

PELOT PERFORMANCE COACHING

The Training and Competition Mindset Getting the **MIND RIGHT!**

Training is more than a physical workout, it requires the right mindset. Often times an athlete will hear me tell them to get their mind right before an exercise set, a drill, or during conditioning. These are reminders for the athlete to rethink his dedication when his body is telling him he can go no further. The mindset going into a workout is just as important as the mindset within the workout. The training mindset needs to be similar to the mindset that athletes possess when going into “game mode”. During a game the goal is to compete and to win. It takes courage, sacrifice and determination to win. These characteristics are common in the most successful athletes. Taking this winning mindset and applying it to every single day is what separates good and mediocre athletes from elite level athletes. The best athletes do not compare themselves to other athletes; they always compare themselves to themselves. If an athlete strives to only be better than his opponent, he will only be as good as his opponent. If an athlete continues to develop to become better than himself, he/she will continue to improve and this will lead to performances that are the best of the best.

If the most elite athletes in the world trained to be only as good as their competition, their performance would decrease. Elite athletes have a strong internal desire to better themselves and a strong will to become the best. These athletes can be the best with proper direction; however, athletes with the right mindset are often not given the proper direction to allow their dedication and commitment to drive their abilities to new levels. A coach’s role is to help provide direction and assistance to help athletes reach new heights in performance. In order for the direction and guidance to be successful, an athlete must have a winning mindset. For example: In a game, if an athlete has a losing mindset, the athlete will surely fail. If an athlete has a winning mindset, it will give him the power to push through when everything else fails. There are two phrases that will never come from the most elite athletes: “I can’t” and “It is too difficult.” These sayings are losing mindsets.

In a game situation if an athlete believes that he truly cannot perform, he needs to get off the field because at that time, he is not assisting his teammates or providing value to the team. If an athlete believes that the situation or demands are too difficult for him to accomplish, the athlete has given up; he has quit. He has been confronted with a hard task or a difficult challenge and the athlete has made the decision to not put forth the effort it takes to try. Accepting and taking on challenges no matter what the sacrifice might be is a rare characteristic. I have worked with many athletes that claim they possess these characteristics, but when situations become difficult and it requires more effort, I can tell who really has the mindset of a winner. The bottom-line is: “the cream always rises to the top” and there will always be a separation of winners and losers when things get tough. I commonly see this in the later part of games or during intense and long workouts; often when I ask athletes to perform one more rep, one more set, or one more sprint. There is a common trait among elite level athletes; they do whatever it takes to get the job done. In most successful players this requires a great deal of sacrifice. To be elite means to make the decision to make sacrifices, many elite athletes sacrifice sleeping in, time with family, time from work, personal time, diet, etc.. These sacrifices are made to be able to commute to train, to wake up to make sure they have time to train, to go to bed early enough to promote a healthy recovery, eating so they can provide their body with the proper nutrients to fuel workout and speed recovery. These athletes are always successful and it is because they have the proper mindset. To be elite, requires the understanding that being an athlete is a lifestyle, not a part-time job.