

ROUTINES TO MAXIMIZE PERFORMANCE

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Sometimes you compete well, sometimes you don't. A critical factor to increasing the consistency of competing well is to have a thoroughly thought-out and rehearsed plan to maximize performance. 'Hoping it all works out' isn't good enough and only through preparation and planning are you able to create a solid performance environment that will result in performance consistency and results. In order to fully understand and gain the benefits of this Performance Point, it is important to acknowledge that performance at training is just as critical to performance in competition, since training is where the groundwork and habits of excellence take shape.

In order to become more aware of the multidimensional nature of performance routines, you need to address a variety of performance factors and how they apply across a time line (see chart on next page) leading up to, during, and even after you perform. Not all performance factors are applicable to all areas in the time line, so it is important to determine what, when, where and how they apply.

Performance factors include having routines around the following areas:

- **Physical Preparation** – stretching, massage, rehabilitation exercises, agility activities, core exercises
- **Nutrition and Hydration Plans** – timing, amount, types of food or drink
- **Mental Routines** – motivation, focus, managing distractions, emotional control, discipline, responding to errors, managing pain
- **Rest and Sleep Routines** – bed time strategies, napping schedule, down-time diversions
- **Technical Elements** – rehearsing skills, applying skills at key moments, quality repetitions
- **Tactical Strategies** – set plays, offensive systems, defensive systems, oppositions' tendencies
- **Equipment** – preparing gear, maintenance, within competition repair or replacement
- **Social Strategies** – who to sit with, when to be alone, positive distractions, family time
- **School or Work Routines** – studying time, working on projects, communicating with group members



Through smart preparation for the London 2012 Games, veteran Paralympian Bo Hedges earned himself a gold medal.

The time line considerations are important as it is easy to underestimate the impact of a decision or behaviour 'away from the field of play' because it appears to not be related to a performance that is a day, hours, or even minutes away. As mentioned above, performance in this context means not just performing during competition but also performing in training.

Therefore, an excellent place to develop and rehearse performance routines is at training so that you are able to explore the impact on performance by modifying various performance factors at different stages of the time line so to establish habits of excellence that will serve you well in competition.

The table below allows you to reflect on your current routines to see what you feel you are doing well (solid), what you are 'kinda-maybe-sometimes' doing (not solid/inconsistent), what you aren't really sure about or need to look into more (not sure), and what does not apply at various times (N/A). Interestingly, you may be surprised to find from your reflections that you have routines in areas that you hadn't really realized and that you don't have solid routines in areas that you may have thought you did. The space below the table allows you to write down some key "Areas to Target for Refinement, Improvement, Strategies" that you can start developing on your own and in conjunction with the appropriate support from coaching and sport science personnel.

PERFORMANCE ROUTINES MATRIX

Instructions: Indicate your assessment of the various performance factors on the time line using the symbols below.

✓ = Solid ✗ = Not Solid/Inconsistent ? = Not Sure N/A = not applicable

| PERFORMANCE FACTORS | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|--------|--------|
| TIME LINE | Physical* | Nutrition | Hydration | Mental | Rest/Sleep | Technical | Tactical | Equipment | Social | School |
| Night Before | | | | | | | | | | |
| Morning/Day of | | | | | | | | | | |
| Travel to Venue | | | | | | | | | | |
| Change Room | | | | | | | | | | |
| Warm Up | | | | | | | | | | |
| In Competition | | | | | | | | | | |
| Warm Down | | | | | | | | | | |
| Recovery/Regen | | | | | | | | | | |
| Debrief/Review | | | | | | | | | | |

*Physical = Rehab, stretching, massage, fitness, agility, core, strength, power

AREAS TO TARGET FOR REFINEMENT, IMPROVEMENT & STRATEGIES: