



JAMES JOHNSTON

Accessible Trails

Easy access on the McKenzie.

The most outstanding characteristic of Oregon's outdoors is its sheer diversity. We're the only state in the country that's got it all: rainforests, a coastline, glaciers and a desert. In Lane County alone you can spend the day wandering sandy beaches or perched precariously on rocky crags more than 10,000 feet above sea level.

On the Willamette National Forest, Lane County's largest chunk of public land, you can spend the hot months of summer shoulder to shoulder with hundreds of water-skiers and sunbathers on a big reservoir. Or you can backpack for weeks in the lonely reaches of the Three Sisters Wilderness without seeing a soul.

For every hard-core rock climber or whitewater kayaker in Lane County, there are probably a hundred folks who like to take it slow on short level trails. Twenty percent of our county's population is younger than 10 or older than 65, and 10 percent of Lane County residents have a physical disability that seriously limits their mobility.

To accommodate this diversity, the Willamette National Forest maintains about 50 campgrounds, view points, trails and other facilities in Lane County that are accessible to people with mobility disabilities. Accessible facilities are not just the lower-rung scenic

experiences, either. They include some of the most breathtaking sites in our area. And they're not just for people in wheelchairs, they're great destinations for people with kids or for elderly family members.

Some of my favorite accessible hikes include the Koosah Falls, Clear Lake and Proxy Falls trails (off Highway 126) and the Salt Creek Falls trail (off Highway 58). But probably the best two — the Delta Grove trail and Sahalie Falls viewpoint — can be done easily in one day and will take you to a magnificent old-growth forest and a spectacular waterfall.

Directions: Take Highway 126 east from Springfield for approximately 35 miles. Between mileposts 45 and 46, take a right onto Forest Service Road 19, at a sign for Delta Campground and Cougar Reservoir. Cross a bridge over the McKenzie River and take an immediate right at the sign for Delta Campground. Travel this paved road for .9 miles. In the summer months, you can drive straight to the trailhead. During winter, when the campground is closed, park near the gate and walk just a quarter of a mile to the trailhead, staying to the left when the road through the campground splits (you have to stay right if you're driving). The trailhead is at a brown sign that points away from you if you're coming

Visualize Success

Tools for improving performance

THE MENTAL ATHLETE by Kay Porter.
Human Kinetics Press, 2003. Paperback, \$16.95.

Where does your negative self-talk come from? What distracts you from your performance? What keeps you from succeeding? Kay Porter of Eugene tackles some of these questions in her updated, important book, *The Mental Athlete*. Porter understands where our self doubt comes from — usually from voices in our past. She understands one's distraction from the crowd and unrealistic expectations, and she knows any person whose intention is clear can untangle herself from the sticky web that hinders us from gaining personal success.



Kay Porter

Athletes with a mental edge or those who have struck a balance between the physical, spiritual and emotional parts of themselves

goal to win a race or meet a time, but when this goal is internalized through visualization, the likelihood of attaining it is much higher.

Not only does Porter give voice to our personal growth challenges, but she also gives the reader exercises to work through and visualizations to use, all of which are specified to the sport or particular situation, such as burn-out or injury.

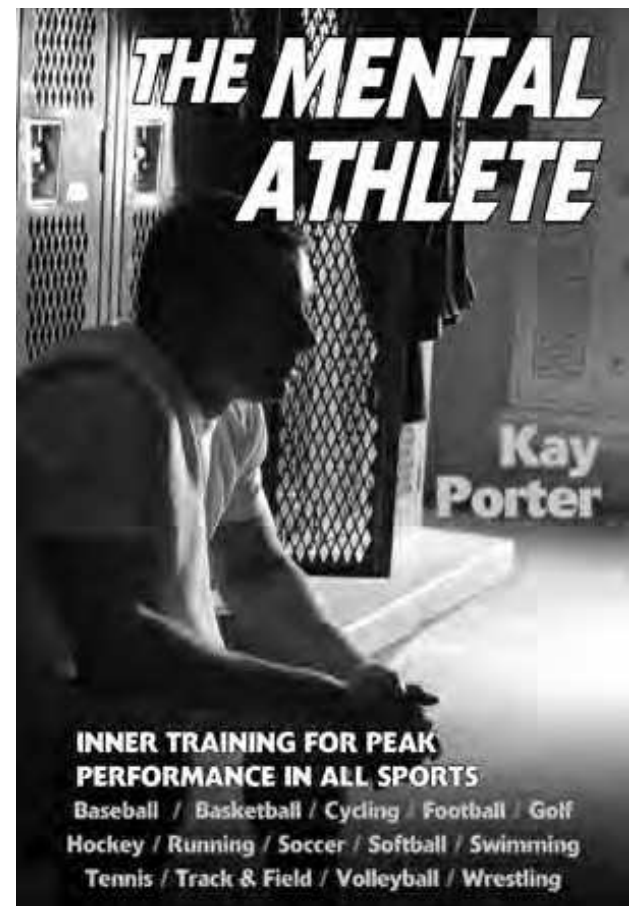
Porter also addresses the importance of mental training for young athletes and the roles parents play in their development as confident, trusting, capable athletes with good attitudes. Our attitude and behavior as parents, Porter says, is crucial to our young athlete's psychological and physical performance. With so many of Eugene youth in sports, this section is particularly important. I'd like to see Porter expand this issue in a separate book.

The Mental Athlete is an insightful book — one of my favorite Christmas presents to give my friends who challenge themselves in many different ways, both in sports and in life. (Shhhh, don't tell!) **EW**

will hold a competitive edge over athletes who have not. To have this edge, Porter writes, one needs to train it, just as one trains her body for competition. This can be done in five steps: log keeping, goal setting, positive self-talk, relaxation and visualization.

Visualization, Porter insists, is a very powerful tool in attaining one's peak performance. "When you visualize," Porter writes, "you compete only in your mind, but this can have such a powerful effect that your entire body feels as if it has actually competed physically."

Training one's mind to visualize through kinesthetic, visual and auditory senses creates neural patterns for an athlete's muscles to do exactly what she wants them to do. One can set a



from the left hand road.

The Delta Grove trail is a half-mile loop trail that begins at a bridge over a small side channel of the McKenzie. The trail is completely flat and composed of hard-packed gravel, earth and asphalt, suitable for travel by people in wheelchairs or walkers. The forest consists of enormous Douglas fir, western hemlock and red cedar interspersed with lush mosses and ferns and abundant hardwoods, including broad leaf and vine maple. During the summer, the Forest Service has bi-weekly series of programs ranging from botany to flint-knapping that are held both on the trail and in the nearby Delta Amphitheatre.

If you've still got time, drive back out to Highway 126, continue driving east for

another 24 miles, and turn left into a parking lot at a sign for Sahalie Falls. Sahalie means "heaven" or "high" in the Chinook jargon, a trade language used by native tribes and fur trappers. The 140-foot falls are among the prettiest in Oregon, and also easily accessible by a short paved path from the parking lot.

Warning! The Delta Grove is at 1,100 feet and is almost always clear of snow, but Sahalie Falls, at 3,000 feet, is sometimes closed by snow from December through April, and the paths are often quite icy during these months.

A complete list of accessible facilities on the Willamette National Forest can be found at www.fs.fed.us/r6/willamette/recreation/tripplanning/map_ns.html **EW**