

ELITE IMAGES

Important differences between elite and non-elite athletes in imagery



IF YOUR GOAL IS TO BECOME AN ELITE ATHLETE, YOU NEED TO LOOK AT HOW YOU USE IMAGERY - AND WHAT TYPE.

As obvious as it is for you, a strength and power athlete, to lift weights to increase your strength and power, it is equally obvious that you must use imagery to increase your performance on competition day. This is what the research says. This is what the athletes say. (See *JOPP*, [Vol. III/4](#), Elite Imagery, for more.) But as an intelligent and science-minded person, you probably realize that there is more to this "picture." Not only is there a difference between how elite and novice athletes use imagery, there are also differences based on the type of sport. One way to classify sports involves open-skill vs. closed-skill sports. An open-skill sport is one in which athletes have to rely on a lot of external information to perform. Good examples are football and wrestling. A closed skill sport is one in which athletes go up against themselves only, such as in weightlifting or figure skating. With this important distinction in mind, what are the differences in imagery use between a novice and elite athlete competing in an open-skill or closed-skill sport? This is critically important information, since it allows you to fine-tune the type of imagery you use for your sport in your never-ending quest to become the best athlete you can be.

Power Key: imagery, visualization, open-skill sport, closed-skill sport