



Mental Preparation Before Competition

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One of the most important tools for success is the mental preparation that you give to your practices and games. Many athletes do not realize how mental preparation and preparation routines can negatively or positively affect their performance. Athletes might think, “Well, I compete tomorrow – it does not matter what I do the day before a game.” The day before and the day of a game are critical times to have consistent, positive, and effective routines set in place. These routines feed directly into relaxation, focus and confidence levels on the field.

Mental preparation before a game is extremely important. Most athletes do not realize how mental preparation before competition can assist them in developing more consistent performance and results. There are some tips to building a positive and effective pre-competition routine listed below. Take some of these tips and begin building your own pre-competition routine. Again, consistent and effective pre-competition routines can make a dramatic difference in your performance.

Pre-Competition Routines on the Day Before

1. Get plenty of rest

It is very important to get a good night’s sleep before games. If your physical body is tired, this event will directly affect your ability to focus, concentrate and your tolerance of mistakes during the game.

2. Get equipment and clothes ready the night before

It is important to get all of your equipment ready the day or night before a game. There is nothing worse for your mental game than rushing around wondering if you have all of your equipment or clothing. If you take care of these items the day before, then you will be able to relax and concentrate on the most relevant things – how you are going to perform on the field.

3. Use Imagery for Game Performance and Situations

Spend some quiet time going through in your mind how you will perform in the game. See and imagine success on various skills, game situations and plays. It is important to make your images “vivid” and “successful.” See and feel success as clearly as you can.

4. Find Healthy Ways to Relax

On the night before the game, all of the training and hard work is done. It is almost game day, or sometimes I refer to this as “Christmas Day.” As part of mental preparation, it is important to find ways to relax the night before a game. Everybody has a different way of accomplishing this task, but it is important to know what helps you relax. Some examples include spending time with friends or family, watching a movie, playing video games, going out to dinner with friends, or spending time with kids. Make a list of various activities that will help you relax the night before a game and then execute them!

Play Hard, Play Smart and Play Well!