

PBA Tour Trials Illustrate the Power of the Mental Game

Contributed by Joe Slowinski
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You might have never heard of PBA player Todd Book. To be honest, I hadn't. He is new to the PBA having joined in 2006. But, certainly, he is making headlines with his consistent performance at the 2007 PBA Tour Trials, winning and leading 4 out of 5 rounds. And, his quotes, provided below, provide us with a clear example of how important the mental game is to being successful at the elite level. The mental game is a critical component to success at the highest level.

Todd Book's strong mental game helped him lead the PBA Tour Trials, 4 of 5 rounds. So, how does he stay so consistent in such a stressful competitive setting of the Tour Trials. His quotes illustrate the importance of maintaining a strong mental game.

As with any aspect of our sport, this requires commitment and great discipline. But, the lesson is clear. Bowlers who aspire to the elite level must practice the mental game and have mental self-control on the lanes.

Here are quotes posted on the PBA recap of the Tour Trials. These short lines provide us with great insight into the importance of a complete holistic approach to excellence.

June 1, 2007

"It all comes down to adjustments. And I don't get emotional about things. I'm not leaving splits and I'm not missing spares. When I'm out on the lanes I bowl one shot at a time. I don't get ahead and I don't look behind."

SLOWINSKI'S OBSERVATION OF LESSON LEARNED FROM QUOTE: Continual observation of your ball reaction is important. Awareness enables wise and thoughtful adjustments. Most importantly, keep your emotions consistently stable. Once the ball leaves your hand, you have no control. Stay in the present and execute the best possible shot each time.

June 2, 2007

"I'll have the same mentality going into tomorrow. I'll take it one shot at a time, I don't watch the scoreboard and I don't watch other people's scores. I never look ahead and I never look behind. I just continue to stay focused and concentrate on the little things. If I make a bad shot, I pick up as many pins as I can and move ahead to the next frame."

SLOWINSKI'S OBSERVATION OF LESSON LEARNED FROM QUOTE: Focus on what you can control. Ignore, as much as possible, what you can't. Commit to the mental game daily, whenever you take to the lanes. Once again, a bowler should stay in the present. Pin count over time can make a difference. Try not to watch the score board or your own scores. Just, focus on executing the best possible shot each time.

May 31, 2007

"I had never seen the pattern before last night, in fact I hadn't seen the pattern from Tuesday night either. After the one-hour practice session last night I stayed an extra two hours and practiced on it some more."

SLOWINSKI'S OBSERVATION OF LESSON LEARNED FROM QUOTE: This is Tiger Woods like.... Individuals who have more dedication to practice will have more success. This helps be prepared for transitions as well as lining-up as quickly as possible for each pattern. By taking more time on the lane condition, a bowler can develop a plan to play the pattern, beginning -- middle -- end.