



**SHANGHAI UNIVERSITY SPORTS RESEARCH CENTER  
COLLEGE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

**“ ZURKHANEH SPORTS AND PAHLEVANI WRESTLING PREGAME “  
“ MENTAL ATTITUDE “**

Most every pahlevan and zurkhaneh sports athlete experiences the positive pregame jitters. the feeling of excitement prior to competition. However, many of these athletes experience more than just jitters, they have performance anxiety, a sinking feeling in the pit of their stomach. pregame jitters are a natural part of sports, but pregame performance anxiety will cause most athletes to tense up and not perform up to their ability.

pregame jitters can cause you not to sleep the night before competition. you might not be able to eat a regular meal the morning of a game. the pre competition jitters may make you feel like you want to throw up. but for many zurkhaneh athletes and most pahlevanan, PREGAME JITTERS INSTILL A POSITIVE TINGLING OF EXCITEMENT IN ANTICIPATION FOR COMPETITION.

you actually want to have positive pregame jitters that will help instill an optimal level of mental activation, which can boost focus. However, too little or too much physical activation is not ideal for finding a flow or peak performance. your ability to learn how to cope effectively with pregame anxiety is critical to consistent performance.

your pregame mental preparation is the best time to manage your emotions and thoughts about your upcoming performance.

here are the most mistakes during your pregame preparation at the zurkhaneh sports/pahlevani competition :

\* PREGAME MISTAKE No 1 :

PLACING STRICT EXPECTATIONS ON YOUR PERFORMANCE

Despite what others have taught you about positive expectations , maintaining high, strict performance expectations can actually limit your success.

your goal is to replace expectations with manageable objectives.

why do expectations limit your performance ? first, you set yourself up for a success/failure proposition. you either achieve your expectations or fail to achieve them. second, if you don't achieve your predetermined expectations, you tend to question your ability that day, either during or after performance. Essentially, expectations set you up for failure before you even start. In addition, expectations are usually about results such as obtaining a specific score or achieving

a personal statistic such as a batting average. Athletes often judge their game based on these expectations. In most cases, your expectations equal pressure and pressure can turn into pregame anxiety.

\* PREGAME MISTAKE No 2:

LEAVING SELF-CONFIDENCE TO CHANCE

self-confidence is paramount in sports. if you have a high level of belief in your ability, you will not become anxious .many athletes who lack self-confidence in their ability leave their confidence to chance. if you can only feel confident when you make a couple strong plays at the start of the game , your confidence is prone to vary widely.

are you unsure how you will perform prior to competition ?

I as a coach teach my students how to be proactive with their pregame confidence. you don't want your confidence to be thrashed around by immediate results at the start of the game. what happens if you start the competition with errors ? you want a proactive approach to confidence, not a reactive approach.

PREGAME MISTAKE No 3:

GETTING DISTRACTED BY THE HOOPLA OF THE GAME

\* The hoopla or atmosphere of playing in the big game such as national koshti pahlevani tournaments, or International zurkhaneh sports championships, for example, distracts athletes during the pregame routine. do you feel additional pressure to perform well in the big game when the hype leading up to the big game causes you stress ?

why do you think the world games and Olympic games has two weeks of hype after the games? the media can jump on all the stories and expose every nugget of information about the athletes and coaches. if you allow the pregame hoopla to distract you from your real mission, you will not be fully prepared to compete.

PREGAME MISTAKE No 4:

CARRYING LIFE'S WORRIES INTO SPORTS :

\* Some athletes have trouble " PARKING " life events or daily life hassles when they enter competition. whether the issue is a term paper or a daily hassle such as paying bills, one goal of mental preparation is your ability to separate your life from sports.

if you take life's worries into competition, you will be distracted and not fully focus on the task.

PREGAME MISTAKE No 5:

OVER-TRAINING BEFORE COMPETITION :

\*Perfectionists in individual sports, such as individual zurkhaneh sports event, koshti pahlevani,

and etc., spend too much in a training mindset just prior to competition.  
In sport, you never want to cram during the final week before the competition.

your goal is to feel prepared when you compete, both physically and mentally. However, you don't want to panic the last two days and start to rework your mechanics or technique to ensure you perform well.

PREGAME MISTAKE No 6:

WORRYING TOO MUCH ABOUT RESULTS OR OUTCOMES:

\*Your pregame worry, anxiety, or tension can come from several sources depending on your personality. What causes you to become anxious or stressed is different than what another athlete experiences. Most worry comes from focusing too much on results or more specifically, the consequences of results. You might be the most anxious about what you think others might say or think about you if you don't play well.

PREGAME MISTAKE No 7:

POOR PLANNING OR LACK OF A GAME PLAN :

\*You should never enter competition without a game plan, race strategy or strategy. In team sports, most coaches give you the game plan. On the other hand, individual athletes must develop their own game plans and strategies. You want to have a game plan that helps you play to your strengths and your opponent's weaknesses.

PREGAME MISTAKE No 8:

PSYCHING YOURSELF OUT BEFORE COMPETITION :

\* Do you compare yourself to your competitors before competition? Your confidence can quickly go in the tank when you make comparisons to other athletes who you think are better than you. Besides, you can't focus your best if you are distracted by gawking at your competitors.

PREGAME MISTAKE No 9 :

WORRYING TOO MUCH ABOUT WHAT OTHERS THINK :

\* For many athletes, a massive source of pregame worry about performance comes from a need to have others "approve" of their performance. If this is you, you might have the need to be admired, accepted, respected, or liked by other people. You worry about performing poorly because you think it may influence what others think about you.

thus, if you crave approval from others, you are more likely to become anxious or are afraid to fail in competition. Your need for social approval underlies and supports fear of failure.

what happens when you want others approval, but can't get it? stress! many people who need others approval to feel good about themselves are prone to pregame anxiety.

PREGAME MISTAKE No 10 :

ALLOWING FEAR OF FAILURE TO BE THE TOP MOTIVATOR :

\* Fear of failure occurs when athletes are motivated by not losing or not making mistakes. the root causes are complex, but fear of failure usually starts when athletes worry about the potential consequences of failure. there are several secondary issues related to this fear, including anxiety, tension, pregame anxiety, trying too hard and lack of trust..

your mental preparation is one aspect of your performance you have total control. do not leave mental preparation to chance or external forces that you can't control.

Once you complete your physical training, you want to enter competition with confidence and focus. be proactive and take personal responsibility for your mental game or mindset before every competition.

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