

Coaching philosophies are a continual work in progress. I have been coaching at the collegiate level for seven years now. It was not until my fourth year of coaching that I really sat down and thought about my philosophy as a coach. I had an idea in the back of my mind of what kind of coach that I wanted to be, but never put it in on paper. I was fortunate enough in December of 2008 to be selected to attend the Women's Coaches Academy in Colorado with 30 of my coaching peers. It is here where I was able to think and reflect on what kind of coach I wanted to strive to be. I found my purpose for coaching is to teach hockey with the love and passion I have for the sport. I will be an honest motivator as a teacher of personal and physical growth on and off the field. After evaluating my purpose, my coaching philosophy followed closely behind. I will work with integrity and pride to give my athletes the guidance they need to be successful as people on and off the field. Although my philosophy will continue to develop and mature, I am confident that I motivate my players to be better people.

The role of athletics can be discussed thoroughly at each different level. I have divided sports into six different levels; 1) Youth, prior to middle school 2) Middle school 3) Travel and club sports teams 4) high school 5) College and 6) National teams and professional. At each level there are different roles and objectives that are obtained.

When children are introduced to athletics at young ages it is usually their parents who encourage them. Either tossing a ball back and forth, running around bases at the local park or kicking balls through the house and pretending to play soccer. All are forms of the beginning aspects of athletics. The main objective of sports at this level is fun. If children are not having fun playing, they will not continue. As parents, with youth that are interested in sports, we have to be careful not to give too much instruction. So much

of sports at the youth age are the children being able to experiment and learn for themselves what works and what does not work. As teachers and parents, letting the children use their imagination to make up games and make up rules helps them to develop as well as allows them to have fun. This ties into helping the children find a sense of self while participating in sports, the ability to develop within a team. Physical, emotional and social development in sports is a key role at the youth age. As stated in the book Paradoxes of Youth and Sport by Margaret Gatz and Michael A. Messner, “physical play is central to the development of social competence” (Gatza and Messner, p. 34). Sports give children a sense of identity while they try to figure out who they are in the world. Some will realize quickly that sports are for them and the opposite will occur as well. The ability for young children to develop while being active is a very important aspect of youth sports.

Another role of sport at the youth level is for the children to learn about sports and how to respect their opponents. It is never too early to teach children good sportsmanship. This starts at home with taking turns with toys or sharing the swing in the back yard. Coaches of youth teams need to be adamant about good sportsmanship and what is appropriate behavior and what is not. A young boy playing t-ball who does not get to bat when he wants to and throws a fit, needs to quickly be taught what behavior is aloud in sports. These are early life lessons that can be taught to young children when they start sports.

Teaching the sport itself is a role for youth athletics. As stated prior, we need to be careful not to teach everything and enable the children to learn the sport for themselves as well. As coaches, we are here to direct and guide, but not take over,

analyze or critique each move. Coaches need to show enthusiasm and excitement for the game at this level.

SOCA, Soccer Organization Charlottesville Albemarle, is a local soccer organization in Charlottesville, VA. Their mission is to “provide a comprehensive soccer program emphasizing player development, enjoyment and citizenship” ([www.socasport.org](http://www.socasport.org)). This youth program is widely known in the community for its strong sports values and teaching youth to love the game. SOCA represents the role youth sports need to have, a positive and fun learning environment for children.

Middle school athletics is the second level of athletics in which I have divided sports. This level is similar to youth sports. I still believe that fun should be the number one role for athletics at this age. Theresa Pusateri is a middle school field hockey coach in upstate New York. Within her philosophy she “emphasizes teaching around the basics of the sport and making it fun for the children”. She feels that she would like to do more skill work with team, but it is not what they need. Pusateri likes to have a team that is “motivated and encouraged to try hard at what is being taught, while at the same time enjoying each other and the sport”. Athletes at this age tend to do sports because their friends are playing them, especially females. So a fun atmosphere is crucial to keep sport involvement.

Similarly to youth sports, at the middle school level, athletes are continuing to develop their social and physical development. Along with these two, moral development starts to mature. Coaches and parents need to be aware of the internal growth of their kids as well as the physical development on the field. At this level, teaching life lessons should be incorporated and seen as a role in sports. Team

camaraderie, teamwork and group problem solving can all be taught at this level. The skills that need to be learned to work within a team are continually taught and should start with athletes that are able to understand the benefits of teamwork, the concept that if everyone works together, more can be accomplished than being alone. In sports like gymnastics or golf, where it is individuals, the importance of teamwork can still be taught. It is taught in ways that we need our teammates to motivate and encourage us. Competitive spirits will start to become stronger at this level, hence why it is important to reiterate the sportsmanship that was taught at the youth level.

The next level of sports that I would like to discuss briefly is the club and travel teams. These teams are beginning to start at a younger age for many sports. Where typically you would see athletes becoming very serious around middle school, we are seeing advanced sports start earlier which is due to the push for specializing in one sport instead of playing multiple sports. According to Youth Sports Magazine, “specialization may have negative physical, psychological, and social effects on children” (<http://www.youthfitnessmag.com/sports-specialization>). At an age where all three of these areas are important roles for athletics, increased participation in club and travel sports needs to be evaluated if it is positive or negative for the athlete. Fun should still be the main reason for participating in a sport at this level. If a child is not having fun, they should not continue. This is what we see happening when children only concentrate on one sport. There are more signs of “burnout and injuries from repetition” say Youth Sports Magazine. The main objectives for athletes at the club and travel level should still be fun, physical and social development, and teaching the aspects of the specific sport.

Too often, coaches at the travel level will put winning as a priority for their athletes and in turn there is a negative affiliation for the game for the participants that are not winning.

The objectives for high school sports are to have fun, continue physical and emotional development, teach the tactics of the sport, and to keep students healthy. I believe the first three roles of athletics at the high school level are similar to previous years of athletics. Social development continues in high school and we see many students get confidence and friends when they are involved in school athletics. As written by Gatz and Messner, “involvement in sport influences the total child, including their physical, social, and emotional competence” (Gatz and Messner, p. 34). High school students need acceptance and sports can do that for them. One role that is pertinent for high school athletics is health. Childhood obesity is at high and schools are removing gym class. When does this leave time for students to be physically active? Getting students involved in sports will help their physical condition as well as their mental. Exercising releases endorphins, which make you happy. Therefore exercise will help keep students happy and confident.

At the college level, the intensity of athletics is increased. I am writing from the perspective of a Division I athlete. Athletics takes on new roles and can consume the life of many student athletes. The objectives for sports at this level are clearer to me since this is the field I work in and once competed in. First, athletes are still to be having fun. When participants are no longer having fun, there are too many sacrifices at this level to continue. Next, it is the coaches’ job to teach the sport. For example they can teach game plan, how to scout an opponent, spotting strengths and weaknesses and basic skills. Teaching life lessons is a role that continues in college. As a coach, I find myself giving

guidance and advice often. It is a time to reinforce what they know is right and to help student athletes feel confident and happy about decisions they need to make at this time in their life. Continuing to teach leadership, teamwork, problem solving or team camaraderie are important roles at the collegiate level. The softball staff's philosophy at University of Virginia barely touches on sport, but strives to make each person better. Their philosophy is, "through discipline, competitiveness, and engagement, our student-athletes get the best out of what University of Virginia has to offer. These three traits are also what allows our athletes to be successful on the field and ultimately in life". Collegiate coaches are more than just coaches they are life teachers.

At the college level, I feel is the first time where winning plays a defined role in athletics. Championships are won and lost and coaches are hired and fired because of it. In this sense, athletics turns more business like. The objective of winning puts added pressure on the coaches and players. Athletes feel the need to win or they will not get to play and on the opposite side, coaches feel the need to win in order to keep their jobs. Ultimately, the role of winning is prevalent in college sports.

Lastly, at the professional and national level, the objectives of sports are fun, winning, learning the sport and public entertainment. Again, I start with fun. If an athlete is putting all their time and effort into something, I believe it should be fun to do. It is not worth anyone's time to practice a sport so much and not love the game. Secondly, at this top level winning is a big role. Athletes have continued their sport to this level because they are striving to win titles, championships, World Cups or Olympic medals. The drive and desire to win at the top level is what gives athletes reason for sacrificing other areas in their lives. For the national and professional athletes, staying on

the cutting edge of the sport and trying new techniques is what gives them advantage to other athletes. Learning and mastering skills is an objective at this level. At the elite level, business and entertainment play a big role. The NFL comes to mind for both of these aspects. It is an industry built around money and entertainment of viewers. Entertainment and business are main objectives for companies like the NFL and on different scales for other sports.

Overall, the six levels of sports; youth, middle school, club and travel, high school, college, and national or professional teams' objectives have similarities and differences. My philosophy on the role of athletics is people should partake in them firstly for fun, then the rest will come as they develop in each level. Without fun, sports are not worth the players' time, coaches' time or parents' time.

Success can be measured in many ways in athletics. The dictionary defines success as the outcome or result of something. Other ways to define success for a team is through what was learned, what was taught, if particular areas were bettered while playing or to evaluate performance. Success is not the same at different levels of athletics.

As a coach, I view success in many ways. There can be little successes within each play. A success can be if a player demonstrates understanding of a new skill. This past weekend on our team, the coaches called it a success when the team was able to press the opposing team into a certain area of the field. The ability to teach and see athletes perform what was taught I believe is success. Along similar lines, another area of success is when athletes learn. When questions are asked at practice and they are able to give an appropriate answer. As a coaching staff it is one of our goals to teach the

athletes to be able to apply concepts of field hockey and use their knowledge to derive their own answers. Although, this is continually taught, it is rewarding as a coach to watch the athletes relate concepts and theories to the playing field.

On our team, one way we evaluate the teams' success is by individual and team performance stats. Even though this is a time consuming process for the coaching staff it is a concrete way for the team to see how they are doing. We have devised a system of crediting attack and defensive points for each game. After the game is over, the film is broken down then watched again to divvy up needed points to each player. Immediately as a staff we are able to see who is contributing or who is not contributing on attack and defense. This system also helps the team see that it takes more than one person to score a goal, or on the opposite side of that, it takes more than one person to stop a goal. We have been using these performance stats for success for the past five years and it has helped the staff and athletes to focus on performance instead of harping on the result. After each game is broken down, we evaluate if the game was a success or not based on our performance stats. It is usually very clear where we need to put our attention for the next week of practice. We have found that our players are very concentrated on the scoreboard. If we win by three goals and play poorly the athletes were fine with it and able to move on. On the flip side, if we lose by one goal and play the best hockey, the team punishes themselves for not winning. The performance stats put both of these sides into perspective. The team is able to give an objective opinion on how the team did using facts instead of a feeling or final scoreboard.

My college coach at Michigan State, Michele Madison, has a defining moment of success. It was after our team won the Big Ten Championship at Penn State in 2002.



Our team had played one of our best tournaments and coach Madison was very pleased. Even though we won the title that is not her defining moment. She knew she had been successful as a coach when the team had finished cooling down and had left the field. She looked back and saw the championship trophy still sitting in the middle of the turf. Now she explains that feeling as an ultimate feeling of success. To be able to teach your athletes the joys of playing a sport they love and to recognize that trophies are not what defines success, but the dedication and teamwork to accomplish a common goal. As a member of that team, I did feel successful and it was a great feeling to celebrate that with my teammates.

As a coach now, I have many views of success. My greatest little success is watching the athletes use the skills and knowledge I have taught them. I feel like I have done my job well and I am reaching the athletes. Ultimately, if I can influence an athlete to love the sport of field hockey and have fun playing, I feel successful as a coach.

The objective of winning or losing is one way to evaluate success and more often than not, seen as the only way to evaluate success. We read about coaches and the first stat that is given is their win/loss record. We evaluate new coaching candidates on their successes in championships, titles or medals they have received. Winning and losing is a concrete way to see how successful a team or organization is. As a Youth Sports Council member, David A. Feigley says the “essence of sport is striving to win”

<http://youthsports.rutgers.edu/resources/general-interest/the-role-of-winning-in-youth-sports>). Without the desire to win, there would be no competition or sports. Feigley continues to explain other important roles of winning; “winning builds confidence, team camaraderie, and increases motivation”. The role of winning is different at each level of

sports. Although, it is not the main role of youth sports it needs to be acknowledged. Youth need to win with class and savvy, sportsmanship needs to be taught immediately. An important portion of “a youth sport is how you win as opposed to whether you win” says Feigley. As athletes get older winning increases importance. I have coached at three different levels, middle school, high school and college. Along with the athletes, I feel that my desire to win has increased at all three levels as well. As a college coach it is my ultimate goal to win a National Championship. In order to do this, winning is needed. Although I cannot reach my goal without concentrating on winning, it is not most important to me as a coach. When the role of coaching is consumed by winning, I feel that I would be in coaching for the wrong reasons. As a coach I want to guide athletes, instill a work ethic and a desire to perform at their best whenever they step on the field. If I am able to do that daily and come up with a National Championship it would be a very extra bonus.

Gender equity is an important topic to me. If it were not for Title IX I would not have had a lot of the opportunities in my life. Because of the women that fought for equality for women in sports, I was able to have a college career in field hockey and now I have my professional career in coaching. Although Title IX started in the work force to find equality for minorities, I am thankful it is applied to women in athletics as well. On the other side of Title IX, men in athletics, I do feel that they get slighted due that football gets the 85 full scholarships in Division I. This leaves other sports like baseball, track or soccer that have larger squads as well with fewer scholarships to go around. Title IX has given many opportunities for women athletes, but has it taken away from male athletes?

Involving females in athletics is very important. I feel that it gives them confidence, a sense of self and inclusion. Christina Kirkaldy works with a local high school field hockey team as well as working with individuals on the side and she feels that many of her athletes are on the team because their friends are too. She feels that it is crucial to continue to encourage the female athletes to maintain and stay involved. It is personally important to me to have girls play sports. When I was a youth playing sports, I felt that it gave me power and confidence to stand up for myself and others and I did not fall into peer pressure. It seems more natural for boys to be in sports, that is why I think it is important to continue to have girls play sports.

At the youth level under the age of 10, I do not feel that it is necessary to have to separate boys and girls. Prior to this age I feel that they are being taught the same lessons and principles. I also think that keeping the girls and boys together will help eliminate stereotypes for both genders. It will help girls get rid the non-athlete, weak stereotype and will help boys to see girls as equals on the athletic field. After the age of 10, I feel that girls and boys need to be separate for athletics. At this time both groups will start to develop at different rates and it could turn into a safety issue if some athletes are bigger and stronger than others. I also believe at the club and travel level that athletes need to be evaluated on their talent and not just their age. I have seen sports team with extremely talented younger players, but they are held back because of their age. I see two problems with this; one, the athlete is not being pushed and therefore cannot develop as quickly. Secondly, it becomes a danger for the athletes that are less talented and could be put in a position where they could get hurt. The separation of boys and girls will help keep a competitive edge amongst the groups.

Along the lines of gender equity in coaching, should women coach women and men coach men? This is a hard area for me to have a concrete answer. Both men and women have coached me and I see the advantages for both. My biggest concern is the diminishing number of female coaches. It is common for men to coach female sports, but not the other way around. If men continue to get hired instead of women to coach women's sports there will slowly be no female coaches. I still do not have a strong feeling if there should be a set number of female coaches, similar to what Title IX has done for athletes. I think athletes would lose amazing coaches if females had to coach only females and males only could coach males.

Equality in athletics for boys in girls is crucial. It needs to be a priority in early years so that athletes will continue to see equality throughout their sport careers.

Equality for people of color is an interesting topic for me. I feel that there are many stereotypes that come along with the black athletes. Some of those stereotypes are positive and some of them are not. The positive generalizations that come with athletes of color are they are stronger, faster and natural athletes. Of course this is not true for all black athletes or people. Some coaches just assume that if an athlete is black they will be dominant at sports. On the other side of the spectrum, negative labels are sometimes given to black athletes as well. So much of our sports media is consumed by the violence of athletes and mostly black athletes. Are the positive things they are doing getting highlighted as much? There are many positive black role models in athletics and they are at the top of the charts in the typically, unexpected sports like tennis and golf. The Williams sisters have brought tennis to another level. I believe that sports media needs to focus on stories like this rather than the Michael Vick stories. Before Tiger Woods' self-

destruction, he was a very positive role model for black athletes. I feel that the media is the main culprit for the negative stereotypes for black athletes.

In my sport of field hockey, I have never really thought about race equality being an issue. Although, there are fewer African Americans in the sport of field hockey and it is a predominately white sport in the states. My philosophy as a coach is if they have the talent and drive to play a sport, field hockey included, it doesn't matter what race they are. Along the same lines, if a player is a freshman I do not have any problem playing them over a senior player. It is all about who is performing and working the hardest towards the team goal. I believe a player that may be less skilled but puts forth 100% effort deserves more playing time than the more skilled player that does not work hard. At the youth level I do not feel like the athletes know the difference in race. It is the parents and coaches that instill stereotypes and bring negativity to the field. As leaders of the team it is pertinent that we are not biased to one race or another. I feel athletics is one place where racism decreases. For example in the movie Remember the Titans, the athletes were able to get over the racial separations and play football. The movie was an extreme case, but it proves the point. My coaching philosophy about equality for people of color would be a lot like Denzel Washington's in the movie Remember the Titans, the talented players would play and others would sit or be cut.

The question comes up often in sports if it is okay to cut players from a squad? Yes, I believe at the high school level and up it is appropriate to cut players. I do not agree with cutting players from a team at the youth level, grade school and middle school. Youth sports are a way to have children be involved. As stated previously, at this level organized sports are more than just athletics, they are for development on many

levels. If we were to cut young athletes at this level I feel like it would be demoralizing and would have a negative effect on the children's perspective of sports over all. Sports are to be fun and energizing at this level and the children should not have to worry about whether or not they are going to play. At the youth level, I am a firm believer of equal playing time as well. Even though some children may already be more skilled than others, it is not the objective of athletics for youth at this age. I feel that some competitive parents have a strong opinion if their child is not playing as much as they think is appropriate, but youth coaches need to be non-biased about who is getting playing time and keep it equal for everyone. I also find it interesting when young children want nothing to do with athletics and their parents are trying to force them to like sports. At this point I would encourage the parents to engage in their child's interest. Youth sports are designed to help develop and build young children and cutting young athletes should not get in the way of this.

At the middle school level, I still believe it is too young to cut athletes. Of course at this level it is apparent that some students should not be involved in some sports. But I do not feel it is an age where they need to be released from squads. There is still time for the athletes to figure it out for themselves and develop other skills that sports can contribute to. For example, at the middle school level, athletics can help with children's social development. Pusateri, who coaches at the middle school level, believes "children should be rewarded for good attendance, positive attitudes, and strong work ethics". Nowhere in her statement was the skill of the athlete discussed. At the level she coaches it is important to recognize the positive contributions an athlete can bring to the team instead of harping only on skill level.

At the club and travel team level, athletes have to try out for these teams. Whenever there is a tryout, I believe it is appropriate for cuts to be made for the squad. Even though some of these teams the athletes could be younger than high school, I still believe it is okay. If an athlete is trying out for a specific team, they are aware that not everyone makes the team. This can be a tough situation for young athletes, but it is their choice to give an attempt to compete at a higher level. The club level is a commitment the athletes are saying they want to be involved in a sport outside of school. I see this as a motivated athlete that wants to get better at their sport. Even though this is the next level, it is still difficult to cut players. I strongly believe that all players need to be told in person if they do not make the team. It is also helpful to give the players a list of areas they need to work on or improve if they would like to come out again next year. If there is no hope for the athlete, I would absolutely encourage them to try out for another sport or for them to tap into other interests besides athletics. I do believe that sports are not for everyone, but all students should be involved in something.

Personally, I have been involved in three different types of informing athletes whether or not they have made the team. While I was in high school, our coach had a brief conversation with each player to say if they made the team or not. Some meetings were brief, while others needed more time and explanations. At the college level, cutting athletes is different. There is an entire recruiting process, so the athletes that show up for pre-season are scouted and are expected to be there. Since I have been at coach, we have held a tryout each pre-season and spring. During pre-season we make it clear that every single person has to make the team. Even the athletes that are on full rides have to show they are committed and prepared for the upcoming season. This may seem drastic to

make every player try out every pre-season, but I have learned to love this system. I would use this system as well because I believe it gives everyone a fresh start. The athletes that were not at the top of their game prior to summer have a chance to prove themselves and how hard they have worked. It also helps the top players. It encourages them to continue to get better as well and just because they are the best players it does not give them a free pass to have a lazy summer. The third type of informing players we had made the team was when I was selected for the National Team. There was a large tournament and after it was completed all the athletes waited around for a committee of coaches to decide who would be selected for the team. Once the decision was final, a list was posted outside their offices of who made the team. I felt that this was a harsh way to inform athletes that their dream of being on the National Team was over. Thankfully, I was on the other side of that and made the team. If I had not made the team I would have wanted an explanation and areas where I could improve. Posting a list seems to me like an easy way out of a very hard job. Unfortunately, at the elite levels, it seems to be the way many teams are announced.

Cutting players is never an easy job, but it needs to be done at certain levels of athletics. There is a head coach at the University that says she will never cut a player that tries out. I feel that is unfair to the athlete. If you know that you are never going to play them, I believe it is your duty as a coach to be honest with the player so they do not waste their own time and the teams' time. These talks are difficult to have, but I truly believe everyone comes out happier if the coach is upfront with the athletes about whether or not they should stay on the team or try other interest.



As a college coach I do not agree with the idea of paying players to play at this level. I feel that it turns college athletes into professionals before they are at that level. If athletes were to get paid to play, how would it be regulated? Would an athlete get a percentage of the revenue made off of specific paraphernalia? It would be impossible to know if a purchase was made to support the school or to support an individual player. Would each athlete on revenue sports get an allotted amount of money? I believe it would be a disaster to regulate how much each individual athlete received. It would be difficult to have a set amount for each sport as well, because the point the players are trying to make is they want money from the merchandise they help sell. So, if an allotted amount were given to each team, it would not be what the athletes are arguing for.

To support not paying student athletes, it is argued that scholarship should be enough for these athletes. It is normal for schools to cost forty to fifty grand a year and student athletes are able to attend school on full ride scholarships. The sports that are fighting the hardest for pay to play are men's basketball and football. Fully funded Division I football teams are allotted 85 full scholarships. This means that the entire team has no expenses except for personal expenses. Even with 85 scholarships, football squads will carry 30-40 more players on their team, so the least talented players have to pay for school as well. For men's basketball, each fully funded Division I team is allotted 15 full scholarships. Since there are only five people that can play on a court at a time, basketball teams have three full teams on full rides. It is a fact that men's basketball and football are the main revenue sports for most universities, but do they need even more money than the number of scholarships they already have? I feel that paying players to play would be excessive. Trying to understand the side of the players, I can

relate to how expendable money is tight. As student athletes, there are many sacrifices that need to be made. Having a job while in school is one of them. There are not enough hours in the day, especially during season, to go to school, be a full time athlete, and have a full time job. Student athletes need to prioritize and a job cannot be a top priority.

I firmly believe that athletes should not be paid to play, but I do think there should be ways for them to earn disposable income. Whether it is time in the summer to work camps or to get a part time job. Maybe there could be a part time job within the athletic department so the athletes could pick up some extra cash. The biggest issue I see is the players that want to be paid to play are not wanting the money for daily needs, they are wanting the money to buy new cars, dress in the most fashionable clothes, or buy unnecessary jewelry. A part time or a summer job could be enough funds for athletes to get by for the school year with needed materials. When athletes want to go above and beyond the necessities, they are right, there is not enough time for them to have the money for those needs. Paying players to play college sports would be a logistical nightmare and I do believe it would make players greedy and miss the true essence of college athletics.

Personal ethics and sportsmanship are very important to me. I believe that the integrity of a coach is the only thing they can control 100%. I have always been a firm believer of actions speaking louder than words for athletes and the bar should be no different for coaches. If coaches expect the athletes they are coaching to act a certain way and to represent their schools a certain way, the coach should hold themselves accountable as well. I feel that my philosophy on personal ethics is basic; hold yourself accountable and follow through with your word. I really liked the quote from the Sabock

article, “the measure of a person is not money or possessions; a person’s real wealth is character” (Sabock, p. 4). I feel without character, a person questions who they are and is not true to themselves or others. I also believe that athletes can see the character of their coach. If a coach is not being honest or fair, I feel that it is transparent to the players. If a player asks a hard questions, I think that is acceptable to tell them the honest truth and if you do not know the answer you should say that as well. I believe that athletes deserve to be coached by good role models.

In my job at University of Virginia, one of my main roles is recruiting. The NCAA has put many restrictions on recruiting and what is acceptable and what is not. Although, there are very tight guidelines, in many instances you are the only one to hold yourself accountable. The NCAA has tried to implement many ways to catch coaches or moderate them, but so much of recruiting is done behind the scenes. So, as the main recruiting coordinator I find it frustrating when other schools are cheating to get an edge. I hold myself to a high standard and pride myself that I will never break a rule to take a recruit from another school. Many recruiters use negative recruiting as well. This is talking poorly of another school to make your school look better. I feel that this behavior is unacceptable and it comes back negatively on the recruiter instead of the other school. My personal ethics as a coach and as a recruiter will never be compromised no matter how much I want an athlete at my school.

Sportsmanship is a topic that needs to be taught to beginner athletes and continued at all levels. Two weeks ago we had a tough loss and some of our players felt that the game was officiated unfairly. At the end of the game when the whistle blew, instead of walking off the field and taking the defeat, they started to throw their hockey

sticks and pout. Immediately, there actions were noticed and coaches took over. They were instructed to pick up their sticks and pull themselves together. One of the players that was acting in this manor was a captain. Actions clearly speak louder than words and her captain's band was removed. She had to give her team a verbal apology and earn her spot back as a captain. I share this story as an example of how sportsmanship needs to be taught and practiced at every level. Our players' behaviors were unacceptable and they knew it, but still choose to act that way. As coaches, it was our job to rectify the situation immediately and teach the athletes the correct behavior. I think that unsportsmanlike conduct is classless and it gives a bad name to the entire team, not just the players acting out.

I hold myself to a very high standard of personal ethics and sportsmanship. Although, I am the only one who can judge all of my actions, I am confident and proud of how carry myself out as a coach and would be comfortable having others evaluate me as well. Ethics and sportsmanship are a decision each person has to make for him or herself. They need to decide how they want to perceive themselves and how others perceive them as well. It is an important aspect of coaching to me and I make it clear to my players what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

My philosophy on coaching is a continual work in progress. Areas that will never differ are my integrity and personal ethics. Sports are fun and I will give my all each day to aspiring athletes to share my love and joy for them.

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