



Planning and Expectations

With a big event approaching a sense of urgency arises along with possible self-doubt as to whether the athlete has done "enough" training. To help in this 'fear' they must have confidence in a structured training program; have enough self-confidence to know that they have trained as much as possible and that training, is correct and geared towards a '**peak**' which would be this big event.

From a training point of view, make sure that the athlete has clearly defined plans for training right up to the final stages. Avoid the temptation to do "*just that little bit more*" in the last couple of days.

Last ditch efforts have a very low success rate and only result in lowering their confidence.

Be sure to keep a record of what the athlete is doing in their preparation. That way they will be directed to repeat the good things and avoid any pitfalls. If the coach or athlete discover that they should have done something else, note it for next time, rather than relying on memory. For now be pleased with the efforts and channel the athlete's attention to doing what they have been training.

By making out a daily diary, it should include how the athlete intends to use their shooting time. For a start, plan not to go to the range every day for long periods. This is not only physically tiring but mentally exhausting too. Look at the shooting schedules and plan range commitments accordingly. Remember to plan for rest and recreational periods also.

The athletes success rate at these events may be judged in several ways. The obvious success gauge will be winning. But this may be out of reach at this stage of their career, so realistic goals need to be set. The coach must look at where the athlete is '**now**' and what their '**realistic**' peak score could be. When setting goals, naturally scores come into mind. Being realistic, will lessen the chances of failure due to the over expectations they may perceive that others around them are placing on their result.

By looking at the athletes average '*club*' scores and their average '*open*' shoot scores, there may be a margin of perhaps 15 points. Set goals around these scores, but do not expect, or hope to get close to their '*top*' score.

'Hoping' and **'wishing'** are thoughts doomed for failure. Being realistic, helps confront the situation with greater self-confidence. Achieving goals helps build self-esteem which in turn helps confidence. You can see that it becomes a cycle.

The athlete's chances of success can be improved through the following:

Planning out the athlete's events properly and constructively will increase the chances of their success. The planning would start from the time they arrive at the range, set up on the range, how they should use preparation time, how to constructively use sighters and then the match and the requirements to fire one or a string of shots.