

Grayt Times

A Show Jumping Collective



Ali Ramsay
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Canada's Upcoming Talents

SUMMER 2021



FREE

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Show Schedule 2021

August

August 4-8 RMSJ (AB)
August 4-8 Caledon (ON)
August 11-15 Tbird (BC)
August 11-15 RMSJ (AB)
August 18-22 Tbird (BC)
August 18-22 RMSJ (AB)
August 18-22 Angelstone (ON)
August 24-29 Tbird (BC)
August 24-29 Angelstone (ON)

September

September 1-5 Spruce Meadows (AB)
September 8-12 Spruce Meadows (AB)
September 8-12 Angelstone (ON)
September 15-19 Spruce Meadows (AB)
September 16-19 RMSJ (AB)
September 29 - October 3 Ottawa (ON)
September 29 - October 3 Caledon (ON)
September 30 - October 3 Tbird (BC)
September 30 - October 3 Ponoka (AB)

October

October 13-17 Caledon (ON)
October 20-24 Caledon (ON)

Canadians on the FEI Ranking List

The Longines Rider Rankings list is released monthly from the international governing body of equine sport, the FEI. The rankings as of July 1st, 2021 are as follows:

Canada Ranking	World Ranking	Rider
1	27	Eric Lamaze
2	50	Mario Deslauriers
3	71	Tiffany Foster
4	88	Erynn Ballard
5	230	Amy Millar
6	265	Vanessa Mannix
7	305	Ali Ramsay
8	342	Kara Chad
9	347	Sam Walker
10	363	Ben Asselin
11	411	Beth Underhill
12	438	Jim Ifko
13	494	Lisa Carlsen
14	525	Rachel Cornacchia
15	559	Brian Morton
16	566	Jacqueline Steffens
17	758	Elizabeth Bates
18	806	Hyde Moffatt
19	822	Jonathon Millar
20	881	Sean Jobin

Letter From the Publisher Holly Grayton

Another year is flying by! I can't believe summer is already half gone. We are grateful that the shows are back up and running and can't say enough to the show management groups for all their hard work.

This summer is one for the books to be sure, from all the eager equestrians looking to get back into the show ring to some very big competitions happening around the world.

The Tokyo Olympics will be just one of several key moments happening in the next couple of months, and I know that many will be following along keenly like me.

Certainly events like the Olympics remain an important worldwide goal and moment of pride for show jumping, but it is the Rolex Grand Slam who continues to keep traditions alive with the absolute best the sport has to offer. Much like in tennis or golf, the Grand Slam events will carry the prestige and honour that no other event can match. Canada is host to the Spruce Meadows 'Masters' aren't we lucky to have that in our back yard?! I hope you join me in cheering on all those who want the best for our sport.

Follow along with us and be part of the action in what will surely be a summer to remember for show jumping.

We welcome new ideas, new writers and viewpoints.
Please send me your reviews at holly@graytdesigns.com

Enjoy,




Contributors: Holly Grayton | Nicole Wanvig | Emily Randolph | Lynne Burns | Alexander Grayton

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Holly's Favorite Things

Tried and tested, some suggestions for you and your horse.



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Adjustability On Course

By Alexander Grayton



Alexander Grayton is an engineer from the University of Calgary, who applies his analytical thinking and critical reasoning skills in training horses and riders. He is a sought-after coach for his ability to explain concepts, strategize for success and his feeling for horses and courses. His signature is competition preparation and execution.

Often show jumping competitions are won and lost by the horse and rider's ability to adjust their stride and track. It is no longer enough to simply be able to jump big jumps - everyone that enters a given class can do that. The cream rises to the top through smart execution of a plan that navigates a course designer's technical demands.

Exercises like the one described here become

a major part of day to day training. Setting poles or cavalettis on the ground in measured distances offer the opportunity for riders to create a base plan, and then work on making scenarios that require adjustability, adaptation to new or changing circumstances, and understanding how things connect together.

Getting the normal number of strides in a straight line is a very important foundation. But of course we must progress from there and be able to do all possible variations - and smoothly!

Work on body position and control, lightness to the aids, and always a calm and patient approach to thinking your way through the exercise.

Print this page and take it to the barn!
Page 11

SCHOOLING EXERCISE: ADJUSTABILITY ON COURSE

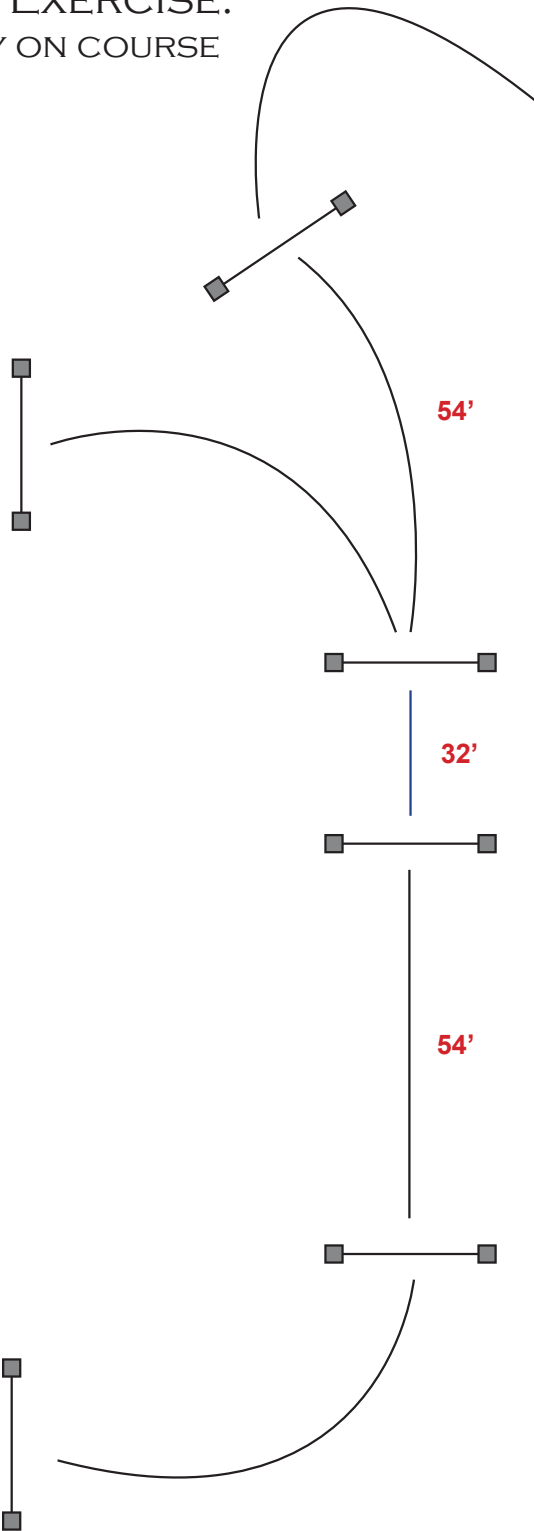
The purpose of this exercise is to work on adjustability on course using a course of poles.

Often times on course riders struggle to manage their horse's stride length, especially as the course demands variation of stride at difficult moments, while their horse's intensity level is at a peak.

It is important to practice what the real world will demand. After establishing a nice, forward rhythm through the line in 4-2-4 strides, start to vary the approach to the line (rollback to it, bend from the centre line pole to it, and so on), as well as changing stride numbers. The toughest variations that riders should strive to get are 6-2-6 and 4-3-4.

In between passes through the line, take the opportunity to gallop a few strides to raise the intensity level, then settle back down to a calmer but good quality canter and re-attempt.

32' = 2 or 3 strides
54' = 4, 5, or 6 strides



Workout On The Go

By Nicole Wanvig

Circuit #1

4 rounds of all 8 exercises
30 sec work / 10 sec rest

1. Burpees
2. Push Ups
3. Speed Skaters
4. Tricep Dips on chair or bed
5. Air Squat with 3 pulses at the bottom
6. Plank Jacks
7. Downward Dog Shoulder Press
8. Russian Twists

Circuit #3

4 rounds of all 8 exercises
40 sec work / 20 sec rest

1. Burpee Tuck Jumps
2. Tricep Push Ups
3. Hip Thrusters with 3 pulses at the top
4. Moving Plank
5. Alternating Lateral Lunge
6. Alternating Jumping Lunges
7. Jack Knife Sit Ups
8. Reverse Burpees



Nicole is an energy healer and personal trainer based in the Calgary area. She is also a life-long rider and understands well the strength requirements a rider needs. Contact her via Facebook or Instagram @nicolewanvig & @nic1vig. Her business is 'Be Love Energy & Wellness' - Check her out!

Circuit #2

4 rounds of all 8 exercises
35 sec work / 15 sec rest

1. Jump Squats
2. Stationary Lunge with 3 pulses at the bottom - Left leg
3. Stationary Lunge with 3 pulses at the bottom - Right leg
4. Mountain Climbers
5. Plank Shoulder Taps
6. Inchworms
7. Fire Hydrants - Left leg
8. Fire Hydrants - Right leg

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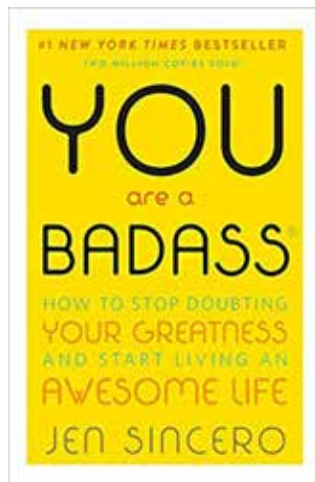
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GraytBook club

If you are looking for some inspiration here are some Grayt suggestions! From books to podcasts to documentaries - we've got something to help with your mental game.



You Are A Badass
by Jen Sincero

I had my doubts about this book that was a gift given to me, but I was surprised at the insights I found and inspiration it gave me. I even read her other book *You Are A Badass At Making Money*.
[Click to open](#)



Pete Carroll
on the Armchair Expert Podcast
What a forward-thinking coach of a stereotypically insensitive sport! He describes his primary objective which is to create a positive team atmosphere.
[Click to open](#)

Siri Lindley
On the Tony Robbins podcast

Siri Lindley on overcoming failure, moving away from fear and learning to love herself. A former 2-time World Champion, Siri was recently inducted to the USA Triathlon Hall of Fame.

[Click to open](#)



Brene Brown

TED Talks

She has the most-watched TED Talk about vulnerability and discusses how nothing great will ever happen without it!

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Ali Ramsay

Where Grit Meets Opportunity

By Holly Grayton



Ali Ramsay grew up in Victoria BC, with big goals in mind. She was barely out of high school when she made a huge move across the country to ride with Jill Henselwood in Oxford Mills, Ontario.

"I met Jill Henselwood in California in 2013 through my good friend Lizzie Gingras. I was given the opportunity to lease one of Lizzie's amazing horses and go train with Jill for the year thanks to the help of my parents. About a year and a half later I started working for Jill. In the end I spent 6 years training and working with her, up until 2019 when I started my own business and moved to the Toronto area."

Ali continues to speak highly of her time with Jill, who was clearly so influential in the formation of Ali's beliefs and standards. "Jill made me the rider I am today. Of

course I came with my own grit and determination but she helped channel it in the right direction and

taught me everything I needed to know about being a Grand Prix rider and trainer."

Jill's focus on flatwork and training were among the key pieces that Ali continues to emphasize in her own program. "Not only does proper flatwork make your job easier in the ring, but it also keeps the horses fit, well-muscled and sound, and I believe helps the longevity of their career."

Ali is well-known for having produced a world class horse in Hermelien vd Hooghoeve, who she sold to Evergate Stables after putting together an impressive string of results in 5* competitions herself. She now has a couple more superstar horses coming through the ranks, including the 12 year old

Lutz, the 10 year old daughter of Hermelien Bonita VH Keizershof Z, the 8 year old stallion Howard du Seigneur and 8 year

old gelding Conrado 12.

With top goals in the sport in mind, Ali hopes to remain consistent in Grand Prix competition and make her way back into the 5* ring. "A big goal would be to win a 5* Grand Prix. And to get back on the Canadian team when the moment is right."

Balancing a business with personal goals can be tough and to this point Ali says, "I'm very fortunate to have an amazing team surrounding me. My head groom Meghan Dettman has been with me ever since I started my business and really helps things run smoothly. For us it's important to make as solid a plan as possible before a busy day to optimize time management, then just expect that with horses anything could change and the plan you made may not be how it plays out. Starting early in the morning helps too!"

Show jumping is an ever more expensive sport to do, and Ali's mindset is to keep the sport as the primary objective. "I try to

keep the dollar signs out of the equation and just focus on developing horses and riders. Obviously,

that's easier said than done. Every horse I own is for sale which is how I am able to fund myself and the business. For me, when we're looking for horses to develop, the only ones that catch my eye are ones that look like they can jump anything, with nice blood and just the right amount of brave and careful. I would say my business model would be quality not quantity."

Rapid fire questions:

- What do you do to recharge yourself?
"Sleep and yoga."
- What advice would you give your younger self?
"Go to bed earlier."
- What advice would you give your current self?
"Can't win 'em all, but you might as well try!"





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WHY SETTLE FOR LESS?



Julia Tops

Combines International Relations & International Riding

By Emily Randolph

As conversation with Julia Tops moves seamlessly from her riding goals and future aspirations in the sport to her master's degree thesis on politicizing water infrastructure, it's hard not to be impressed by the 23-year-old rider.

The daughter of Canadian Show Jumping Team veteran Tani Zeidler and Longines Global Champions Tour founder and Dutch Olympic team gold medalist Jan Tops, Julia's passion for show jumping and her love of horses are in her blood. However, it's



Summer 2021



Article Name
quickly apparent that they aren't the only positive traits that have been passed on.

A commitment to excellence and a tenacity for accomplishing everything that she sets her mind to are as much a part of Julia's DNA as her brown hair, and she's putting those qualities to good use while simultaneously going after goals in international relations and international riding.

An Early Start

Growing up in Calgary, Alberta, Julia was riding before she could walk, and she fell in love with horses from the start.

"Looking at pictures of me as a baby, I was already riding with my parents, sitting in front of them," said Julia, who went on to have a successful junior career in Canada. "As I got older, my parents wanted to see if I really wanted to ride and not just do it because they did. It was always my choice. I went to a normal private school, and my studies always came first. If I did well enough in school, I could ride."

So, with a strong desire to ride, Julia poured herself into her studies as well as into her time in the saddle. Following high school, Julia attended the University of Toronto and simultaneously moved her horses to her father's Stal Tops in The Netherlands to begin training with him.

During that time, as she watched many of her peers

Continued on page 24



Summer 2021 Photo Credit: Arnd Bronk Horst & Carlotta Andrea Buracchi

Julia Tops

Continued from page 23

choosing between either continued education or an equestrian career, Julia worked hard to pursue both. In 2020, her dedication paid off with a master's degree in International Development from the lauded London School of Economics.

Seeing Success

Now, for the first time since entering grade school, Julia is taking time to enjoy focusing solely on her riding before again combining her field of study with her equestrian pursuits – and she's doing so with great success.

This season, Julia has notched numerous top-five finishes on the Longines Global Champions Tour, largely with one special mount, India Blue ZF.

The 15-year-old warmblood mare was the very first breeding product of Julia's mother's Zeidler Farm in Calgary, and Julia and "Apple" have grown up together from the day of Apple's birth to now competing in CSI2* events throughout Europe.

"My mom had this vision, and she's done such an impeccable job," said Julia of Zeidler Farm's successful breeding program. "It's not necessarily part of the horse culture in Canada to produce young horses like it is in Europe where there are young horse competitions every weekend. That makes me even prouder of Apple and the fact that she is Canadian bred. Riding her has honestly been a joy, and I'm so thankful."

Beyond this show season, Julia aims to strike a balance between riding internationally and working in international relations.

"I want to be able to support myself and my equestrian passion by working in the engaging and intellectually challenging field of development, where I can strive to help people have a better quality of life," said Julia. "I aim to do that alongside continuing my parents' hard work in the sport."

No matter what the future may hold for Julia, it looks incredibly bright, and we look forward to continuing to watch her shine.



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A Coaching Experience

By Lynne Burns

Kathleen Sullivan was the fourth riding instructor in as many years to come to the barn where I learned to ride, and was one of the coaches whose skills had the biggest impact on me.

A riding coach in a show barn holds a pivotal leadership position that calls for a person of integrity and accomplished competitive history. Several charismatic trainers had tried to steer operations and training after we lost our previous long-time coach. One by one they came and went leaving us searching for someone more stable (no pun intended).

Kathleen breezed into our little “green acres” and quieted the drama from all the change and single-handedly blew away the clouds from our skies. To call her focused would be an understatement. She competed in 3-Day Events – as the reader well knows, this is a grueling element of equestrian sport that combines dressage, cross-country and show jumping. Her competency as a rider and coach along with this cross-section of skills if doubted was only amplified through her horses. A horse that will jump a fence so high it can’t see the other side has courage beyond the reasonable and can be quite a handful to deal with. Suffice to say that while attending to her horses’ daily needs, we were as alert as jackrabbits crossing a highway.

This quintessential force in our barn renewed our vigor for riding. Her training program humbled us young teens at first, but ultimately

polished us to a shiny new reality. For me, training centered on an unrelenting problem that I didn’t know how to resolve, and day after day in the quiet after morning chores, my horse and I would follow Kathleen into the arena for our lesson.

My horse was so sensitive to sight, sound and touch that it was impossible to ride him without his bolting, shying and generally sporting about like a jack-in-the-box. Left to my own logic, I had accommodated his sensibilities by riding as if not touching him. This only heightened the problem so that every shift, every move of mine was a new reason for him to explode.

In our hushed arena, Kathleen and I invited his aberrations to come out to play amidst the dusty sunbeams, and like bad dreams that fade in the light of day he slowly woke up and learned to cope with life. There were some doubtful stages when he increased his resistance to our plan, but with Kathleen’s certainty on how to correct the problem, we pushed on. No longer did he race to the jumps in anticipation and bolt off afterward in reaction. It was a lesson for both of us in trust and communication.

Over time he transformed; it was as if he’d grown into his own skin instead of looking for reasons to jump out of it. I’ll never forget Kathleen’s skilled persistence. Her lessons continue to help me today when I catch myself riding through life as though I’m not touching it.

Young Gun Lexi Ray



Lexi Ray
Ottawa, Ontario
Jewel 8 12 year old Mare
Jana van d'Abdijhoeve 12 year old Mare
Evita 12 year old Mare
Lukaku vd Bisschop 9 year old Gelding

What does your day to day look like?

My day to day schedule consists of spending all my time with my horses and trying to fit some schoolwork in at the end of the day! I am currently in my fourth year at Western University studying MIT with a specialization in journalism.

Who has been a major influence in your career thus far?

Laura Kraut and Nick Skelton have been major influences in my career thus far. On top of being incredible riders, they are true horsemen and amazing coaches. I look up to them in every aspect.

Is there something you’ve heard a coach say or have said to you that really made an impact?

Laura just recently told me that when I walk a course and make a plan for how I want to execute my ride in the ring, I should treat it like a math test that I know I am going to ace. She said act like you have studied for the test your whole life and have all the tools to succeed. Riding the course and sticking to your plan should be the same way.

What would you say are keys to your success? For example, working out, meditation, people that support you - anything that you really lean on?

I lean on my parents the most for guidance during the hard times and celebration for the good times. My mom loves the horses just as much as I do. I also have a great groom, vet, and blacksmith that I trust completely to take care of my horses who I love more than anything! For exercising and working out, Laura

introduced me to an online fitness app called Aaptiv that I use every day. It is the best fitness app I have used and is really motivating with a wide variety of workouts for when you are on the go and don’t have a lot of time. I highly recommend it!

What is your favourite exercise you do when riding?

When I am riding I like to practice a lot of adjustability. Getting the horses to go forward off your leg and then come back to a collected canter emulates what happens on course when you have a long line and then a short one right after. At the trot I like to do a lot of serpentines and stretching their neck long and low. Before the adjustability, I am a big believer in letting the horse warm up and stretch out before getting down to work. I always let my horses start trotting with a looser rein and low head set for a few minutes until I feel them relaxed and moving well.

Young Gun

Mackenzey Nedeau



Mackenzey Nedeau
Ottawa, Ontario
Wilby 17 year old Gelding
Deja Vu 7 year old Mare

Tell me about your horses, who you ride with, and what your day to day looks like

I currently have two lovely horses; a 17 year-old gelding named Wilby and a 7 year-old mare named Déjà vu (Gia). I train with the Millar family at Millar Brooke Farm, located in Perth, Ontario. My current day-to-day life consists of working with my horses and training my group of over a dozen students at Benhaven Stables, located in Beckwith, Ontario.

When did you know you wanted to compete at the top of the sport?

Competing at the top level of equestrian sport has always been a dream of mine. I have always thought about how cool it would be to jump as high as the top riders do,

26 Photo Credit: Grayt Designs

but for the longest time, I thought I wanted to strictly be a top hunter rider. That is until I got a taste of the bigger jumper classes.

Will you make this a career?

I am very pleased to say that I have begun making this my career. I officially became a professional this year and I am loving all the hard work put into developing myself, my horses and my students.

Do you have any quotes that motivate you?

One quote that really sticks with me is an Ian Millar quote “Success is a terrible teacher.” There is so much more to that quote than meets the eye. Equestrian sport is rarely about winning, which is what makes it all the more special. Which ties into another quote I have heard “If you aren’t winning, you’re learning.” Of course, winning is an amazing feeling, but being able to look at the moments that could be improved upon is what brings the most

value. It is interesting that I live by seemingly “negative” quotes. But the way I look at them is always with the “glass half full” approach. Life isn’t about winning; it truly is about learning.

Is there something you’ve heard a coach say or have said to you that really made an impact?

So many things come to mind. I am someone who enjoys taking all the information I can, from whoever I can. The first thing that popped into my head upon reading this question is a similar answer to a previous question, but it was the day Ian asked me what my goals were for the 2019 season. I told him how badly I wanted to jump 1.20m and he told me to always set bigger and better goals. Set goals that seem almost too difficult to achieve. It makes you work even harder to be the best you can be. It is important to enjoy every part of the journey.

Summer 2021

Young Gun

Jade Fowler



Jade Fowler
Calgary, Alberta
Igor F 14 year old Gelding
Chelsea 9 year old Mare

When did you know you wanted to compete at the top of the sport?

Passion for horses has always been a part of my life due to my mother and older sister’s heavy involvement in the horse world. A memory that I hold close took place in 2013 when I went to cheer my sister on at CHIO Aachen in dressage. At one point at the end of her competition, we took a wander over to the jumping side to watch. I had never seen such a calibre of show jumping and all I can say was that it took my breath away and made me even crazier about the atmosphere and sport itself.

Who has been a major influence in your career thus far?

There are so many people that have played their parts in helping

Summer 2021 Photo Credit: Grayt Designs

me get to where I am so far in my career which is why it is difficult to pin down one major influencer. Nevertheless, a person that has made a large impact and continues to be a big part of my learning is my most recent coach Alexander Grayton. Over the last few years of being under his guidance, my knowledge of the sport, as well as my riding and horse’s training have taken leaps in development. His dedication to my learning, to the sport, to the development of horses, and overall horsemanship are just a few elements that continue to inspire me.

Do you have any quotes that motivate you?

During my time at Millar Brooke we created a book club and we ended up covering the Michael Jordan Netflix series, “The Last Dance”. One of the quotes that we covered and I have found myself falling back on whenever the sport has gotten me down is: “I’ve missed more than 1000 shots in my career, I’ve

lost almost 300 games. 26 times I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.” - Michael Jordan

Is there something you’ve heard a coach say or have said to you that really made an impact?

Training with Alex Grayton one thing that you will never fall short of is creative analogies relating horses to logically reflective things such as book shelves... One of the less crazy things he has taught me is the “Alter Ego”. Without going into a large amount of detail, the alter ego entails embodying someone you look up to in scenarios where your own personality won’t cut it. In my case, going into competition, I needed to be more gritty, therefore, I try to embody someone who has a lot of grit. In other words, you could call this having a “game face”.

27

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