

Table 1: Athlete quotes on mental health, pressures, and the media

Athlete	Quote*
Simone Biles (Gymnastics)	<i>"I truly do feel like I have the weight of the world on my shoulders at times. I know I brush it off and make it seem like pressure doesn't affect me but damn sometimes it's hard hahaha!"</i> ¹
Anthony Ervin (Swimming)	<i>"I didn't know a thing about what it was like to be part of the black experience...It's like winning gold and having a bunch of old white people ask you what it's like to be black. That is my black experience."</i> ²
Kevin Love (Basketball)	<i>"Over the past few years, athletes around the world have shown us incredible courage by shining a light on the mental health toll that comes with extreme pressure. In doing so, they helped kick-start a cultural shift around mental wellness."</i> ³
Noah Lyles (Track & Field)	<i>"I'm not defined by being an Olympic bronze medalist or gold medal world champion or the high schooler that went pro. That's not who I am. I'm Noah Lyles."</i> ⁴
Simone Manuel (Swimming)	<i>"Please stop interviewing athletes right after a disappointing performance...It's mentally and emotionally exhausting to coherently answer questions while trying to process the fact that people already saw you fall short of the goals you worked so hard for on the world's biggest stage."</i> ⁵
Sam Mikulak (Gymnastics)	<i>"Going forward I'm letting go of expectations and just doing it for fun. I'm tired of living in fear. I'm tired of putting pressure on myself."</i> ⁶
Naomi Osaka (Tennis)	<i>"(I)...get huge waves of anxiety before I speak to the world's media. I get really nervous and find it stressful..."</i> ⁷
Sha'Carri Richardson (Track & Field)	<i>"I was just thinking it would be a normal interview. But to hear that information coming from a complete stranger, it was definitely triggering, it was definitely nerve-shocking..."</i> ⁸
Sloane Stephens (Tennis)	<i>"This type of hate is so exhausting and never ending. This isn't talked about enough but it really freaking sucks."</i> ⁹
Bethany Zummo (Sitting Volleyball)	<i>"So often I feel like athletes are just supposed to be strong and tough and hard. And we're human, before that, and we go through so much, and we're pushed to our limits, especially at this level"</i> ¹⁰

*Sources for these quotes are listed in a supplement.

Table 1 Sources:

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