**Train your Brain for Running**

Athletes, take a look back at the beginning of the season and think about the first day of practice. Remember feeling out of shape, concerned about who is beating you, or possibly not knowing anyone on the team? Remember how sore you were the first day, the first week and then how the soreness started to go away? Think about the mileage you are putting in now compared to the mileage you began with. Your body has accomplished everything you have asked of it.  
  
Now think about your attitude. Coaches tell athletes that they must have a positive mental attitude (PMA). PMA doesn't only consist of being willing to do the workouts without complaining, but also setting and striving for goals, being rational rather than emotional, and having confidence. Let me go into more detail.  
  
***Workout without complaining***  
The coaches have a specific reason on why the athletes do the drills and runs they do. If you have a question, ask the coach. He will explain the benefit of that day's training. Realize that you are not the only person in pain. The entire team is sore. If the team waited on the recovery of every member, there would be no team and the season would be over. If you are concerned about a pain tell the coach and he will advise you on what to do.   
  
***Setting and striving for goals***  
Each of the athletes should set goals for themselves and their team. Goals should be something that is attainable and once met, revised.  
  
***Being rational rather than emotional***  
We all have those days when we have had a poor workout or crummy race. It is okay, things go wrong. Instead of letting the emotional side of you take over (thinking how bad you are) look at it rationally. How can you improve? Visualize the improvements on the situation and use the mistake to grow from. As long as you tried your best, no one can ask for more.  
  
***Confidence***  
Running a race in your mind can help you run the actual race confidently. Think about the course and how you will attack it. Think about what could happen during your race and how you will handle each situation. For many athletes, negative chatter is a culprit for diminishing confidence, so be positive when you visualize a race. You need to start believing in your training and yourself. Change the negative chatter to positive compliments.  
  
The first day was a long time ago and many miles away, but the accomplishment of being able to put one foot in front of the other, day after day has made you stronger physically and mentally. PMA (Positive Mental Attitude) is not an acronym that coaches use. It is a way to make you more successful in the race and in life.