

# HEADSTRONG!

Spring ~ 2007

THE MENTAL *EDGE* ~ GAIL ROYCE ~ 10045 Morningside Dr. ~ Morrison, CO, 80465 ~ 303-697-6389 ~ [mental\\_coach1@msn.com](mailto:mental_coach1@msn.com)

Happy Spring! It's that fun time of year when I have my skis, golf clubs, snowshoes and bicycles all prepped and ready to go at a moments notice. I love Spring time in Colorado! This past winter brought some awesome downhill days, numerous snowshoe treks and an "extreme" Yellowstone adventure- cross country skiing through a herd of at least 40 feisty buffalo! But "play time" is almost over, as training has started for this year's Cherry Creek Time Trials, Bolder Boulder, Barkin' Dog Duathlon, Triple Bypass, the Glenwood Triathlon and my ultimate goal- attempting to qualify for the Boston Marathon. And in the middle of all that, a ten day gymnastics trip to China. Whew! It's going to be a full and exciting summer.

So, what "fire in the belly" goals do you have for the next few months? Are they written down, with a clear plan for achieving them? Are your goals challenging you to grow and improve as an athlete? Keep me posted! Your amazing feats and accomplishments always inspire me to keep pushing my limits and to be the best I can be.



But I'm Such A  
Perfectionist!



Many athletes proudly proclaim themselves a "perfectionist." But is that really a positive and beneficial quality for an athlete? Pure perfectionism means never allowing yourself to make a mistake, or to create or perform something less than perfect. It means doing something so flawlessly that absolutely no one can criticize you. The question is, is that a healthy attitude and does it help you to attain excellence or does it hinder your success?

Kobe Bryant misses free throws, Tiger Woods hits drives into the trees, and Maria Sharapova double faults. Perfect? Absolutely not. Mentally tough, fierce, driven, and successful competitors? Absolutely! In baseball, a pitcher always throws a few balls in a "perfect" game. A "perfect 10" in gymnastics really means the gymnast made fewer mistakes than anyone else. Michael Johnson shattered the world record in the 200 meters in the '96 Olympics. Many labeled it the perfect race. But Michael remembers a mistake, "the stumble, the briefest shudder, step three to be exact." He then asks, "I just wonder sometimes: Is it possible to run a perfect race?" (from *Slaying the Dragon*) Most accomplished athletes will say that perfection is standard of measurement, but not truly an attainable goal.

These, and other successful athletes, do set unbelievably high goals for themselves. But they also respect the limitations of being human! There's a difference between relentlessly pursuing your ultimate performance and expecting everything you do to be without fault. Contrary to what they believe, perfectionists thinking is self-defeating and their behaviors usually hinder progress and performances. Some thoughts to ponder:

Perfectionism is a time and energy waster. (Many tasks go undone while trying to make a minor detail perfect)

Perfectionism is frequently a form of procrastination.

Perfectionists are often late and fail to complete projects

Perfectionists must have everything "just right" or they just can't perform well; a handy excuse for failure.

Perfectionists rarely feel a deep sense of accomplishment, pride, or joy in their performances.

Perfectionists train long & hard, but failing to meet their impossible standards makes them unhappy people.

Perfectionists are difficult teammates to be around- their discontent drains the energy of those around them.

Labeling himself a perfectionist and expecting only perfection is setting an athlete up for failure and disappointment. In the extreme it may include depression, anger, anxiety, loneliness and obsessiveness.

A successful athlete must have an incredible work ethic and unflinching effort. A champion must sometimes sweat the small stuff; attention to detail can make the difference. Winners must hold themselves to a higher standard and expect excellence. But this must all be done with a healthy and well balanced approach. Be excellent and extraordinary. Be fabulous or spectacular. Be remarkable and exceptional. But please, don't be a perfectionist and deprive yourself of the performance of a lifetime.

(If you'd like more information on perfectionism, please let me know. I have a couple of excellent articles I'd be happy to email to you.)

## ~Gail's Rules for Athletic Success~

**Rule #2- Establish clear goals. Put them in writing & create an action plan to achieve them. Believe whole heartedly that you have the ability to make them a reality.**

Nebulous goals and athletic success don't go hand in hand. To stay motivated and committed you must have a clear vision of what you want to achieve. Writing your goals down makes them real and holds you more accountable. Schedule a time and place to create your goals for the year or season. The short term goals and action steps are the keys to reaching your "fire in the belly" goal, so be specific and detailed in your action plan. Review your goals on a regular basis, and evaluate post-season. And finally, you must have an unwavering belief in your ability and potential to accomplish your goals. They may be tough, but you know you have it within you to rise to the challenge. Only with this belief will you have the energy and effort to pursue your goals 100%.



~~~~~  
**Good luck to the following athletes in their Spring and Summer competitive seasons:**

|                |                                                                    |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tae Kwon Do    | Stephanie                                                          |
| Figure Skating | Erica, Annabel, Kalee, Shoshi, Ashley, Brittany, Christina, Braden |
| Tennis         | Jordan, Courtney, Erika, Alex, Victoria                            |
| Mtn. Biking    | Sampson, Brian, Kathy                                              |
| Basketball     | Erin, Kerrick                                                      |
| Lacrosse       | Kelly, Connor                                                      |
| Baseball       | Travis, Justin, Evan                                               |
| Racquetball    | Jo, Denny                                                          |
| Diving         | Justine, Courtney, Morgan, Cameron                                 |
| Volleyball     | Mikaela, Kathryn                                                   |
| Golf           | Courtney, Connor                                                   |
| Soccer         | Amanda, Carissa, Tanner                                            |



A little inspiration is always a good thing. Watching movies about athletes journeys or reading biographies of successful athletes and coaches can spur a little motivation. Some of my favorites:

### Movies:

**"Cool Runnings"** Oldie but a goodie. The story of the Jamaican bobsled team. Fun and filled with great mental skills.  
**"The Greatest Game Ever Played"** A golf movie, but you don't have to be a golfer to appreciate the story & message.

### Books:

***Slaying the Dragon***- Michael Johnson          Combination autobiography and success tips.  
***Reach for the Summit***-Pat Summit with Sally Jenkins          Great coaching, commitment, and intensity story

~~~~~  
"It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by the dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions and spends himself in a worthy course; who at the best, knows in the end, the triumph of high achievement, and who, at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory or defeat." - Theodore Roosevelt