"The Great Debate" at the S&P Division Day

1st May 2018

Newman University was the place to be on Wednesday 25th April 2018, as two of the leading researchers in the world went head to head at the BASES Sport and Performance Division Day in a much anticipated debate examining the brain regulation of exercise performance.

After almost 3 years of twitter sparring, Newman University’s Dr Ibrahim Akubat managed to bring together the two heavyweights of the sport and exercise research world, through his role as CPD representative for the [British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES)](http://www.bases.org.uk/).



There was much excitement surrounding the day and the build-up on social media was interesting to follow.

Professor Samuele Marcora and Professor Alan St Clair Gibson spent the day trading blows as they each tried to gain the upper hand. The audience, featuring delegates from the other Higher Education Institutions, national sports institutes and the world of elite sport, was engaged throughout.



The sport industry in Birmingham was well represented on the day as other speakers included Dr Neil Dallaway from University of Birmingham and Newman’s very own former international runner, Richard Taylor, who is also currently a PhD Scholar at Newman.

Richard joined forces with his father Dicki Taylor and presented on what influences pacing from the athlete’s perspective.

However, it was the main event everyone was waiting for and the main point of contention and disagreement was on the concept of afferent feedback playing a role in the regulation of exercise performance.

There were perhaps surprisingly many areas of agreement and a mutual respect was evident between both Professor Marcora and Professor St Clair Gibson. The debate sparked great interest on social media.

Reflecting on the event Newman’s Dr Ibrahim Akubat said “it was an event everyone wanted to be at, lots of people have been asking about recordings of the event, we’re proud that we were able to put it on here at Newman University! We would like to thank [Perform Better](https://performbetter.co.uk/) (also based in the midlands) & [Firstbeat](https://www.firstbeat.com/en/) on behalf of Newman University & BASES for supporting the event and it can only have come together through the efforts of Sam and Zig to agree to it and get here.”

The sentiment of the day was best captured by a tweet after the event from Dr Ibrahim Akubat (@trainingimpulse)

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