



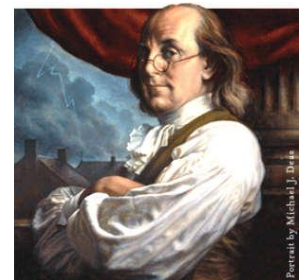
Mental Preparation for Performance

The following are a few basic ideas of how you can mentally prepare for competition. As with your technical skiing these need to be practised and refined in training.

- ❑ Positive thoughts & attitude will not always help your performance but negative thoughts & images will invariably make your performance worse. Replace negative self talk in your head, instead of saying "I can't do this" or "I won't do this", be positive and say "I **can** do this" or "I **will** do this". Say to yourself "I am prepared", "I am in control, I can do it".
- ❑ If you are over excited & nervous use deep breathing to help you relax & calm down.
- ❑ Remind yourself about past good races, if you could do it then you can do it now! Remember you do not become a bad skier overnight.



- ❑ Inspect the course(s) properly; look for the rhythms & rhythm changes.
See yourself ski the course, as you want to, feeling the rhythms, getting changes perfectly.
- ❑ Make sure that your skis are prepared properly. Even if you are not currently preparing them yourself, it is still your job to make sure that they are done properly.
- ❑ Warm up physically & mentally prior to your run, find a good routine that that works for you & use it every time you race.
- ❑ Before your run do not concern yourself about times or beating other people. You do not have control over other performers, so there is now point worrying about them. Instead focus on things you do have control over that will help you perform better. Use your Race Plan for this.
- ❑ If you know that you have prepared properly before hand then you will feel better & be more confident. Remember, "If you fail to prepare then you are preparing to fail". I think Benjamin Franklin said that.
- ❑ Do not allow yourself to get upset or worry about things that you can't control or change, for example the weather conditions, the course, other performers, race delays, race organisation. Make sure that you get the things that you can control right, course inspection, ski preparation, your warm up & pre race preparation.
- ❑ Races are not the time to give yourself technical instruction like " use your edges" or "release pressure of my inside ski", those sorts of things are for training sessions. You already know how to ski, trust your body to do it for you automatically.



- Use your Race Plan to give you a focus for the race. Your Race plan should give you something to concentrate on during the race, this should be a non-technical focus that will improve your performance & give you that bit extra. With your Race Plan try to use words that mean something to you. You may prefer the word "powerful" instead of "strong" or you may prefer the word "flowing" to "smooth". Alternatively you can use mental images that have all the qualities that you would like in your skiing, for example you could say that you would like to ski like a Cheetah, because a Cheetah is Fast, Powerful & Agile. Hold that image before & during the race.



- When formulating a race plan keep it simple. During a race you will find it difficult & confusing to hold lots of thoughts over the short period of a race. You can have an individual focus for each part of the race. For example:
 - Start – Explode out of the gate
 - Race – Look up & ahead
 - Finish – Drive for the finish line
- Most importantly, **enjoy your skiing**