



Champion Coach Note: New Year's Resolutions

It's a new year and that means a new opportunity to commit to making a positive difference at your school, in your sport, and in the lives of your athletes. Ushering in a new year, for many, means developing resolutions in different areas of your life in order to become a better, healthier, and well-rounded individual. As a coach, you are no different! Robert Frost writes in his famous poem "The Road Not Taken": "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference." As a coach, take the path to improvement and excellence this year as a resolution. Commit to developing the character of your athletes and teaching them important life lessons through your sport.

Take some time yourself and with your athletes to set new goals for the year that are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. Create a short list of attainable goals instead of a long list that may be unrealistic. It's important to regularly reference these goals to track your progress and to hold yourself accountable. Write down your goals or inspirational quotes on a poster or create a collage or word web so that they are always visible.

Don't forget to set goals of character: Focus on qualities and virtues that you would like to develop yourself and that you would like to see in your athletes. Visualize what a successful year would look like. Select a theme that you want to define your year (for example, Year of Making the World a Better Place; Year of Courage; Year of Inspiration).

2013 National Champion Notre Dame Men's soccer coach, Bobby Clark, said, "Coaching is simply



Kansas City Parochial League
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"If your actions inspire others
to dream more, learn more,
do more and become more,
you are a leader."

~ John Quincy Adams

Athlete Reflection

Click this [link](#) and watch this inspiring and amusing video clip with your team by [Kid President](#) and reflect in a team meeting on the following questions:

1. What can I do to make the world a better place?
2. What can I do to improve my community? My sport?
3. How can I bring out the "awesome" in my teammates and classmates?
4. Through my example, what am I teaching others?
5. How can I make 2014 even better than 2013?

another word for teaching." What are you teaching your athletes? At the same time, what are you teaching the world through your approach to coaching? See the great potential in your athletes, and commit to developing the whole person, using the lens of athletics to teach your athletes the qualities necessary to succeed. Legendary basketball coach, John Wooden, said, "What you are as a person is far more important than what you are as a basketball player." As a coach, make a positive difference by developing the character of your athletes first and by not placing an emphasis on winning as the only important outcome for your team.

As a coach, you, too, are a life-long learner, and by challenging yourself to grow, you will be giving an even greater gift to your athletes. Never stop learning. Never rest on your personal journey for excellence. Never stray from your commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of your athletes. As former U.S. Hockey coach, Herb Brooks, said, "This is your time. Now go out there and take it."

Best wishes for a successful 2014!