

Self-Confidence: A Key to Success in Sports

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Abstract: Preparing for sports competitions now-a-days is, more complex and difficult; therefore it requires disciplined training for achieving high standards in sports. Some of the athletes in the world are physically gifted yet, their lack of psychological skill prevents them from performing well in sport.

The most important part of psychological preparation for competition is the development of personality traits necessary for success in a competition. These traits are diligence, perservance, determination, responsibility, emotional stability, self-control, self-confidence, calmness and competitiveness. These traits are tested and well formed in competitions The most consistent finding in peak performance literature is the direct correlation between self-confidence and success. Self-confidence is considered to be one of the most prominent traits in successful athlete and it has a remarkable effect on one's performance as it helps an individual to reduce psychological state such as anxiety and also other similar undesirable symptoms.

Keywords: Self-confidence, sports, psychological preparation, development of personality traits.

Introduction

Sports and games, an excellent source of diversion and recreation have also turned so highly competitive that there is an insatiable quest among

individuals for making and breaking records in performance and winning medals at international athletic contests. Organization of apex tournaments is today a great money-spinner. The pomp and glory involved in sports competitions add to the prestige and honour of nation. The involvement of print and electronic media has added new dimensions to sport competition. Sports competitions are therefore, becomes emotionally charged situations in which tempers run high and tantrums over-power participants, officials and even spectators. Competition can cause athletes to react both physically (somatic) and mentally (cognitive) in a manner which can negatively affect their performance abilities. Preparing for sports competitions now-a-days is, more complex and difficult; therefore it requires disciplined training for achieving high standards in sports.

Athletes and coaches spend thousands of hours in physical practice sessions attempting to develop physical skills to perfection. Somehow the misconception persists that if one practices and trains hard enough physically for a competition, everything else will magically come together. Some of the athletes in the world are physically gifted yet, their lack of psychological skill prevents them from performing well in sport.

Sound mental preparation is quite necessary to succeed in sport. It is true that there is a “physical” component to performance and that one need the right techniques and skills in their respective sport. But there is a mental and emotional side of competition as well. There is a link between mental and physical performance. In fact, during a given competition, or between two competitions that closely follow each other, there is usually no marked change in an athlete’s skill level, physiological capacity, or biomechanical efficiency. The fluctuation in performance is generally caused by the fluctuation in the athlete’s mental control.

Sports performance is not simply a product of physiological and biomechanical processes but psychological factors also play a crucial role in determining performance. Although psychological preparation is a

component that has been often neglected by athletes and coaches alike, studies have shown that mental readiness was felt to be the most significant statistical link with Olympic ranking. Athletes have frequently been quoted to state that the mental aspect is the most important part of one's performance.

Today, modern sports record an increasing number of athletes of the same or very similar functional and physical abilities and technical-tactical readiness. In such situations, when two athletes of very similar capabilities meet, a more successful one will definitely be the one having more adequate psychological preconditions.

The most important part of psychological preparation for competition is the development of personality traits necessary for success in a competition. These traits are diligence, perservance, determination, responsibility, emotional stability, self-control, self-confidence, calmness and competitiveness. These traits are tested and well formed in competitions. If an athlete is well prepared for competition from physical, technical and tactical point of view, the most important factor deciding about their degree of success is self-confidence. The most consistent finding in peak performance literature is the direct correlation between self-confidence and success. Self-confidence is considered to be one of the most prominent traits in successful athlete and it has a remarkable effect on one's performance as it helps an individual to reduce psychological state such as anxiety and also other similar undesirable symptoms. Self-confidence is advantageous for athletes.

Concept of Self-Confidence

Self-confidence is commonly used as self-assurance in one's personal judgment, ability, power, etc. One increases self-confidence from experiences of having mastered particular activities. It is a positive belief that in the future one can generally accomplish what one wishes to do. Self-

confidence is not the same as self-esteem, which is an evaluation of one's own worth. Psychologists describe self-confidence as a dimension of self-awareness that is reflected in one's conviction of having those traits that make him/her competent to always have full control over the results of their activities, to adjust them to what he/she appreciates and considers desirable (Havelka 1992).

Many psychologists have emphasized the need to distinguish between self-confidence as a generalized personality characteristic, and self-confidence with respect to a specific task, ability or challenge (i.e. self-efficacy). Self-confidence typically refers to general self-confidence. This is different from self-efficacy, which psychologist Albert Bandura has defined as a "belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task and therefore is the term that more accurately refers to specific self-confidence. Specific confidence is the confidence one shows in performing a particular task. For example, a cricket player may have high level of self-confidence in batting, but a low level of self-confidence in fielding.

Self-confidence in Sports

All coaches consider self-confidence a dominant trait which considerably determines the quality of sport performance. Self-confidence in sport is manifested in sport situations and implies the level of an athlete's confidence in his/her abilities to be successful in sports.

Self-confidence in sport can be defined in several ways depending on theoretical approach used to explain and measure it. Many sport psychologists, especially those working as consultants in practice, consider it a key component in the programmes of mental exercises intended for athletes. The athletes themselves point out that self-confidence is a mental trait of key importance for their success in relevant sport performance, but only when it is high, stable and resistant to irresolution. That is why all young, talented and ambitious athletes wish is to make their fragile and

unstable self-confidence that accompanies ups and downs of their performance to become much stronger, more stable and resistant. Self-confidence is a key factor in discrimination between successful and less successful athletes. Level of self-confidence in athletes is highly influenced by their selection of goals, commitment and endurance. An athlete with lack of self-confidence doubts whether he/she is good enough, whether he/she has qualities necessary for success. When an athlete doubts his/her success or expects something bad to happen, he/she creates a so-called negative self-imposed prophecy, which is very much present in sports. Negative self-imposed prophecies are psychological obstacles that lead to a magic circle: expectation of failure leads to real failure, which on the other hand reduces self-confidence and opinion of one's own self and increases expectation of future failures.

Successful athletes work constantly on building their self-confidence. Although success is believed to enhance self-confidence, it is more often that the opposite is true: good performance is a "consequence" of self-confidence. The most accurate would be to conclude that self-confidence is both a cause and a consequence of success in sports. There are a number of techniques for developing self-confidence. The role of coaches in development, enhancement and maintenance of self-confidence with athletes is of key importance.

Models of Self-Confidence in Sport

There are theoretical approaches or models in general approach to self-confidence in sport used to test and explain it. However, researches on self-confidence in sport mostly contain two theoretical approaches:

- Bandura's model of self-efficacy and
- Vealey's model of multi-dimensional sport self-confidence

Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy:

Self-efficacy refers to beliefs of an individual that he/she possesses abilities to organize and perform certain activities necessary for success in fulfilling a specified task (Bandura 1997). Bandura's theory of self-efficacy describes self-efficacy in interaction with environment determinants aiming at changes in behaviour.

Self-efficacy is not a static feature of personality, but a variable characteristic that assumes control of physical performance disturbing thoughts and affective states. "According to this theory, internal personal factors, environmental events and behaviour have mutual impact on each other, so a full understanding of human behaviour in certain situations requires understanding of interactive effects among a person, environment and behaviour" (Bandura 1997).

According to this theory, feelings of self efficacy originate in the following sources of information: successful or unsuccessful completion of a task, experience gained through observing other models or demonstrators, verbal persuasion coming mostly from the coach, seeing your own self in a successful performance, physiological conditions that can be positive and supportive or negative and damaging, and emotional conditions of depression when depression and anxiety reduce self-confidence while feeling of energy and liveliness increase self-confidence.

Vealey's model of sport self-confidence:

Working on motivation for achievement and self-confidence in sport, Robin Vealey developed two models of self-confidence. Each of these models are situationally specific and combines a feature and state of self-confidence and involves aspects of achievement goals theory. According to the first model, sport self-confidence is a belief or level of confidence of an individual in his/her own abilities that make him successful in sport especially when he/she interacts with competitive orientation thus creating temporary self-confidence that has a direct impact on behaviour and

performance. Competitive orientation is not the same in everyone, because each person has a different notion of success.

Competitiveness as part of self-confidence assumes an athlete's confidence in his/her capabilities to perform or win regardless the quality of performance. For the needs of sport self-confidence testing, Vealey has developed the following instruments: TSCI (Trait Sport Confidence Inventory); SSCI (State Sport Confidence Inventory) and COI (Competitive Orientation Inventory). Using these instruments it is possible to foresee a more successful state of self-confidence of athletes in different situations and accordingly their behaviour and successfulness.

However, as majority of athletes claim that social factors, such as behaviour of coaches, their communication styles as well as expectations of important adults, have an important impact on their sport self-confidence, this model can be considered incomplete. That is why Vealey reviewed this model in which she makes a distinction between self-confidence in current competition and one in forthcoming season based on a typical level of self-confidence of a person. This means that self-confidence can be something felt only today, which makes it unstable (state of self-confidence), or it can be part of a person thus very stable (feature of self-confidence). Trait-confidence can be defined as a dispositional feeling about being able to perform a task, whereas state-confidence refers to a more "in the moment" belief about being able to perform the task (Vealey 1986).

Multi-dimensionality of self-confidence in sport is represented through components where the level of confidence determines how athletes will see and interpret (cognition) different situations they find themselves in, how they will feel then (affects) and how they will behave (emotions, behaviour, cognition).

Types of Self-Confidence

Based on her own model of multi-dimensional self-confidence and a large number of researches, Vealey concluded that self-confidence in sport consists of three independent components or types of self-confidence:

- Physical abilities and training
- Cognitive efficacy
- Level of endurance

These three components are closely connected to:

- Competitive anxiety
- Ability of adjustment
- Sport performance itself.

The Six Sources of Self-confidence

The self-confidence that an individual feels during a particular activity or situation is generally derived from one or more of the following six elements:

- **Performance Accomplishments:**

Performance accomplishment is the strongest contributor to sport confidence. When an athlete performs any skill successfully, he/she will generate confidence and be willing to attempt something slightly more difficult. Skill learning should be organized into a series of tasks that progress gradually and allow the athlete to master each step before progressing on to the next. Personal success breeds confidence, while repeated personal failure diminishes it.

- **Being involved with the success of others:**

It can also significantly strengthen the confidence of an athlete, especially when they believe that the performer with whom they're playing with (e.g. a team-mate) closely matches their own qualities or abilities. In effect, it evokes the reaction: "if they can do it, I can do it".

- **Verbal Persuasion:**

Verbal Persuasion is a means of attempting to change the attitudes and behaviour of athletes, and this also includes changing their self-confidence. In sport, coaches often try to boost confidence by convincing athletes that the challenge ahead is within their capabilities: “I know you are a great player so keep your spirit up and play hard.” An athlete might reinforce this by repeating the message over and over to him or herself as a form of self-persuasion.

- **Imagery Experiences:**

Athletes can use mental imagery in an attempt to adjust to their stress levels prior to competition. Calming images of relaxing scenes, peace and tranquillity will reduce their stress level. It is used to calm the mind and body and on the other hand high-energy images of intense competition, strong effort, and successful performance in their mind will often raise physiological activity. When athletes uses imagery, they should convince themselves that they can endure more muscular fatigue, manage potential threats safely, achieve greater athletic feats, or return to performance from injury, the imagery should be structured so that the individuals imagine themselves performing just slightly better than what they think they can do. Just as in setting goals, the imagery should be challenging but attainable.

- **Physiological States:**

Physiological states such as muscular tension, palpitations, tension, nausea, sweat, clammy hands, and butterflies in the stomach can reduce feelings of confidence in an athlete. These bodily sensations that are associated with competitions need to be perceived as being facilitative to performance and this can be achieved through the application of appropriate stress management interventions.

- **Emotional States:**

It is the final source of self-confidence and relates to how an athlete controls the emotions associated with competition, such as frustration, worries, unrealistic performance expectations, self-defeating statements excitement and anxiety. Very often, the importance of the occasion creates self-doubt, which is why it is essential to control one's thoughts and emotions.

It is important to mention these sources because in order to enhance self- confidence, athletes should have a clear understanding of their source of confidence.

Characteristics of self-confident athletes

- Confident athletes tend to be more skilled and effective in using cognitive resources necessary for sporting success.
- Athletes who have self-confidence believe in themselves. They believe in their abilities to gain required skills, physical and mental competence, i.e. they possess what is necessary to fulfil their potentials.
- Self-confident athletes remain task-diagnostic by focusing on process solutions to problems in the face of obstacles, whereas less confident individuals are more likely to become self-diagnostic and focus on their perceived inadequacies.
- Athletes who possess a strong belief in their ability reported being able to peak under pressure and cope successfully with adverse situations during competition.
- Athletes with high sport self-confidence would possess better concentration, game strategies, healthy emotions, control of tempos.
- Self-confident athletes have been consistently associated with positive affect, whereas a lack of confidence has been associated with anxiety, depression, and dissatisfaction.
- Self-confident athletes have also been linked to productive achievement behaviours such as increased effort and persistence.

- Self-confident athletes have also been associated with the setting of challenging goals and the expenditure of maximal effort and persistence to achieve those goals.

Thus, athletes who are high in confidence are likely to succeed because of their productive achievement behaviours.

Characteristics of low self-confident athletes

- **Unable to Bounce Back from Mistakes:**

Athletes with low confidence can get stuck in to a cycle of negative thoughts and behaviour after mistakes. This means multiple mistakes can happen when it really only needed to be one. One may notice during games that he/she is still focusing on a mistake many minutes after it happened. The most confident athletes can recover from a mistake within a few seconds and do not let it affect their psychological state or their play.

- **Cannot Control Negative Emotions:**

Out of control emotions are a sign of negative thoughts and this may show through one's body language or it can be noticed through mind and how an individual cannot focus on what he/she is doing. Negative emotions and their levels depend on the individual but may include anger, anxiety, fear or sadness. Confident athletes can stay composed with a positive attitude in any situation.

- **Performing Poorly Under Pressure:**

Failing in pressure situations is a big sign of low self-confidence. Low confidence is underestimating one's ability to deal with situations and an

athlete can notice their performance level will be much lower than they know they are capable of.

- **Lack of Focus on Important Information:**

Athletes get distracted by unimportant things such as the crowd, parents, or events that are not under control such as the opponent, the officiating, the weather, field conditions, the past, the outcome, other people's expectations, etc. If an athlete is at optimum level of confidence then he/she will only focus on themselves and what they need to do.

- **Worrying About the Future and Fearing Failure:**

Athlete with low self-confidence feels that they will not be able to perform at a level necessary to do well or to overcome obstacles. During the game situation an individual's thoughts about the future will prevent them from focusing on what they are doing at the moment, or before games worrying too much about future will prevent them from preparing correctly. Confident athletes have belief and the knowledge that whatever happens in the future even if unexpected, they will overcome them and perform at their best.

- **Lack of Motivation and Enjoyment:**

When an athlete dreads going to practice or in games because of the stress or anxiety he/she feels about their lack of ability and the situations that may arise that they feel they can't deal with. Then the athlete may start to find reasons or excuses not to compete or train. Participation in sport at any level is supposed to be enjoyable and if an athlete is at his optimum confidence level he will be able to both perform well and enjoy it.

- **Performing Better in Practice than in Games:**

This is an easy sign to recognize that shows low self-confidence. Athletes with low self-confidence often have great practices or warm ups and are unable to repeat this during competitions.

- **Lack of Trust:**

Athletes with low self-confidence do not trust their skills because they may lack belief in the preparation they are during practice. During games this may translate to playing it safe or avoiding risks. The athletes who have optimum confidence are able to take risks and play to win. They do not fear failure and have confidence in their preparation. When athletes feel confident, they are more readily able to turn sporting potential into superior performance. Conversely, when they feel unsure of themselves, the slightest setback or smallest hurdle can have an inordinate effect on their performance.

Building self confidence

Even though self-confidence might not be a constant but rather temporary state, there are methods every athlete can follow in order to enhance it. These techniques can be used in combination with each other in various ways, depending on the task and the learner, to enhance self-confidence. The following are the ways to build one's self-confidence:

Goal Setting:

Goals can be the foundation to self-confidence. If goals are unrealistically high, a person will probably face self-confidence issues. It is important to set realistic goals yet challenging so that an athlete can go into a competition with excitement and confidence. . For complex tasks, the goals should be specific and challenging but attainable. For easy or routine tasks, the harder the goal, the better the performance. Assuming an individual has

the requisite skills and commitments, working toward difficult goals can build a strong sense of confidence because the goals offer more information about the performer's capability to acquire knowledge and skills than do easier goals. Some individuals, however, may need some persuasive help to be convinced that the goals are not too difficult. In addition, for complex and difficult tasks, short-term goals should be used along with long-term goals. Similarly, when using short-term goals, the performer's perceptions of self-confidence for attainment of future goals should be monitored, as well as perceptions of self-confidence that result from goal attainment.

Adequate Preparation:

One reason for self-doubt is inadequate preparation. The best athletes in the world spend countless hours on their fitness level outside the court or field. By working on strength, endurance and ability, as it pertains to a particular sport, one can be more assured during the heat of a game that he/she is having the required fitness level to compete with the best. Putting extra time on working over the skills needed for a particular sports makes an athlete more confident during each play.

Positive Self-Talk:

Self-talk is the running conversation that goes on in our head nearly 24 hours a day. Most of the time we did not really listen to or pay attention to what we are saying, but the words that constantly spin around in our head can have an influence on the images in our mind and also on attitude, mood, self-worth, determination, and attention. People may simply be born optimistic or pessimistic, and their self-talk reflects that attitude toward life.

Positive self-talk will affirm that an individual possess the skills, abilities, positive attitudes and beliefs that are the building blocks of success. The statements one chooses should be vivid, should roll off the tongue, and be practiced well in advance of competition. Most of all, they must be totally believable. It should be used particularly in the low-confidence situations.

Self-talk can lead the way to higher belief in your ability and, ultimately, your self-confidence.

Personal Affirmations:

Affirmations are self-talk statements that create an image, thought, or positive mind-set. Affirmations should be realistic and focus on something that is in one's control. It is used to overcome shaky self-confidence. Affirmations can set up the framework for all of that as long as they deal with the present and carry enough resolve to have a positive effect. If an athlete has just started the sport and using the affirmation that "I am an Olympic Champion" probably will not boost his/her self-confidence for an upcoming match. It is important to keep affirmations focused on the current situation and make them reflect a certain aspect that we know is true. Otherwise, they are just wishful thinking without any resolve. Use affirmations in practice so that they have a positive effect on an individual's mind-set during a match.

Distinguishing Confident Situations and Situations of Doubts:

To achieve a greater sense of stability in confidence, it is necessary to know exactly what causes it to fluctuate. Take a clean page and divide it into two columns. Label the first column as 'High-confidence situations' and the second column as "Low-confidence situations". In the first column, list all of the situations or circumstances of the sport in which an athlete feels completely confident. In the second column, list the situations or circumstances that sometimes cause confidence to diminish. Clearly identifying the situations that make an individual feel uneasy is the first step towards building greater self-confidence and at the same time also creates the awareness of areas that can be improved.

Visualization:

Visualization is a powerful confidence booster. Visualization is an act of creating and "rehearsing" a positive mental experience in order to enhance one's ability to achieve a successful outcome in real life. The most important

thing with visualization is using multiple senses, like sound, sight and smell. When a football player visualizes scoring a goal, he can feel his foot hitting the ball, the smell of the grass under his foot and the sound of the crowd. This incredibly vivid imagery helps an athlete to prepare mentally, by improving their confidence, focus, clarity and speed of thought. It helps them prepare for any scenario: how will I react to the crowd? What if we go 1-0 down? What shot will I take in a certain situation? But it also fires impulses to the muscles, therefore priming them for action. The more vivid the mental image, the more effectively the brain primes the muscles to complete the same physical and technical action in a real game. The visualization recreates the mental state associated with past performance success and will help in bridging the gap between one's ability and confidence.

Dwell On The Positive:

Get in the habit of looking for the upside of things. Being negative will not only kill one's confidence level, but also sabotage an individual's performance. If the weather is foul, it is good to think that how this will bother the opponent more than you. If an opponent is bigger, faster or stronger, think about how they have much more to lose than you since you're not expected to win. If a competitor starts to suddenly cheat or talk trash, think about why they are doing it, because they don't feel that their skill level by itself is enough to beat you. This positive approach will help an athlete to feel better and perform at a higher level

Development of Positive and Productive Attitude Towards Mistakes:

It is important to express a positive, productive attitude toward mistakes, even toward defeat. When athletes make mistakes, usually they become frustrated, often too excited and anxious. This leads to unproductive changes of attention and increased muscle tension, which has additional damaging effect on performance. It is very useful to teach people to look upon mistakes as useful experiences in the process of achieving personal perfection. No athlete is happy with mistakes, but it is a big mistake to make them feel upset because they made a mistake.

State of anxiety will only cause new mistakes and failures, so it is much better to try to achieve at least a partial success, remaining cool and learning from the mistake, using it for future success. Four steps characterize this positive approach to mistakes. First, the athlete's distress about the mistake is acknowledged. Second, the athlete is complimented by the coach, finding that something about the performance that was correct. The compliment must be about an important and relevant aspect of the task. Third, the coach provides instructions on how the athlete can improve the mistake. Fourth, the coach ends with a positive note by encouraging the athlete to keep trying.

Concentration on the Process:

When one is first learning complex tasks, self-confidence and success can be enhanced by emphasizing process-related (or learning) goals over outcome-related (or performance) goals. Rather than defining success through outcome measures, such as winning and losing, success should be redefined to include process variables, such as effort, form and strategy. These process-related goals are important because they help individuals to focus on the learning aspect of a skill rather than viewing the skill as requiring inherent aptitude.

Positive Communication:

Positive communication is especially an important technique when mistakes and setbacks occur. Because mistakes and failures are inevitable, the way in which the coach communicates and interacts with their trainees will have an important influence on the learner's self-confidence. Telling learners that their past failures were due to insufficient effort, rather than lack of ability, can help them meet their setbacks with renewed vigor and persistence because lack of effort can be rectified. But encouraging learners to emphasize external factors (e.g., bad luck or task difficulty) as the reason for a setback (as some athletic coaches do) could be a serious because the learners may start to perceive that the outcome is out of their control and not take responsibility for their performance.

Positive communication by the coach has been shown to be very helpful in reducing the negative affect that occurs in failure situations. Most individuals feel discouraged and ashamed when they do not perform well and need the assurance and encouragement of their coach in regard to their abilities. In response to the athletes mistakes, the coach should not focus on the error itself, but instead find something positive and constructive to say about improving the performance. A positive communication style allays feelings of embarrassment and promotes a sense of self-confidence.

Performance Feedback:

Performance feedback can provide clear information about the athletes that they are making progress toward their goals. Different types of performance feedback can be used, depending on an athlete's phase of skill acquisition. As with performance feedback, if rewards are used they must be clearly tied to performance progress in order to influence self-confidence.

Anxiety Reduction:

Some athletes may interpret an increase in their physiological arousal as a fear that they cannot perform a skill successfully. Thus, it is believed that if the arousal of these individuals can be reduced through such techniques as relaxation and biofeedback, fears will decrease and self-confidence will increase.

Manipulating the Environment:

Another technique that coaches can use to help improve coping confidence is to try to manipulate the environment to reduce the uncertainties of the situation. For example, sources of uncertainty might include how dangerous the situation is, how well one expects to perform, whether one will be asked to perform, or what ones teammates will think. Uncertainty can be reduced by providing information of task requirements, providing assurance to the learner (or performer), and emphasizing realistic, short-term goals that take the attention away from long-range outcomes.

Situational Training Sessions:

A good way to build self-confidence is to organize situational training sessions when the competition conditions are simulated, because in this way the athletes increase their self-confidence and find it easier to cope with stressful situations during real competitions since they are already familiar with the situation.

Conclusion

Self-confidence is a belief that a person has inner sources, required abilities to be successful. The very concept of self-confidence refers to the belief of individuals in their own competences or their expectation to be successful based on those competences. Self-confidence is characterized by high expectation of success. It can help generate positive emotions, improve concentration, influence the setting of goals, increase commitment, and direct the athletes toward winning rather than toward avoiding failures and thus enhancing the psychological strength of athletes. Self-confidence is built by successful performance, self-confident behaviour, self-confident thinking, imagination, increasing physical fitness and mental preparedness. Self-confidence is a potent predictor of an individual's performance, given the appropriate skills and adequate incentives.

These facts lead to the conclusion that adequate approach to mental training is extremely necessary in sports. It has been proven that self-confidence increases considerably through mental training. Majority of athletes, coaches and psychologists deeply believe that from psychological point of view self-confidences is the key factor for success in sports. Development and maintenance of self-confidence is one of the biggest requirements of mental training with athletes and is identified in sport literature as one of the "secrets" of their success. Impact of self-confidence on an athlete's performance is one of the most intriguing topics in sport psychology. All coaches consider confidence a dominant trait which considerably determines the quality of sport performance. The athlete's low self-confidence leads to an expectation of poor performance and the poor

performance leads to an even low level of self-confidence. As we know that athletes need self-confidence to win but it is also true that athletes need to win to develop self-confidence. The need is to find out how to get this winning/increased self-confidence, which breeds success and how to prevent an individual from losing self-confidence.

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