



## Champion Coach Note: Developing Humility

When coaching, you will come across many different types of athletes that will excel at different levels at different times. There are those who will excel to the highest level and those who may struggle to differentiate themselves. It is important to help the ones who excel to be held to a higher standard when it comes to being humble and gracious for the blessings bestowed upon them. Being humble is a remarkable trait in the greatest of athletes, but more importantly the greatest of people.

A humble person “restrains the unruly desire for personal greatness” and has “an orderly love of themselves based on a true appreciation of their position with respect to God and their neighbors.” (Catholicculture.org). Humility does not mean your players have to bring themselves down or understate their successes. Rather, it is a gracious acknowledgment of their strengths and achievements while understanding others have helped them reach this level of success.

Coaches of character should keep the better players in check while promoting confidence in the less talented players. It is important for everyone to keep a level head. It is very easy for a talented player on the field to let his/her talents turn into arrogance off the field. This attitude leads to athletes feeling “entitled” as individuals. Hopefully as a coach, you are one of the first people to recognize this and can prevent it from happening. You can talk individually with your “star” athletes to develop their virtue of humility. To keep them grounded, remind them they are looked up to and should be mentors and positive guides for others on the team. Help these



Humility is not thinking less of  
ourselves, it's thinking of yourself less.

~ C.S. Lewis

### ATHLETE QUESTIONS

Hold a discussion with your team on  
developing the virtue of humility.

- What kind of player and person do I want to be?
- What do I want my legacy at this school and on this team to be?
- How do I act when our team wins? Am I consistent when we lose?
- Do I thank the referees?
- How can I challenge myself to be more humble?

### TEAM ACTIVITY

Coaches can recognize and appreciate every player's “talent” on the team. To directly do this, hold a team meeting where you go around

athletes to understand they can use their skills to build up others and make the whole team more successful.

Here is some advice on creating humility in athletes from [Don't Waste Your Sports](#) by C. J. Mahaney

- A humble athlete recognizes his limitations. We all come with divinely imposed limitations—limitations meant to humble us.
- The humble athlete welcomes critique and correction from coaches and teammates. If an athlete is humble, she realizes that she has some opportunity to improve, so she welcomes correction.
- The humble athlete acknowledges the contribution of others. No athlete accomplishes anything alone.
- The humble athlete is gracious in defeat and modest in victory. When the humble athlete loses, he recognizes that his opponents played better, and he sincerely congratulates them on the win. And when the humble athlete wins, there are no excessive celebrations, no inappropriate victory dances. He realizes that victory is a gift from God and is an opportunity to draw attention to God, not himself.
- The humble athlete honors her coach. She doesn't rip the coach in private, she doesn't slouch when on the bench and she expresses her gratitude to the coach and the whole team.
- The humble athlete respects the officials. He doesn't protest a call—even if it was inaccurate.
- The humble athlete gives glory for all her athletic accomplishment to God. She knows that all of her athletic skill is ultimately a gift from God.

Champion coaches coach to develop the virtue of humility.

the circle inviting each team member to stand and then ask the other team members to say what qualities that person contributes to the team. This can also be done in writing with the "applause" sheets being sent home with each athlete. Remind athletes that qualities to be pointed out are not just physical traits, but what the individual brings to the team emotionally, socially, spiritually and intellectually.