

# Pressure Points

For those who perform under pressure

April 2008

Special Edition for USA Canoe & Kayak



## Good Luck!

This special issue of *Pressure Points* includes a few reminders that will hopefully help you have your best performance ever at the Olympic Trials.

I will be at the USNWC from Thursday throughout the race weekend and available for both on and off-site consultations; but I also welcome the opportunity to just shoot the breeze.

You've done your preparation and the moment you've been waiting for is at hand. Crank it up to **212** and have a BLAST!

- Charlie Brown PhD

## Tips for a Great Performance at Team Trials

# PLAN AHEAD



Team Trials are right upon us and you're looking for a peak performance. You've put in the countless hours of physical training and have been integrating mental skills into your program. So how do you bring it all together to have that ideal run at the crucial time you want it? A little bit of advance planning can go a long way to help you have your best trials ever.

### Minimize decisions.

A person makes better choices if he or she is calm and relaxed, so go ahead and plan out your schedule for race weekend before the frenzy of the big week. Minimize decision-making during the competition so you can stay in relaxed auto-pilot mode as much as possible. Know when you want to be at the course, when to start your warm ups and what you want to do between races and after events. It is a good idea to go ahead and make tentative plans for your evening meals, so you're not left at the last moment trying to round up a group of people or having to be by yourself when you would prefer to have company. You don't have to micro-manage and choose the restaurant in advance, but it may be helpful to make a list of possible choices so you don't have to play, "I

don't know, Where do you want to go?"

### Don't just think it;

**INK it.** Uncertainty tends to create stress. An easy way to minimize uncertainty is to use checklists and write it down. Think of using a checklist as preparation for Beijing: the USOC is already cautioning that the Chinese bureaucracy is rigid and does not respond well to the unexpected. If an athlete forgets a credential or piece of equipment, there may be no recourse to remedy the situation. Their advice: make your lists and check them twice.

**REMEMBER:  
Pressure is a  
privilege**

### Plan for potential

**distractions.** You know what routines work the best for you. This race weekend is liable to present special challenges, however,

## Quick Tips...

# DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

*Dealing with the media can be an exciting, enjoyable experience, as well as great for the sport; but there are potential negative effects that you will want to consider with an interview request.*



### Protect your performance:

- It is your race and your decision whether to interview
- You do not want any interview to impact your performance
- If in doubt, don't do it
- You have every right to say "no" and do what is best to perform at your best

***If you choose to have an interview, consider the following:***

### Limit the time allocated for the process

- It is never, "just a moment..."
- Reporters and the press are skilled at engaging a person in conversation; don't let the interview interfere with either your preparation or recovery

### Keep things positive

- Be respectful of your competitors and the supporting organizations
- Bad mouthing anyone can often have unpredictable negative consequences (you don't want to fuel the fire of your competitors)
- Like it or not, you are role models for youth and ambassadors for whitewater slalom; be a class act

### Recruit someone to help you maintain your time limits

- It is often a challenge saying "no" to politely end an interview
- Bring someone with you to help maintain your pre-determined time limit and "run interference" for you
  - Agent
  - Staff member, coach or sport psychologist
  - Trusted friend or family member.

in that promoters are anticipating 35,000+ spectators and more media coverage than any whitewater event in US history. Have a strategy for managing the additional crowds and allow extra time for traffic. Make certain that you a plan for getting the down time that you need, and check out the tips in this issue on dealing with the media. CB

CB's Best Bets for  
Charlotte Entertainment  
this Weekend -  
Friday 4/17

### **The NoDa Gallery Crawl and the Evening Muse Listening Room**

Carolina Gator Gumbo 8:30

Cajun music and dance lessons for the  
Cajun waltz and two-step - \$8 adv

Michelle Malone and porterdavis  
10:30

Bottle-neck slide, blues harmonica and  
some the best gut-wrenching vocals you  
will ever hear - \$12 adv

*The will to win is  
important, but the will to  
prepare is vital.*

*-Joe Paterno*

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