-standing Chair of the SENr Board. Clyde provided an overview of the register and its role in protecting the public and sporting profession. The Chair of the newly branded BDA Sport Nutrition Specialist Group (previously SDUK) followed. She explained the purpose behind the group's new marketing which was welcomed for its inclusivity in bringing RDs and registered sports nutritionists into one collaborative forum.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DAY

The 'Current Science vs Practice' session showcased research by the Research Institute for Sport and Exercise Sciences at Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU). Dr James Morton, who currently works with Liverpool Football Club and Team Sky, presented on 'Carbohydrate restriction and its practical application in the real world'. James expounded on the use of carbohydrate restriction which has been shown to enhance training related adaptations of skeletal muscle. He discussed how this enhanced response is likely due to activation of the molecular signalling pathways that regulate training adaptation. James explained that although scientific understanding of the response has improved greatly, translating this into practice has proved challenging. The second representative from LJMU, Daniel Owens, a PhD Researcher in Skeletal Muscle Physiology presented on the link between Vitamin D and Skeletal Muscle Health, with particular reference to athletic performance. He highlighted current research, providing translational recommendation for real world sporting environments.

Members of the SENr Board also presented on their areas of expertise, outlining the many and varied sport and exercise nutrition career pathways. Louise Sutton, Principal Lecturer in Sport & Exercise Nutrition at Leeds Beckett University, considered

how higher education can support and nurture the development of sport and exercise nutrition practitioners. She highlighted the work that has been done to update the SENr Competency Framework and to launch a new SENr accreditation process for university courses.

A view of working in the elite sporting environment was provided by Kevin Currell, Head of Performance Nutrition at English Institute of Sport and Richard Chesson, Lead Nutritionist, Scottish Rugby. Kevin inspired the audience with the drive and energy required to support athletes to Olympic Gold and adopting a 'Performance Backwards' rather than a 'Nutrition Upwards' approach. He passionately spoke of the EIS goal of 66 Olympic and 121 Paralympic medals in Rio and used the symbol ' $>\Sigma$ ' to convey the EIS message of teamwork, with the organisation being 'greater than the sum of its parts'.

Richard Chesson spoke of the skills required to work within team sports including an in-depth understanding of the sport, high levels of enthusiasm and adaptability and a willingness to effectively operate within a multidisciplinary team. Richard also led a later session based around common questions asked of Performance Nutritionists by athletes in elite sports. This interactive session covered topics such as 'Should I take a fat-burning supplement?'; 'Should I drink coconut water?'; 'Should I take protein shakes?' and 'What's the deal with sweet potatoes? All of which were eloquently answered by an expert panel.

The final careers talk was given by Chris Cashin, providing practical advice and guidance for those wishing to set up as freelance practitioners.

The day concluded with presentations from the winners of the 2014 Dairy Council Professional and Student Awards, which were conferred for innovative research into the use of dairy products in the sports nutrition arena.

Karen Reid, RD and SENr Board member presented the case study 'Dietary Strategy to Increase Muscle Mass and Improve Recovery in an Elite Sprint Kayaker' whilst Arthur Dunne, a previous student of St Mary's Twickenham, presented his research which considers whether consuming unflavoured milk effectively attenuates muscle damage after strenuous exercise. The winning submissions can be found in full on the SENr website: www.senr.org.uk/news/

THE NEXT SENR EVENT

The event was concluded by Andy Burman, BDA CEO with formal thanks to GSK for hosting and the unveiling of the next event, which is to take place in Scotland on 13 November 2015 and which will showcase research from Stirling University. ●



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Booking for the next event is via the BDA website: www.bda.uk.com/calendar/

The next SENr event is on 13 November in Edinburgh (An interactive programme including facilitated networking workshops)



REFERENCES

- www.sciencecouncil.org/content/100-leading-uk-practising-scientists