

# Thoughts on Competition Day Activities for the Jumper and Combined Event Athlete

Eli Sunquist, Jacksonville Athletic Club

[www.jaxtrack.com](http://www.jaxtrack.com) @JAC\_TrackField

“The dominant role of the coach should not degenerate into patronage of treatment of athletes as children. The highest pitch of athletic performance is out of the question if the athlete is unable to think and act on his own.”- Dietrich Harre

Below are a few thoughts on getting ready for the competition day, as well as how to be best prepared to execute on what we have practiced. Remember practice is when we do the work, and competition is where we perform. When we enter the competition arena, the only goal is to perform and to set new personal records. If you are not focused, or thinking too much of “what ifs” then you will not be able to perform. In practice we work hard at drills, feedback, as well as making adjustments. Once we get to the competition, only minor adjustments will need to be made. I have trained you so that you will be ready at the competition. However, I cannot do it for you. This means that I will sit back on meet day, watch, and give you advice on how to improve upon what you just did. One of my coaching buddies says it best:

“When a great singer / dancer / pianist gets on stage they will have gone over their show a million times, but when the lights go on and they charge admission they ‘show’ you what they’ve learned in all of those practices. They don’t get a ‘do-over’. Many of the stars we all admire actually do better under this type of pressure than they do when it is only a dress-rehearsal before the big show...A meet is all about you.”- Joe Walker, University of Louisville

Sure, I will give you the advice that you need to perform better. However, I must stress that when “the lights go on” it is your time to show me, and the audience what you can do. Hold nothing back and put on a great performance!

With that being said, here are a few words of advice:

- Put down your approach marks early
- Check in even earlier!
- In between jumps stay loose, focused, and ready for the next one. Don’t sit down too long, or worse yet, joke around between attempts. If I see that, I will run over and knock off the bar for you, or walk through the sand after your next jump. You can socialize all you want after the meet. Not before, and not during.
- We are all adults. Be smart, be prepared, and please don’t make any excuses. If you perform badly, we will fix it. However, I do not want to hear any silly excuses.

### **Long and Triple Jumpers**

- Warm up about an hour before you are scheduled to jump. Give yourself time to do the short warm up, sprint drills, some accelerations, and then get on the runway. Plan to step on the runway about 20-25 minutes before your flight starts
- Once ready to go, do 2-3 full approaches and then 1-3 short approach jumps (10 step for lj, 6 step for tj)
- Take ample rest between approaches and jumps (3-5 minutes)
- Be very forceful about getting your approaches in. Don't be nice!

### **Pole Vaulters**

- Make sure you have all of your poles, tape, chalk, etc
- Give yourself plenty of time to warm up, do 2-4 approaches, straight pole drills, and short approach jumps
- Take some attempts at high bungees!
- Be very forceful about getting your approaches in. Don't be nice!

### **High Jumpers**

- Give yourself time to do 2-4 approaches, then take some jumps at some high bars (no more than 3 jumps)
- Be very forceful about getting your approaches in. Don't be nice!

### **Combined Event Athletes**

- Try your best to compete in the events I have scheduled for you. If not possible, focus in on a few that will be convenient depending on the layout, schedule, etc. If in doubt, ask me.
- **Hurdles**- Run through them!
- **Sprints**- Push hard, be powerful, run the race models we have worked on in training
- **Throws**- 4 words to focus in on: Aggressive, Tall, Fast, Loud!