

A few weeks ago, *Training to Be Balanced* (my business), brought national fitness professional, Robb Rogers to Jackson Hole for team staff continuing education. Rob Rogers is a well sought after nation presenter with a diverse background in collegiate and professional sports and military. Coach Robb's presentation gave us a plethora of new information from preventative, corrective exercises, first step mechanics to explosiveness to killer, blast Youth Sport conditioning ideas.

We feel lucky to have shared in Coach Robb's years of experience and his knowledge will serve as an impetus for growth in our approach to physical training, with people of all ages.

I share our experience with Coach Rob Rogers, because he shared an article he wrote with us. I feel this article to be beneficial and inspiring with the up-coming Athletic Fall Conditioning season upon us. It talks about hard work, commitment and preservation - when "your moment" arrives in Athletics. Parents, please read the following article that Coach Robb has written. You might like to pass this article along to your young athlete or even Sports coach and challenge him or her to look ahead and take charge of how they view their up-coming athletic season and future.

"Look, if you had one shot or one opportunity - to seize everything you ever wanted, in one moment . . . Would you capture it or would you let it slip . . ." Eminem 2004

One shot, one moment, one opportunity is easy. Everyone in the world has the ability to go for it, let it all out, give it their best, for the big chance, with no regrets. But that moment comes only with hours, days, months and sometimes even years of preparation to create the opportunity. That instant in which for a fleeting moment of time the window is open, the stars are aligned and the moment is ripe to seize the day and become recognized as the winner and even champion that you have become. The grind of preparation creates the winner, the focus and execution, day in and day out creates the opportunity and knowing in your heart of hearts that you have earned and deserve the mantle of winner, of champion, will determine the outcome of the moment.

Talent is a precursor to success in any field in which physical skill is the dominant trait. However, talent alone is greatly overshadowed by a willingness to grind out preparation in the form of quality, focused practice repetitions. Several different studies as well as a book by Malcolm Gladwell have documented many elite musicians and athletes that chose to practice basic fundamental tasks such as musical scales, core training, footwork and balance drills in order to keep the foundation solid on which the talent is allowed to flourish. This commitment to repetitive, daily basic skills is the key for successful elite artists and athletes. As legendary pianist, Vladimir Horowitz was quoted, "If I don't practice for a day, I know it. If I don't practice for two days, my wife knows it. If I don't practice for three days, the world knows it." On the *Today Show* when asked what it takes to be such a prolific writer, John Grisham responded that you must write a page a day, every day. Some days it may take five minutes, some days five hours, but you must write a page a day.

To become accomplished in any endeavor, practice is critical. But how much practice, what kind of practice? It has been theorized in many articles, books and studies that it takes 10,000 hours of focused, deliberate practice effort to become accomplished or elite in any endeavor. Your ultimate success is influenced by genetics, timing, opportunity and location. Several studies in piano, swimming, violin, diving, weightlifting and other sports have found that 10,000 hours of practice over 10 years is the minimum time required to achieve international levels of expertise. The intensity of training preparation will build layer upon layer of skill, one quality repetition at a time in order to make seemingly impossible execution look effortless. Practice does not make perfect, only perfect practice makes for perfect execution.

In today's society another challenge is to find time to recover. Many elite athletes studied, engaged in a full eight hours of sleep each night as well as a 30-minute nap between practice sessions in order to maximize recovery. Many times overtraining is a function of under recovery rather than too great a stimulus in terms of volume and/or intensity. For today's athlete, this recovery means shutting down the laptop and phone and resting. In addition, quality nutrition is also a challenge in our hurry-up, fast paced society. Fast food is also fat food if you drop the *s* - which means many times athletes must take time to prepare snacks and pack food and water with them in order to have quality choices throughout the day. As the athlete ages and the quality of training increases, finding time for active means of recovery is vital. From various massage styles and hydrotherapy baths to post training stretching and tempo running, recovery is the vital component for elite athletes in heavy training phases. In fact, recovery at the end of one training session sets

the stage for and is the beginning of the next training session. When the stress of our culture, intense training volumes, lack of adequate recovery and poor nutritional choices collide, that is when injury and illness rear their heads and put the process off course for days, weeks and even months.”