



# STADION news

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## Overtraining

In the previous issue of *Stadion News* you learned what overtraining is and what causes it. You have also learned the symptoms of basedowic overtraining—one of two types of overtraining.

The other type of overtraining—adisonic overtraining—results from an excessively high volume of training work. This type of overtraining occurs mostly among older, more advanced athletes and is characterized by:

- 1) Progressive anemia
- 2) Hypotension
- 3) Diastolic blood pressure increased over 100 mm Hg immediately after exercise
- 4) Digestive disturbances
- 5) Loss of appetite
- 6) Low resting heart rate and a slight fatigued feeling

Treatment for both basedowic and adisonic overtraining consists of special diets, physiotherapy, and climatic therapy.

### Treatment for addisonic overtraining

Special diet: acidifying foods (cheese, meat, eggs, sweets), vitamins (B, C).

Physiotherapy: hot-cold showers, sauna of medium temperature alternated with

short cold showers, dynamic exercise, vigorous massage.

Climatic therapy: seaside and sea level altitude.

### Treatment for basedowic overtraining

Special diet: alkaline foods (milk, fruit, vegetables), vitamins (A, B, C), no stimulants (coffee, tea); alcohol in small quantities is permitted.

Physiotherapy: swimming outdoors, warm baths 35-37 degrees Celsius (96°-99° F), cold showers in the morning, light and rhythmical exercise, massage, no sauna!

Climatic therapy: moderate ultraviolet irradiation, change of environment (alternate various altitudes).

To learn how to recognize early signs of overtraining, how to avoid it, and how to treat it, order the book *Science of Sports Training: How to Plan and Control Training for Peak Performance* by Thomas Kurz (use the order form on page four).

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## Stretching clinic in St. Johnsbury, Vermont

Thomas Kurz, author of *Stretching Scientifically* and *Secrets of Stretching*, will conduct a stretching clinic in St. Johnsbury, VT, on July 25th. The clinic is a part of Northeastern Regional Martial Arts Clinic. For more information call Mr. Steve Jones, 1-802-748-2318.



Thomas Kurz, age 40, does a split with no warm-up at a recent seminar in Minneapolis, Minnesota

*"The results [of using Tom Kurz's method] have been astounding! Students have displayed excellent flexibility which they parlayed into outstanding kicks in terms of height, speed, and power. Injury rates have declined significantly."*

—Stephen Dileo, Altoona, Pennsylvania



Mr. Dileo and some of his students

## Your Self-Confidence and Your Performance

by Artur Poczwadowski

*You can do it if you just have a little confidence.*

—D. L. Feltz, *Understanding Motivation*

*This is Part III of a four-part article that explains what self-confidence is, what can happen if you are overconfident or not confident enough, and how to develop, maintain, and restore it to an optimal level, in the case of an athlete who has lost self-confidence.*

*The author, Artur Poczwadowski, is a sports psychology consultant. He graduated from Gdansk University (M.Sc. in psychology) and from AWF—University School of Physical Education (M.Sc. in coaching). He competed on a national level (in Poland) in judo. Currently he is working on his Ph.D. thesis in sports psychology at the University of Utah.*

*You can reach Artur Poczwadowski by e-mail at [Artur.P@m.cc.utah.edu](mailto:Artur.P@m.cc.utah.edu) to arrange consultations on preparing mental training programs, implementing these programs, monitoring, and adjusting them.*

### Self-confidence and performance

In summary, neither too high or too low a level of self-confidence bodes well for a high performance level. If self-confidence was measured by a questionnaire, the level predicting a satisfying performance would be of a medium value (and would be different for each individual). Thus, the described relationship between self-confidence and performance has an inverted U shape. A review of studies on self-confidence and performance was provided by Feltz (1992).

Optimal self-confidence has been shown to have numerous positive consequences. According to Weinberg (1988) it arouses positive emotions during the learning process and competition and facilitates concentration (there are no self-doubt statements or worries, for example). The appropriate level of self-confidence enables an athlete to set challenging goals, increases persistence and effort, and facilitates risk taking—essential in confusing the opponent, or using a new technical or tactical element.

Miller (1982) found that an increase in self-confidence brings with it an improvement in the athlete-coach communication and working relationship, an increased productivity in practice sessions and tourna-

ment preparation, and an increase in the athlete's enthusiasm. In addition, improved self-confidence adds to an athlete's sense of fun while practicing and competing.

Self-confidence affects an athlete's perception of stress, and consequently determines the intensity of psychophysiological response to stressors (described by Tache and Selye in their model of coping with stress in Poczwadowski, 1991, p. 21). In addition, self-confidence affects anxiety level prior to competitions—the higher the self-confidence level, the fewer stimuli are interpreted as threatening and the lower the anxiety level (Martens in Krawczynski, 1991). The lower the anxiety level, the more mental energy is saved for realistic assessment of a given situation, decision making, and correcting tactics.

The realization that self-confidence fluctuates affects any consideration of building it up. Self-confidence undergoes long-term changes related to different phases of the training process. Fatigue, diet, competition results, and the coach's expectations are other long-term changes that affect it. Short-term changes including menstrual cycle, small failures during practice sessions, mood swings, tiredness, errors during the performance, or negative self-talk during competitions, also affect self-confidence. In the face of these short-term changes, an athlete needs skills of restoring self-confidence at any given moment prior to or during a performance.

The self-confidence issue in sport is of a fairly high complexity. Every practitioner knows, however, that in order to deal with this problem, it has to be simplified without losing any of its major characteristics. Here are some practical strategies to develop, maintain, and restore an optimal self-confidence level that facilitates successful performance of athletic tasks.

### Recalling the best performance

This strategy aims at looking at yourself as a person in the positive light of your accomplishments, skills, and strengths. During structured exercises, recall the successful

events that prove your worth and competence. This recalling can be enhanced by going back to scrapbooks containing photos or newspaper articles, to video tapes, or to your trophy collection. Another way of doing it is to write your performer resume or tell somebody your career highlights. Why not organize a meeting with some students in a elementary school, for example, or with some athletes of a small community recreation center?).

During exercises such as these, athletes answer the question: "What am I good at as a person?—Cooking? Driving? Making friends?" Then they extend their consideration to a view of themselves as a performer in their sport. For example, a judo athlete might say: "I am good at fighting in tachi-waza (standing position), left side, leg techniques; I have good endurance and tactical sense, effective anticipation of my opponents' moves and attacks; recently I have started to feel better in ne-waza (ground work); I did very well during our physiological tests on strength and speed."

These exercises have a much stronger effect if the comments about your competence are provided by your teammates, and especially, your coaches. In this situation, the exercises have the same format and require completing a sentence that begins: "In my opinion your strengths as a person and a performer are.... Follow-up sentence stems might be: "The evidence for it is...." "Do you remember the tournament two years ago when you.... You did great that time. I remember you...." The same approach can be used while working with a team: "As a team we are good at...."

Support any statement with strong evidence and make sure that such a session does not change into a cheap pep talk and mutual adoration.

A variation of these exercises is recalling individually—without teammates—your best states in a similar format of storytelling and writing them out in a journal (Orlick 1986). Also, recalling best states can be done in deep relaxation while at the same time you use previously developed imagery skills.

*(continued on page three)*

## Self-Confidence

(continued from page 2)

Another idea within the same strategy is to produce a motivational video tape with a "Rocky"-like scenario (i.e., training sessions, private life, and your competition or performance successes mixed with favorite music). Sometimes you can use ready-made recordings of other players' or teams' performances that you consider outstanding. Here, you are using the phenomenon of vicarious experiences.

Use these strategies in the development phase (end of the off-season period) and the maintenance phase (end of the preparation period) for working on self-confidence. The motivational video has its best effect when used in the period directly prior to a major competition (i.e., 1-2 weeks prior to it).

1. Feltz, D. L. "Understanding motivation in sport: a self-efficacy perspective." In *Motivation in Sport and Exercise*, G. C. Roberts (ed), (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1992) pp. 93-105.
2. Weinberg, S. W. *The mental advantage*. (Champaign, IL: Leisure Press, 1988)
3. Miller, K. "Confidence training program." In *Mental Training for Coaches and Athletes*, Orlick, T., J. T. Partington, and J. H. Salmela, eds. (Ottawa: The Coaching Association of Canada, 1982) pp. 107-108.
4. Poczwardowski, A. *Wybrane zmienne psychologiczne zawodników judo reprezentujących różny poziom sportowy [Selected psychological factors of various skill level judo athletes]*. Unpublished Master's Theses. (Gdansk: Gdansk University, 1991)
5. Krawczynski, M. "Rainera Martensa model leku współzawodnictwa sportowego" [R. Marten's Model of Competitive Anxiety]. In *W kregu psychofizycznych zagadnień profilaktyki i terapii w sporcie*, W. Tłokinski, ed. (Gdansk: AWF, 1991) pp. 63-68.
6. Orlick, T. *Psyching for Sport: Mental Training for Athletes* (Champaign, IL: Leisure Press, 1986) pp. 87-94.

To be continued in the next issue

## Self-Defense Tip

The attacker grabs your clothes or your hair from behind and pulls you back and down into his or her strike or knee kick.

What should your first reaction be when you feel a grab from behind?

No matter if you are grabbed by the hair or by the clothes you should first squat down. The movement feels like a dive. It will protect you from receiving the full force of the strike to the head or knee kick to your back. It will nullify the backward and downward pull on your trunk or your head if you are pulled by your hair.

## How to Use Bungee Cords

Bungee cords are a valuable means of resistance training. In many sport-specific exercises, cords—unlike weights—provide resistance through the whole movement.

Typically in exercises with bungee cords or springs, resistance increases toward the end of the movement. That is fine if a similar progression happens in your sports technique, for example, in judo or their grappling throws and takedowns.

If you want the resistance to be about even through the whole movement, you need to use a long and hard bungee cord. If you want to concentrate your effort on the last phase of a movement, exercise with a soft but short bungee.

You can regulate the amount of resistance by changing the number of cords and their length—shorter are harder.

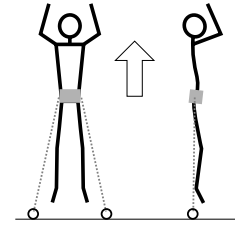
You can also use bungee cords to make movements easier. For example, you can destroy mental barriers regarding your image of a movement and your abilities. In the case of jumps, the bungee cords attached to a beam above you and to your belt or a harness pull you up higher than your imagined ability. Add this exercise to your normal jumps and see what happens.

Because the bungees will help you jump higher and stay in the air longer, you can also use this method to practice elements of airborne techniques such as leg maneuvers in a track and field long jump, high jump, and triple jump, or karate-type flying kicks.

You can use bungee cords to make jumps more difficult, too. Attach bungees to your belt or harness and to the floor or a platform from which you will jump up. Set the bungees so they have a slight tension when you stand, before you jump up.

It does not matter if you are grabbed with both hands or with one hand. It does not matter with which hand—you should always squat down. It does not matter which hand strikes you or which leg kicks you. You are surprised from behind and you do not have time to look or to feel how you are grabbed and what is coming next because the strike may be already on its way. Only after getting in a deep squat can you concern yourself with breaking the attacker's grip.

On the video *Basic Instincts of Self-Defense* you can see how such attacks look and why any other way of reacting will get you hurt. On this video Pawel Nastula, judo world champion and 1996 Olympic champion will also demonstrate how to



After a three or more jumps detach the bungees and jump free of any resistance. You will feel much lighter and the jumps will feel much easier. You need to experiment to find the proportion or combination of repetitions of resisted and free jumps that lets you feel this lightness.

The main benefit of this exercise, apart from building strength, is the pleasant mental effect of feeling unusual lightness and ease of jumping, which makes you perceive jumping exercises as fun.

For best results use all variants of jumping exercises—no resistance, resistance of weights, resistance of bungees, plyometrics, and the help of bungees.

Regarding the selection of exercises in a single workout keep in mind that Russian scientists have found out that exercises with normal resistance should be mixed with only one other kind of resistance. For example, shot puts with normal shot and with lighter shots can be done together in one workout but not shot puts with lighter shot and with heavier than normal shot (Kurz, T. *Science of Sports Training*, Island Pond, VT: Stadion Publishing Co., Inc., 1991). In the case of jumping, normal jumps and jumps with the help of bungee cords can be done together in one workout but not jumps with help and jumps with resistance.

You can order your bungee at 1-800-723-6175. It costs \$0.50 per foot.

counter such attacks and subdue the attacker.

To learn more techniques, order *Basic Instincts of Self-Defense*. Call 1-800-873-7117 or send us your check or money order (see the order form on page four).



## Q&A on STRETCHING (continued from previous issue)

Study this typical question on stretching and training carefully. It may contain elements that relate to questions of yours.

■ **Question:** *I received your video Secrets of Stretching a few days ago. I like it a lot and have also shared it with my head instructor at my karate studio. We have been slowly incorporating your methods into our karate classes. We began using your methods a few months ago after reading your book Stretching Scientifically. Many of the students are beginning to see remarkable results!*

*Since reading your book and viewing the video, I have decided to redo my workout routines. I am a martial artist and, therefore, my primary goal is to train in order to improve my martial arts skills, flexibility, speed, and endurance. I am 35 years old and am in above average condition for someone my age. I have worked out all my life. I also would like to maintain my muscle mass. (I'm not BIG, but I do have good muscle tone and would like to continue working with weights in order to keep my tone.) I am 5'10" and 170 lbs. If I don't work my upper body I will lose weight and be pretty scrawny looking, especially with all the other exercising I do.*

*So, even though I want to develop a workout that will improve my karate skills and flexibility, I also want to maintain and even improve my muscle mass in my upper body.*

*Here is what I have come up with:*

**Day 1 & 6: Technical/Speed**

\*Dynamic Stretching A.M. & P.M.

\*Techniques & kicking drills

\*Sparring

**Day 2 & 5: STRENGTH**

*I have listed the exercises in the order I do them. What do you think?*

\*Dynamic Stretching A.M.

\*Warm-up

\*Bench Press/Dynamic leg stretches

\*Chest Flys/hamstring curls

\*Military Press/leg extensions

\*Bicep Curls/Squats

\*Dips/Deadlifts

\*Chin ups/Adductor flys

\*Crunches

\*Back extensions (machine)

\*Isometric stretches (arms, side split, front split)

\*Relaxed stretches

**Day 3: Aerobics**

\*Jump rope

\*Running/Sprints

\*Bike

\*Relaxed stretching

**Day 4: OFF**

Answer: Both the video *Secrets of Stretching* and the book *Stretching Scientifically* (p. 64) explain how to schedule workouts, but you managed to miss it. Your Technical or Speed workout must precede your Strength or Endurance workout, a Strength workout must precede any Endurance workout, which is followed by a day of complete rest or active rest (easy, fun activity). Never do a Technical or Speed workout on the day immediately following either an exhausting Strength or an exhausting Endurance workout, and never do Strength after an exhausting Endurance workout because such sequences of efforts lead to overtraining.

In single workouts never work on endurance before any other ability with the exception of static passive flexibility, which is developed by relaxed stretches. With exception of your warm-up, the intensity of your efforts should diminish as the workout progresses. Study *Science of Sports Training* for an in-depth explanation of why the same exercises give different results depending on their sequence in a workout and in the weekly sequence of workouts.

Regarding your strength exercises, I suggest that, instead of leg curls and extensions, you do more squats and deadlifts since they are better for your knees. By doing the deadlifts before adductor exercises, and abdomen crunches before back extensions, you break the rule of never fatiguing stabilizers—in this instance, abdomen muscles, which stabilize your back, or your back, which stabilizes your legs—before movers.

(More about this workout in the next issue)

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