



Champion Coach Note: Coach as Role Model

Today's note is a message to coaches from two student athletes at Notre Dame. Christian Meyers who plays club lacrosse and TJ Jones, outgoing captain of the Irish football team now drafted by the Detroit Lions.

Christian begins: "There is, as there should be, a great deal of emphasis placed on coaches being attentive to their players and helping them grow and develop. In addition to this, coaches need to closely monitor their own behavior as they are working with impressionable children and adolescents. A coach will inevitably miss some things that an individual player does, since there are many players on a team; whereas there are many players who are all watching what an individual coach does. A coach who tells his or her players to behave respectfully will be more influential if he or she practices the respectful conduct he or she professes."

Coaches, remember that your athletes are watching, listening and learning. Can you take pride in the example you provide?"

TJ now gives a tangible example of a coach who was a positive role model. "The competitive nature of humans can sometimes take over and alter the priorities of coaches. Coaches need to recognize this and keep a proper perspective. My father was a coach while I was growing up and he made sure that regardless of our record, we were going to have the most fun out of all the teams in our league. Not only did he speak it, he achieved it. Because of this attitude, every other player in the league wanted to be on our team. He made sure to help every player, the most gifted to the least skilled, develop a love for the game and a love for the team. There are many kids that are no longer able to play sports as we get older, but when asked about their fondest memories,



"A leader's most powerful ally is his or her own example."

~ John Wooden

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they mention my father's team as one of their best experiences. It is because of this coach and his emphasis on 'fun and development' that I was able to play football at the collegiate level. Coaches, you never know how your actions will impact a child's life but you can do your best to ensure positive caring interactions with each athlete you have the privilege to coach."

Coaches, as the sport season winds down for this school year, remember that you are creating a legacy.

How do you want to be remembered by your athletes?

How will your athletes from this season remember you?