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IHSAA EXPRESS

Supporting Education Through Activities

High School Principal: Adults Present Biggest Sportsmanship Challenge

By Nicholas Novak



Most high school athletic directors and administrators would agree that their greatest challenge in hosting an event is not getting the facilities ready for a competition or preparing for hundreds or even thousands of spectators, but dealing with behavior issues and lack of sportsmanship during the game.

When sportsmanship is mentioned, images of a rowdy student section or a disrespectful student-athlete may come to mind, but the issue is bigger than that. Unfortunately, the bad behavior on display is often perpetrated by adults – the coaches leading the teams and the parents who have come to watch their kids compete.

Handling student issues is admittedly an easier task for school personnel than addressing those issues caused by adults. Whether it is players on the team or fans in the bleachers, all student issues can be addressed by individuals – teachers and administrators – who know them well and are enforcing a code of conduct that students are required to follow.

Coaches can positively influence their players' behavior by making their expectations or team rules clear at the beginning of the season and holding student-athletes accountable. Consequences for misbehavior might include benching for part or all of a game, suspension from team activities or removal from the team.

Likewise, athletic directors and administrators positively influence fan behavior by addressing expectations with students before they even make it to the stadium or the gym. Knowing where the line is and what the consequences are for crossing it certainly helps students to be fans and not fanatics. If students know the rules but don't adhere to the standards that have been set, the consequences that are imposed at least seem fair since they received ample warning.

Dealing with behavior and sportsmanship issues with coaches and parents can be a bit more difficult, but it is essential to ensure that a culture of sportsmanship exists in your school. When confronted by an administrator, a student shouldn't be able to say "what about Joey's dad? He said the same thing I did and nothing's happening to him." Or an athlete who gets ejected for arguing with officials complains to the coach that "she didn't do anything that the coach also didn't do."

If student-athletes on a team misbehave and demonstrate poor sportsmanship, it is most likely because their coach allows it and potentially engages in the same behavior himself. Coaches have to recognize that the young men and women they work with take their lead from them. If they want their players to show good sportsmanship, they have to model it for them.

Coaches must demonstrate through their words and their actions that they respect the other team. It's easy to talk badly about a team that isn't very talented, to tell players that "they should mop the floor with these guys" or use other insulting phrases. No matter what a team's record is, it deserves respect. This respect begins with how the coach talks about the other team, but also extends to outward displays of sportsmanship such as shaking hands and post-game interviews with the media.

Modeling good sportsmanship also includes respecting the officials. Student-athletes think it's acceptable to argue a call with a referee if they see their coach also doing it. While it is sometimes necessary to get clarification about a penalty or a foul, it ends there. Getting into a shouting match with an official never helps a situation and it sends a message to student-athletes that such behavior is acceptable. In addition, an arguing coach is sure to fire up that rowdy student section.

Although it is more challenging to deal with coaches than students, they must be held accountable for their actions if they do not represent the school in a positive light. If athletic directors and administrators stand idly by when a coach engages in inappropriate behavior, they are tacitly acknowledging that it is acceptable to behave in that manner.

Parent spectators can be the most difficult group to work with in an attempt to promote good sportsmanship, but it helps if schools and school personnel receive adequate support at the district level. Districts need to create a handbook for athletics or some other document that delineates the role of parents – what that role should be and should not be. Having the expectations spelled out very clearly helps reduce the questions about what may be allowed at a sporting event.

At the school level, promoting good sportsmanship with parents begins much like it does with students, that being sharing expectations at the beginning of each season. Athletic directors and administrators should not be afraid to address the issue directly and let parents know that poor sportsmanship ruins the experience for their kids and the rest of the spectators.

Athletic directors and other school administrators can take advantage of the great resources that are available to help present the situation in an entertaining, but educational format. Perhaps the most current useful information on this subject is the NFHS Sportsmanship Course, which is available online at www.NFHSLearn.com. School leaders can even engage booster clubs or parent-teacher organizations to help take a stand against their overzealous friends.

Unfortunately, the parents who are likely to cause problems at a sporting event probably aren't checking out the website for tips about sportsmanship and they may not respond well to friendly reminders from other parents to act appropriately. It is important for athletic directors and administrators to remember that they can and should address any inappropriate behavior by parents and remove them from the event if necessary.

To create a culture where good sportsmanship is valued and celebrated, athletic directors and administrators must address the behavior of not just the students, but coaches and parents as well. High school athletic directors and school administrators may not be able to influence the behavior that students see at college or professional sporting events, but they can control their own high school stadiums and fields, and that's a good start.



ADMINISTRATION CORNER

DATES TO REMEMBER

12/1	Fall Sport Concussion Survey Due
12/3	Wrestling Weight Assessment Window Closes
12/4	First Wrestling Competition Date
12/6-7	State Drama
12/9	Board of Directors Work Session
12/10	Board of Directors Meeting
12/25	Christmas Day
12/23-1/3	IHSAA Office Closed (Holiday Break)
1/1	New Years Day

DECEMBER CHECKLIST

- ___ Enjoy the Holidays with family and friends
- ___ Work with student section on an appropriate sportsmanship plan for home Basketball games
- ___ Publish Spring Schedules
- ___ Organize Fall Opponents
- ___ Organize Winter Opponents
- ___ Develop/Review Winter Cancellation Checklist
- ___ Spring Facility Emergency Plans
- ___ Spring Coaches Requirements
- ___ Send a citizenship reminder to parents and coaches

ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITIES - PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

- ** Meet regularly with staff to inform them of game management procedures and reinforce the ideals of good sportsmanship. Keep administrators informed of any problems that occur.
- ** Maintain control over student groups involved in activities/athletics and encourage growth in sportsmanship.
- ** Be at the game site (home or away) in advance of everyone's arrival.
- ** Have regular, informal sessions with the local media and elicit their participation and assistance in the program.
- ** Establish contact with the opponent's athletic director in advance of each contest to offer assistance with arrangements and equipment.
- ** Arrange security escorts for officials. Provide secure quarters for officials and visiting teams, and extend every courtesy to make them enjoy their visit to your school.

Fall Sportsmanship Awards



Girls Soccer

- 5A - Coeur d'Alene Vikings
- 4A - Twin Falls Bruins
- 3A - Kimberly Bulldogs

Boys Soccer

- 5A - Borah Lions
- 4A - Idaho Falls Tigers
- 3A - CDA Charter Panthers



Volleyball

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 5A - Madison Bobcats | 2A - Orofino Maniacs |
| 4A - Bonneville Bees | 1A DI - Valley Vikings |
| 3A - Fruitland Grizzlies | 1A DII - Watersprings Warriors |

IHSAA Student Advisory Council



In mid-November, the IHSAA Student Advisory Council met for their fall meeting in Boise. The main topic of the meeting was our Lead & Achieve leadership summit, which should take place this spring. There will be one summit for each district ran by the SAC representatives from that district. Each school in the district will select two students, one junior and one sophomore to attend.

Our theme for this year's summit is "Reach out of your Range." There will be various activities and learning opportunities like breakout sessions, ice breaker games, and speakers.

The goal is to encourage students to be proactive leaders within their schools and other areas of influence. We want students to be excited about their leadership possibility. We'll have more information as we continue to plan, so prepare to see more on our Lead & Achieve Summit!

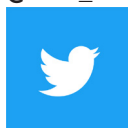
-Dakota Gorges, SAC Reporter

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COACHES CORNER

Nebraska Football Coach Scott Frost Reveals How Cussing and Yelling at Players Can Be Poisonous to Success

by Brandon Hall

If Scott Frost is able to turn around Nebraska football, it won't be through an endless tirade of red-faced shrieking.

Frost, who led the University of Central Florida to an undefeated 2017 season before accepting the head coaching job at Nebraska, said as much during a recent media session.



"No fear of failure"-This is a great quote from Coach Frost on teaching his players by not yelling at them or cussing at them.

"We're not going to yell and scream at kids. We're not going to cuss at kids. I don't think that's the right thing to do. And I also don't want to make kids afraid to make a great play. If someone misses a tackle or drops a ball, they don't need to be yelled at—they need to be taught the right way to do it so it doesn't happen again. Once you take away that fear of what might happen if you make a bad play, it really frees you up to go make great plays. I want our team to always play with a desire to excel and no fear of failure," Frost said.

For Frost, there's little benefit in reaming out a kid and embarrassing him in front of his teammates when he already knows he missed a play. In fact, it's counterproductive. It can put the player play in a state of constant fear where they're dwelling on all the bad things that will happen if they don't make a play. Frost would rather have his players focus on playing fast and free and thinking about making great plays. That's why he's striving to build a culture of "no fear of failure" inside the program.

It's a simple coaching strategy, but it's obviously of great importance to Frost. It's also one we can certainly get behind.



THE PLACE FOR
HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS



AUTOMATED SPORT PRODUCTION

The NFHS Network has partnered with Pixellot to offer a new hardware & software solution for automated live event production.



One-time installation
in your athletic venue

One-time payment,
zero recurring costs

Fully automated
(no people required)

How it works

- Auto-tracking feature enables cameras to follow the action (panning and zooming)
- No camera operator required
- Score graphics sync with venue scoreboard
- All events stream to your branded school page on NFHSnetwork.com
- Each Pixellot unit can integrate with your coaching software

Hardware

- Fixed installation includes:
- Camera unit - Weatherproof camera in a single mounted unit
- Scoring device - plugs into scoreboard for automated score integration into the broadcast
- Desktop Computer - for production integration & video processing

The NFHS has extended the 2 for 1
Pixellot offer until June 1, 2020

Contact Us



DRINK
CHOCOLATE
MILK WITHIN

30

MINUTES
AFTER YOUR WORKOUT TO
REHYDRATE, REPAIR,
& REPLENISH



3 COMMON SPORTS OVERUSE INJURIES

OVERUSE INJURIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR NEARLY HALF OF ALL SPORTS INJURIES TO MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.

SPORTS INJURIES BY SPORT (AGES 5 TO 14)



#1 ELBOW AND ARM INJURIES

SYMPTOMS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

- Forearm pain
- Wrist pain
- Weak grip
- Decreased velocity in throwing
- Pain or swelling in the front of your shoulder and side of your arm
- Stiffness

OVERUSE INJURIES INCLUDE:

- **Tennis elbow** (lateral epicondylitis)
Inflammation of the tendons that connect to your forearm muscles to the elbow
- **Little League elbow** (medial epicondylitis)
Inflammation on the inside of your arm and elbow
- **Osteochondritis dissecans**
Cartilage and a thin layer of bone begin to separate from the end of a bone
- **Rotator cuff tendinitis** (swimmer's shoulder)
The tendons and muscles near your shoulder become inflamed

SPORTS FREQUENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH ELBOW & ARM INJURIES:
TENNIS, GOLF, WEIGHT-LIFTING AND BASEBALL

#2 KNEE INJURIES

SYMPTOMS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

- Swelling
- Pain when bending the knee
- Loss of range of motion
- Stiffness in the knee
- Tenderness
- Discomfort

OVERUSE INJURIES INCLUDE:

- **Anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) sprains**
Most common in high-impact sports
- **Jumper's knee** (or patellar tendinopathy)
Occurs with repetitive jumping
- **Iliotibial band (IT band) syndrome**
Inflammation of the tissue along the side of the knee

SPORTS FREQUENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH KNEE INJURIES:
SOCCER, FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL

#3 FOOT AND ANKLE INJURIES

SYMPTOMS TO LOOK OUT FOR:

- Pain and stiffness in the foot
- Mild swelling along the tendon
- Tenderness to the location of injury

OVERUSE INJURIES INCLUDE:

- **Plantar fasciitis**
Common cause of heel pain
- **Ankle sprains and strains**
Can occur when the ankle turns, rolls or twists awkwardly
- **Shin splints**
Pain on the inside of the shin bone

SPORT FREQUENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH FOOT & ANKLE INJURIES:
RUNNING, SOCCER, GYMNASTICS

Sources:

Safe Kids USA Campaign web site, 2009.
Preserving the Future of Sport: From Prevention to Treatment of Youth Overuse Sports Injuries. AOSSM 2009 Annual Meeting Pre-Conference Program, Keystone, Colorado.



IMPACTS OF EARLY SPORT SPECIALIZATION



In a recent influx of research on early sport specialization, many papers have been drafted detailing its effects. National Leadership Council Member Dr. Joe Donahue shared some of the latest reports from Seth Cheatham, Mia Smucny, and several other professionals. Below is a summary of the impacts of early youth sport specialization.

In today's society, there is a strong cultural emphasis on elite status as a requirement for athletic success. Whether this status is gained through scholarships or professional participation, it goes consistently in hand with pressuring children towards single sport training. Parents and coaches are looking to fulfill the 10,000 hour practice requirement perpetuated in the media; they are urged towards early age, high-intensity training by the popularized triumphs of Tiger Woods and Andre Agassi. The consequence of such promotion is an increase in early sports specialization.

Early specialization in a single sport has increased tremendously in recent years. Young athletes are participating more in multiple, high-commitment teams of the same sport and are pursuing extra training from specialists. While this intensified training might be expected to produce a higher caliber of athlete, in reality it can be mentally and physically damaging. The repetitive microtrauma of specialization leaves athletes vulnerable to overuse injury and burnout as well as can deter athletes from long-term participation in a sport. Alternatively, multi-sport participation has shown to build strong athletic foundations and increase chances of gaining elite status (whilst maintaining enjoyment) in one sport.

It is critical for parents and coaches to promote a regimen of diverse athletic activity that accommodates a young athlete's interests. When physiological and skeletal development are still occurring, the practice of repetitive movements will increase risk of injury. Additionally, serious athletic time commitments can be socially isolating and psychologically stunting. Young athletes should instead immerse themselves in a variety of sports to attain long-term success. A focus on comprehensive, physical skills rather than specifics as well as avoidance of excessive time commitments can prevent burnout and injury and create a healthier lifestyle for the athlete.

Below are some key statistics around early sport specialization:

- Only 0.2% to 0.5% of high school athletes ever make it to the professional level
- Up to 54% of all injuries seen in pediatric sports medicine are related to overuse
- Young athletes who are highly specialized are 36% more likely to suffer a serious overuse injury than those who are not
- Focus on one sport can slow critical social development and lead to stunted psychosocial growth
- 88% of Division 1 athletes at one US university had participated in 2 to 3 sports as children and nearly 70% delayed sports specialization until the age of 12 or older
- 97% of professional athletes believed being a multi-sport athlete was beneficial to their success
- current college athletes experience depression rates that are twice as high as those of former, graduated college athletes





If interested in learning more about a specific study on early sport specialization, you can reach out to PCA's Director of External Relations at Casey Miller at her email, casey_miller@positivecoach.org. Thank you again to Dr. Joe Donahue for sharing these articles and to The Nueva School summer volunteer Aliya George for summarizing this research!



FALL STATE CHAMPIONS

CROSS COUNTRY

GIRLS

-  Boise **5A**
-  Idaho Falls **4A**
-  Sugar-Salem **3A**
-  Soda Springs **2A**
-  Oakley **1A**

BOYS

-  Timberline
-  Idaho Falls
-  Sugar-Salem
-  Salmon
-  Liberty Charter

VOLLEYBALL

5A



Thunder Ridge

4A



Bonneville

3A



Sugar-Salem

2A



Firth

1A DI



Troy




1A DII



Watersprings

SOCCER

GIRLS

-  Rocky Mt. **5A**
-  Sandpoint **4A**
-  CDA Charter **3A**

BOYS

-  Eagle
-  Caldwell
-  SV Community

FOOTBALL

5A



Rigby

4A



Kuna

3A



Sugar-Salem

2A



West Side

1A DI



Prairie

1A DII



Lighthouse Christian

SWIMMING

GIRLS

-  Boise **5A**
-  Sandpoint **4A**

BOYS

-  Boise
-  Bishop Kelly

Thank You
Dairy West

State Tournament
Sweatshirts



PIONEERS BY NATURE

dairy west

2019
IDAHO HIGH SCHOOL
Drama
IHSAA
STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS



December 6-7
Thunder Ridge High School



The 13 Qualities of Great Leaders

By Alan Stein

I'm thankful to have had the opportunity to work with, learn from and talk shop with countless hall-of-fame basketball coaches over my career.

There were dinners with Bobby Knight and Hubie Brown, and I watched Mike Krzyzewski and John Calipari run practices. I also met John Wooden and Dean Smith, and interviewed Brad Stevens, Tom Izzo, and Jay Wright. Through these experiences, I've been able to closely observe the qualities of a master leaders.

13 Qualities of Great Leaders

1. A great leader is purpose driven. Their position is simply their platform to teach life lessons. They want to positively influence people and be a part of something they love.

2. A great leader is a big thinker. They think long term and they dream on a macro level. They don't look at where their team/company is, but rather where their team/company should be and will be. Also, they know that their own creativity and imagination on their only limiting factors.

3. A great leader has high character. They do the right thing when no one is watching. They hold everyone in their company to a high standard of excellence. They'll willingly sacrifice winning to do what's right, and they model high character every day of their lives.

4. A great leader embraces change. They embrace the societal change that comes with millennials. They embrace the spur-of-the-moment changes that require split second decisions and strategic adjustments.

5. A great leader has empathy. They know empathy is one of the sharpest tools they have in their toolbox, as empathy helps forge meaningful connection with their team. Before rushing to judgment, they always take the time to view each situation through the other person's lens.

6. A great leader takes calculated risks. They don't play it safe for a sense of false security. They know you can't achieve much in business or in life unless you are willing to leave your comfort zone and take intelligent risks. And, they have no problem living with the consequences of their decision.

7. A great leader is decisive. They have strong convictions relating to their company culture and standards. They believe in their business philosophy and have no problem making decisions to fully support each.

8. A great leader uses their authority appropriately. They know that respect must be earned. They know that the title "leader" carries a tremendous responsibility — a responsibility they gladly shoulder and utilize wisely. And they don't feel threatened. They want everyone in their company to be a leader as well.

9. A great leader is an effective communicator. They know that nothing has been taught until something has been learned. They are able to communicate one-on-one, with the entire organization and through digital platforms like text message and social media.

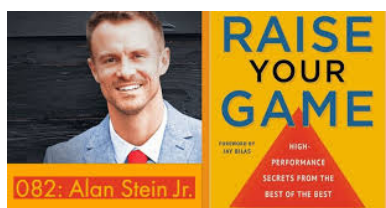
10. A great leader is a servant leader. They put the needs of the organization, their teammates and their employees before their own. They consciously serve everyone in their company on a daily basis and acknowledge that the organization is bigger than them.

11. A great leader is courageous. They don't fear failure. They don't worry what other people think.

12. A great leader is committed to the betterment of their employees on and off the court. They are fully devoted to developing employee skills, as well as their leadership, communication, toughness and respect.

13. A great leader works on their craft every single day. They take pride in learning on a daily basis. They have the humility to know that no matter long they have been coaching or how successful they have been, that the day they stop learning is the day they need to retire.

Alan Stein, Jr. is speaker, author, and performance coach whose programs teach businesses and organizations how to develop championship-level performance, cohesion and accountability. His upcoming book is titled "Raise Your Game: High-Performance Secrets From the Best of the Best." Visit www.AlanSteinJr.com



SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE FALL STANDINGS CLASSIFICATIONS TOP 10

5A

	School	Academic Score	Athletics Score	Total Score
1st	Eagle	710	675	1385
2nd	Timberline - B	745	605	1350
3rd	Boise	705	470	1175
4th	Mountain View	705	375	1080
5th	Rocky Mountain	725	338	1063
6th	Lake City	705	320	1025
7th	Coeur d'Alene	525	490	1015
8th	Skyview	690	285	975
9th	Centennial	730	240	970
10th	Madison	540	420	960

4A

	School	Academic Score	Athletics Score	Total Score
1st	Bishop Kelly	735	455	1190
2nd	Idaho Falls	710	455	1165
3rd	Sandpoint	695	360	1055
4th	Twin Falls	710	315	1025
5th	Jerome	710	245	955
6th	Bonneville	715	175	890
7th	Moscow	695	165	860
8th	Minico	705	150	855
8th	Skyline	620	235	855
10th	Nampa	680	163	843

3A

	School	Academic Score	Athletics Score	Total Score	Qualified Average
1st	Sugar-Salem	460	570	1030	85.83
2nd	Snake River	515	328	843	70.25
2nd	Timberlake	510	333	843	70.25
4th	Weiser	520	320	840	70.00
5th	Teton	480	310	790	65.83
6th	Kimberly	700	320	1020	63.75
7th	Filer	535	180	715	59.58
8th	American Falls	410	165	575	47.92
8th	Buhl	500	75	575	47.92
8th	Fruitland	255	320	575	47.92

2A

	School	Academic Score	Athletics Score	Total Score	Qualified Average
1st	McCall-Donnelly	505	335	840	70.00
2nd	Melba	350	323	673	67.30
3rd	Cole Valley Christian	355	225	580	58.00
4th	Declo	535	150	685	57.08
5th	Soda Springs	365	195	560	56.00
6th	Salmon	360	190	550	55.00
6th	West Side	365	185	550	55.00
8th	Firth	525	100	625	52.08
9th	Malad	430	90	520	52.00
10th	Nampa Christian	380	95	475	47.50

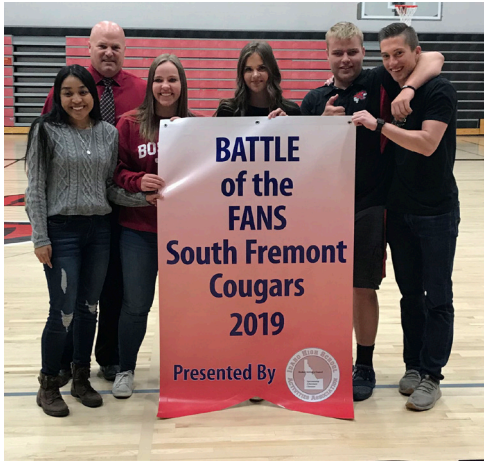
1A DI

	School	Academic Score	Athletics Score	Total Score	Qualified Average
1st	Valley	360	245	605	75.63
2nd	Ambrose School	270	265	535	66.88
3rd	Liberty Charter	285	175	460	57.50
4th	Prairie	355	100	455	56.88
5th	Potlatch	350	75	425	53.13
6th	Butte County	175	180	355	44.38
7th	Genesee	190	90	280	35.00
8th	Greenleaf Friends	190	75	265	33.13
8th	Victory Charter	85	180	265	33.13
10th	Oakley	0	263	263	32.88

1A DII

	School	Academic Score	Athletics Score	Total Score	Qualified Average
1st	Rockland	265	150	415	69.17
2nd	Sun Valley Community	455	185	640	64.00
3rd	Lighthouse Christian	190	190	380	63.33
4th	Kendrick	185	173	358	59.67
5th	Watersprings School	175	100	275	45.83
6th	Garden Valley	175	88	263	43.83
7th	Carey	165	95	260	43.33
7th	Murtaugh	185	75	260	43.33
7th	Timberline - W	260	0	260	43.33
10th	Dietrich	170	75	245	40.83

**2019
Battle of the Fans
WINNERS**



SMALL SCHOOLS
South Fremont Cougars

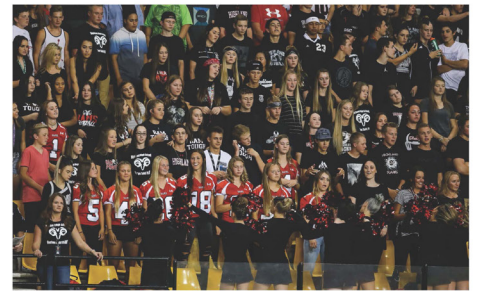
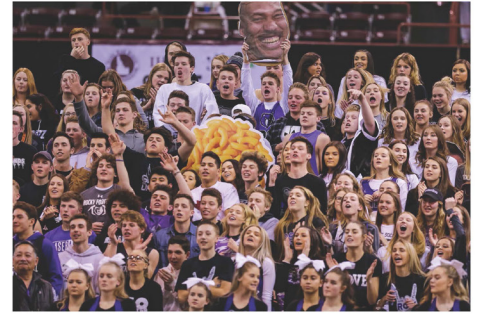


LARGE SCHOOLS
Lewiston Bengals

IHSAA Student Advisory Council brings to you...

Battle of the Fans

1. **Film your student section:** Film your student section during an athletic event.
2. **Video Content:** Edit your video so it is no more than 90 seconds. You must introduce your school and discuss why your school should win.
3. **Post to YouTube:** The deadline for your video is *January 15*.
4. **Email us your link:** Send the link to: federicom@idhsaa.org
5. **Judging criteria:** Your videos will be judged on Sportsmanship, School Spirit, Originality, and Student Section Leadership. Be LOUD and POSITIVE!



CONGRATULATIONS

Gisselle Villaycana Norato
Jerome High School

DESIGN WINNER

IHSAA Student Advisory Council
Sportsmanship T-Shirt Design Contest



5 Powerful Tips for Coaching Millennial Athletes

by Tyler Johnson

Nothing drives me more crazy than hearing adults despairingly utter the words, “kids have changed.” I sure hope they have! The world has undergone rapid change over the past decade and will continue to do so moving forward. Today’s youth are different than the kids before them. But so were the kids before that, and the ones before that.

If coaches want to connect with their kids and lead a competitive team, they must adapt as well. Change is scary but essential.

With that in mind, here are five ways coaches can better meet millennial athletes where they are and help elevate them into better athletes and better people.



Give Them Time to Switch Gears

Rarely did I ever enjoy a school day as much as a sports practice. But that doesn’t mean I never carried stress from the school day with me into sports play. Getting kids to transition out of the “sit still and be quiet” mindset common in many modern classrooms to a more engaged, lively state is key to more productive practices and training sessions.

You don’t want kids to feel like they just walked into boot camp every time they get to practice.

Today’s student-athlete has more stress than past teens and finding ways to get them to transition to practice mode is key. Fun is the element that disconnects the school stress and invigorates their full court press. Allow athletes to connect with each other during warm-ups or through a game that loosens the body and focuses the mind.

Help Them Communicate

Connections create learning environments, and great connections create commitment. Find ways to have your team collaborate or solve a problem related to the teams success. Take a step back and let them discover solutions and coach one another.

Collaborative learning is how many NFL and NBA players spend their summers. Think Von Miller’s pass rush camp or the countless star-studded NBA pick-up games.

Small-sided games can be one way to get greater collaboration out of your athletes, but really, putting them in any goal-based scenario where they have to work with their teammate(s) to figure out a solution is going to be beneficial. When the goal relates to something they need to do on game day, then you’re really onto something.

When we engage people’s ideas, we engage them!



Follow the ‘Commercial Break’ Rule

Student-athletes tend to learn best in small chunks. You can either complain about their attention span or you can adapt to use it in your favor.

If millennial athletes are doing the same thing over and over for a long period of time, learning is usually going to decline. Keep this in mind as you structure your practices and film sessions. Can you build-in a transition or adjustment every seven minutes or so?

This is called the Commercial Break Principle because if you don’t engage young people by the first commercial break, they are tuning in somewhere else. Teenagers also need a break often as well. This might be a quick several reps on your own at practice. A minute to get a drink and prepare for the next drill, etc. Micro-break is the idea. Then back to work.

Admit Your Mistakes

Coaching is tough. We won’t be perfect. When we do make a mistake or see an error in our ways, one of the greatest things we can do for this generation is step up, take ownership, and explain ourselves. Display accountability by illuminating your errors, imperfections and mistakes.

If you don’t do it yourself, how can you expect it from your athletes?

Through the social lens of today’s athlete, not enough light is shown upon adults who handle their issues openly, honestly and productively.

The media provides more than enough examples of how not to do things. But as an athlete’s coach, you can be an incredible role model in their life. Showing them how to step up and handle difficult situations is one of the greatest gifts we can give them.



Know Their Favorites

As coaches, we’re going to have to cover and drill some things that our teams may find mundane and stale. Such is life.

But we can counteract those potential energy-drainers by allowing our players to regularly perform their favorite drills.

If you don’t know their two or three favorite drills, simply ask them. Mixing these in to your practice plan will keep energy, focus and morale high. Think of it like letting kids out for recess before they come back into the class room.

And don’t just stop with drills. Asking your athletes their favorite plays gives you valuable insight into the strategies and concepts they’re most comfortable and confident in.

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