

THE TRAINING PLAN

Your guide to preparing for
a successful Open

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SHERPA



MINDSET

"Perfection is the lowest standard you could ever set for yourself."

Anthony Robbins

We know that competitions, especially long, drawn out ones like The Open, can become very stressful. Being ok with this and having strategies to deal with both the ups and downs over the five weeks can make or break both your experience, and the outcome of this years Open.

Things will go wrong, mistakes will be made and, in case you didn't yet know, you are not perfect. Focusing on your best, rather than perfection, is the foundation of self-belief.

Lay a foundation for a growth mindset where errors are a natural part of your development as an athlete. You can identify your mistakes, learn from them and do better next time.

"Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best you are capable of becoming."

John Wooden

Here are four practices you can undertake to improve your mindset and mental toughness.

1. Laser Focus

To be successful in this years Open means doing your best to maximise your performance on each event, one at a time. Living in the moment, carrying good feelings with you and leaving the bad ones behind is what allows you to give your best in every moment.

Whatever you do, make sure you have no regrets at the end of the day for you gave it all you had, each and every moment.



ACTION STEP

Over the next few weeks, during your warm ups, practice keeping your mind on task, thinking ahead about what will be required. Leave your phone in your bag, make sure that you have gotten any work done that needs doing before you get to the gym, clear your calendar for your workout.

When you hear 3,2,1,Go! You think of nothing but the work, the movements, your breath. We're looking for 'flow state' defined as when a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energised focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity. In other words, you are working your butt off, and yet making it look effortless.....

2. Evaluation

Most athletes version of post training or competition evaluation is, "I could have gone faster" or "I shouldn't have done it that way.."

This is not helpful. Instead ask yourself honest questions, and most importantly, allow yourself to answer them without judgement. This is a tool for improvement not punishment.

Remember that every competition is an opportunity for winning or learning. During training, you can achieve the same thing.



ACTION STEP

Every workout you complete between now and The Open is a chance for reflection, evaluation and an honest assessment of where you could improve. Things to think about;

Preparation: did you do everything you could during your warm up, prep and practice to ensure your best performance?

PMA: Did you maintain a positive mental attitude throughout the entire session? Responding vs reacting is one clue, eg, if you trip on your skipping rope, do you simply step out and start again, or do you swear and shout?

Workout flow: Were your transitions between exercises efficient? Could you have set up the equipment better to improve this? How did you break up your rounds/sets?

Effort: Did you give the best that you had to give that day? Remember, you won't always be at 100% but if you give 100% of what you have, you must be satisfied with that.

3. Visualisation

Many elite athletes routinely use visualisation techniques as part of training and competition, to cultivate not only a competitive edge but also to create renewed mental awareness, a heightened sense of well-being, and confidence.

Other names for this practice are, guided imagery, mental rehearsal, meditation — but no matter the term, the basic techniques, and concepts are the same.

Essentially, visualisation is the process of creating a mental image of what you want to happen or feel in reality. As an athlete you can use this technique to picture the process and the outcome of an event or training session.

These scenarios can include any of the senses. They can be visual (images and pictures), kinesthetic (how the body feels), or auditory (the clang of the barbell, the cheer of supporters).

Using your mind, you can call up these images over and over, enhancing the skill through repetition or rehearsal, creating an adaptation similar to physical practice!

ACTION STEP

Picture your success.

The best time for this is just before you start your warmup, or 5-10 minutes before you are due to start your workout. Lie or sit somewhere quiet, close your eyes and breathe in through the nose, out through the mouth, slowly and deeply for 10 breaths. Then picture your workout, see yourself moving efficiently and confidently through the movements.

Think about each transition you will need to make, and picture yourself successfully moving through those transitions calmly and in control of the event. Think about how your body/muscles feel as they perform the movements, the look on your face, your stance, your posture. Repeat the visualisation until it becomes reality, until you can see it.

4. Self-talk

Self talk is both the easiest method of mental skill training, and one of the most used. Many of you may use it as you approach a heavy barbell, "tight!", "fast!", "punch!" But what many people don't do is use self talk to impart positive vibes upon themselves.

It's far more common to hear, "I'm no good at rope climbs" "The weight feels really heavy today", or "I can't do it!"

ACTION STEP

Say it and make it so

Create yourself a mantra that you can repeat multiple times per day. "I am very proud of how hard I have trained. I'm confident, prepared, and excited to compete."

Try a positive statement such as, "strong", "I'm ready" or the classic, "light weight!"

