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Winning After Winning: The Red Wings Challenge

Many repeat champions will tell you **it is harder to win the second championship than it is the first**. Our Detroit Red Wings are now up 2-1 over the Pittsburgh Penguins in their quest for back-to-back Stanley Cup Championships. Athletes and teams looking to repeat their success from the previous season face a number of unique challenges.

Here are the Top 5 Challenges with tips on how to keep winning:

1. Problematic focus on having to repeat and feeling the pressure to win another championship
 - What to do:
 - Focus on the “process” of playing, the little things that bring you success one day at a time, one play at a time
 - Start the new season from scratch ... it is a different year, different situation
2. Taking your success for granted (overconfidence)
 - What to do:
 - Remember the things you did to win the first championship:
 - Hard work
 - Commitment to excellence
 - Quality practices (practice is the foundation of championships)
 - Always strive to be better than you were ... stay hungry
3. Distractions: more attention from fans and media ... greater expectations by community
 - What to do:
 - Focus on the critical aspects of your game
 - What's my job?
 - Can I do my job?
 - Will I do my job?
4. Expectations that you should play at a championship level *all* season
 - What to do:
 - The reality is that the season contains many ups and downs
 - Your first championship season likely had periods that you didn't play well, but you fought through them
 - You'll have to do the same in your attempt to win it all again ... stay focused
5. In team sports, there are changes in team structure and team chemistry ... the team trying to repeat may not be the same team that won the championship
 - What to do:
 - Respect the time it takes for team building and redefining player roles
 - This is illustrated well in Detroit when rookie Justin Abdelkader contributed the first two goals of his NHL career in the Finals.