



BRIAN PRICE

After winning Olympic gold in Beijing in 2008, Canadian men's eight coxswain Brian Price wasn't sure what to do with himself. Speaking engagements beckoned and he and his wife Robbi had their second daughter. Now 35, Price's perspective comes from battling leukemia as a child and both success and disappointment at the Olympics. (Price was also on the rudder for Canada's disappointing fifth-place finish in the men's eight at the 2004 Athens Games.) Last December, after two years away from rowing, the three-time world champion rejoined the national team training camp in Victoria, British Columbia, and is now aiming for London 2012.

Post-Beijing, you're on a real high because you've just won. Everything is great and life is really good. Over time that starts to fade a little.

Standing in front of large audiences and telling my personal story of going from a kid with cancer to an Olympic champion was great, but it never quite replaced the satisfaction and nervous excitement that rowing gave me.

I found you just couldn't replace the feeling of getting to the start line, the feeling two weeks before the worlds or Lucerne, when it's just dead focus and you're refining minute details. It was that focused atmosphere that I realized I missed. I knew I would need to compete again on the international stage.

My biggest worry was, Am I going to have my boat feel? That's something I pride myself on—not

to just react with random calls, but to know what the boat needs right now. I found out it's like riding a bike.

I'm 35 now and this is a young, strong group of enthusiastic rowers who want to win. The challenge also extends into my family life and my ability to balance rowing with my role as a husband and father of two young girls. My motivation to be back with the team should be very clear—to win again. Honestly though, anyone who rows at this level should be thinking the same thing.

I would only come back if Spracklen was the head coach directing the eight. I would not have rowed for anyone else.

I often find myself thinking about something Mike told us many times over the years: "If you

aren't nervous, you aren't going to win." I've learned that there are essentially two reasons to be nervous; you're unprepared, or you care about the outcome or result. Sitting at the starting line of the 2008 Olympic final, I knew that I had done everything possible to prepare, so I was nervous for the right reason.

I have to remember that, even though we won gold in Beijing, it can be very easy to forget the days that I struggled. I would often get nervous for fairly routine rows because I cared about my performance on a daily basis. I would continually strive to be in top form not only for myself but also for my crewmates. To me, practice became as important as the actual race.

I want to find out if I can do this again with a totally new group. □