

What happens to the brain under pressure

Pressure doesn't mean an athlete is weak or unprepared. it means their brain is doing exactly what is is designed to do, protect them.

When the brain senses stress (big game, fear of mistakes, expectations) it shifts into survival mode.

What happens behind the scenes?

The amygdala (brains alarm system) becomes more active.

the prefrontal cortex (decision-making, focus, problem solving) becomes less active

fine motor skills, timing and awareness drop

the body becomes tense, rushed, or reactive.

This is why the athletes say:

“I knew what to do, I just couldn't do it”

“I was thinking too much”

“I panicked after the mistake”

Main takeaway

Performance under pressure isn't about toughness, its about regulation
athletes who perform consistently aren't immune to pressure, they've trained skills that help their brain stay online when it matters most.



306.260.4243
optima.athletic@gmail.com

