DEDICATED TO THEIR SPORTS

Four young sports stars talk about their lives.

A. DARIUS (runner)

I've always been sporty. I played a bit of everything at one time, but I was better at football and athletics. When I was 14, I had a trial for a professional football club, but eventually I opted to go down the athletics route instead. My biggest moment came when I got to compete for my country in the youth team and got a medal. It didn't result in much media attention, though, which was a shame. I'd been hoping some sponsorship would come out of it, because the training doesn't come cheap. I train at home all winter and then go away for three weeks, usually Florida, before the season starts. It's good fun – there are great athletic facilities there and the nightlife is great too. You've got to be really disciplined, though. If friends ask me to go out the night before training, I have to say no, I wish I didn't, but dedication pays in this sport. The main goal for me is to get to the next Olympics – that would be fantastic.

B. Gabriel (surfer)

The surfing community is small, so you get to meet the same guys wherever you compete. Professional surfers are very serious and often the best waves are at dawn, so if you're really going to get anywhere, you have to cut out late-night parties altogether. I don't mind that so much, but I do love having a lie-in, and I usually have to give that up too. But it's worth it, because without that kind of dedication I might not have won the National Championships last year. I make sure that a big night out follows any win, though, and if there's cash involved in the winnings, I'll go away somewhere really nice, And, of course, the sacrifices are worth it in the long run because winning that championship meant I got picked to present a surfing series on TV. I guess I'm a bit of a celebrity now.

C. DIETER (yacht racer)

With five lads on a boat together, you have a good laugh. We're very traditional and we always celebrate a win in great style. It's been said that we act a bit childishly when we're out, but we don't actively go looking for media coverage. Sometimes the reporters actually seem more concerned about where you go out celebrating and what you get up to there than about where you came in the race. I'm away for eight months of the year, so it's great to get back, go out with my mates from other walks of life and do the things they do. You can't live, eat and breathe the sport all the time – it's not healthy. I'm known within the world of sailing, but fortunately I can count the number of times I've been recognised in the street on the fingers of one hand. I'd hate to become some sort of celebrity. I get a lot of nice letters from people wanting signed pictures, though. It may take ages, but I reply to every one. It would be cheeky to complain, even if it does take a bit of organising.

D. Tomas (tennis player)

It's always a great thing to walk on court and feel that the crowd is behind you. At the last tournament, though, it all got a bit crazy with people crowding around. Despite that, I have to admit that I do still get quite a thrill out of being spotted by fans when I'm out shopping or something. It has its downside, though. My last girlfriend didn't like it if I got too much attention from female fans. The thing is, tennis players have to travel quite a lot, and in the end that's why we split up. I guess. That was hard, but you've got to make sacrifices in any sport; you've got to be serious and professional. Actually, it doesn't really bother me too much. I'm content to concentrate on my game now and catch up on the other things in life once I've retired, because, after all, that comes pretty early in this sport.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Read the article about four sportsmen. For questions 1-15, choose from the sportsmen (A-D). The sportsmen may be chosen more than once.

Which sportsman mentions…

a time-consuming aspect of being well known in his sport?	1.	
a career opportunity resulting from an achievement in sport?	2.	
the financial rewards of success in his sport?	3.	
a good result that went largely unnoticed?	4.	
the importance of having a social life outside sport?	5.	
enjoying a change of scene when training?	6.	
difficulties in a relationship resulting from his lifestyle?	7.	
enjoying being recognized by people in the street?	8.	
attracting attention for things not directly connected to the sport?	9.	
not finding the idea of fame attractive?	10.	
regretting having to turn down invitations?	11.	
the advantages and disadvantages of supporters coming to watch the sport?	12.	
the time of day he has to go training?	13.	
disappointment at not getting help as a result of an achievement?	14.	
a feeling that his sporting career will be relatively short?	15.	

Find synonyms in the article for the following words and expressions.

1. Commitment:	_____	8. Saucy:	_____
2. Aim:	_____	9. Moan:	_____
3. Sunrise:	_____	10. Excitement:	_____
4. Guys:	_____	11. Disadvantage:	_____
5. Immaturely:	_____	12. Break up:	_____
6. Worried:	_____	13. Annoy:	_____
7. Luckily:	_____	14. Focus:	_____

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LIVEWORKSHEETS