

MIND GAMES
VIEW FROM THE TOP
60-SECOND SUMMARY
HOT OFF THE PRESS
DIRECTORY



OLYMPIC COACH

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Message from the MANAGING DIRECTOR

GRIT: Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals

THE 2006 COACHES OF THE YEAR —Thoughts from the Best

HOW TO CHOOSE A NUTRITION PROFESSIONAL

CONTENTS

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FEATURES

3

Message from the
MANAGING DIRECTOR

4

GRIT:

Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals

6

THE 2006 COACHES OF THE YEAR

Thoughts from the Best

9

**HOW TO CHOOSE A NUTRITION
PROFESSIONAL**

DEPARTMENTS

11

MIND GAMES

Preparing for Major Competitions: Team Building

13

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Lee Bodimeade

14

60-SECOND SUMMARY

Sequencing your workouts

16

HOT OFF THE PRESS

16

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ON THE COVER

USA Women's Field Hockey players—Upper left: Goalkeeper Amy Tran, Middle Photo: Keli Smith, Large right photo: Captain Kate Barber and the Lower Left photo: Keli Smith (front) and Melissa Leonetti (back)

Message from the
**PERFORMANCE
SERVICES MANAGING
DIRECTOR**
by
DOUG INGRAM

Every year, the USOC recognizes America's best coaches. The process begins in January with each National Governing Body (NGB) nominating their representative for the previous year in each of the five categories: National, Developmental, Volunteer, Paralympics and the "Doc" Counsilman Science Award. The USOC feels that it is important to recognize, appreciate and promote the efforts of coaches across America at every level of sport. In this issue, the four Coaches of the Year share their philosophies' and experiences with you.



Angela Duckworth of the University of Pennsylvania has been studying GRIT and its relationship with and to "expert" performance. To understand this phrase, check out the article.

Bob Seebohar of the USOC Sport Dietician in the Endurance Sportfolio helps coaches find a nutrition specialist, who will be able to meet you and your athlete's needs. It is a great article and even includes recipes.

With less than 400 days before the start of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, Sean McCann provides some solid tips for coming together as a team; whether you coach an individual or team sport.

As always we hope that you enjoy this issue. Please feel free to share it with other coaches. The address to subscribe is: <http://coaching.usolympicteam.com/coaching/ksub.nsf>

Remember, the wider and stronger our coaching base, the higher the pinnacle of our athlete's performance will be.

GRIT

Perseverance and Passion for Long-Term Goals

by Angela L. Duckworth, Department of Psychology,
University of Pennsylvania

“Compared with what we ought to be, we are only half awake. Our fires are damped, our drafts are checked...men the world over possess amounts of resource, which only exceptional individuals push to their extremes of use.”

—William James (1907),
The Energies of Men, pp. 322-323

In 1907, psychologist and philosopher William James suggested that talents were different from the strengths of character required to fully exploit those talents. For his entire distinguished career, James was fascinated with why only a handful of individuals realize the limits of their potential while the rest of us fall far short of what we could be.

As a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania, I have taken up James’s question of why some individuals accomplish more than others of equal talent. My research suggests that one personal quality is shared by the most prominent leaders in every field: grit.

WHAT IS GRIT?

Grit is perseverance and passion for long-term goals. Grit entails working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining both effort and interest over years and years—despite failure, adversity, and even just stalls in progress. The gritty individual approaches achievement as a marathon; his advantage is stamina. Whereas disappointment or boredom signals to others that it is time to change trajectory and cut losses, the gritty individual stays the course.

The idea that grit might be essential to high achievement evolved during interviews with professionals in a variety of fields unrelated to sports, including investment banking, painting, journalism, academia, medicine, and law. Asked what quality distinguishes star performers in their respective fields, these individuals cited grit or

a close synonym as often as they mentioned raw talent. In fact, many were awed by the achievements of peers who did not at first seem as gifted as others but whose sustained commitment to their ambitions was exceptional. Likewise, many noted with surprise that prodigiously gifted peers did not end up at the top of their field.

Encouraged by these interviews, my colleagues and I developed a self-report questionnaire to measure grit. A version of this questionnaire is available at www.gritstudy.com, and includes questions about how consistent an individual’s interests tend to be over the long-term, and how the person reacts to disappointment and failure. (The questionnaire can be faked in the sense that a person can easily “pretend” to be grittier than he or she really is, but in the context of academic research, there is no serious incentive to do so.)



RESEARCH FINDINGS

Here is a summary of our findings. In our first study, we found that grittier adults complete more years of education. Completing an advanced degree is a challenge for many individuals – the drop out rate from community colleges, for example, is by some estimates far higher than 50%. Grittier individuals also make fewer career changes over the course of their lifetime. One unexpected finding was that older individuals tend to be higher in grit than younger individuals. It is possible that we get grittier as grow older and mature — this is true of several personality traits such as conscientiousness.

In a second study, grittier college undergraduates earned higher GPAs than their peers, despite having slightly *lower* SAT scores. More generally, we find in all of our research that grit is either inversely related to measures of talent or not related at all. In other words, we do not find that the most able individuals are always the ones who stick with their commitments over the long haul. This implies that talent and grit are not tightly yoked—it is quite possible to be talented and not gritty enough to succeed, just as it is possible to be gritty but not adequately gifted. Probably it takes very high levels of talent *and* grit, and since these qualities are independent of each other, we should expect only a few individuals to have the highest level of both.

School is challenging in some respects, but these initial findings encouraged us to seek more demanding contexts for testing the importance of grit. At West Point, we found grit to be a better predictor of which cadets make it through the first summer of training (aka Beast Barracks) than a summary measure of cadet quality used by the West Point admissions committee. At the Scripps National Spelling Bee, grittier competitors outranked less gritty competitors, at least in part because they studied longer and for more years than did their same-aged counterparts. Finally, in a study of novice school teachers, grittier teachers raised their students' standardized test scores more dramatically than did their less gritty counterparts.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ELITE PERFORMANCE

In my view, achievement is the product of talent and effort. This may seem obvious, but what may not be so clear is that effort is not just not intensity, but also consistency and duration. It's

fairly easy to observe that some individuals work harder than others at a moment in time. As an example, consider two children learning to swim. Assume that both children are equally talented in sports and, therefore, improve in skill at the same rate per unit effort. Assume further that these children are matched in the intensity of effort they expend towards their training. Duration and direction of effort, on the other hand, are described by the number of accumulated hours devoted to training and, crucially, the decision to deepen expertise in swimming rather than to explore alternative pursuits. Our findings suggest that children matched on talent and capacity for hard work may nevertheless differ in grit. Thus, a prodigy who practices intensively yet moves from swimming to the track to yet another sport will likely be surpassed by an equally gifted but grittier child.

At West Point, we found grit to be a better predictor of which cadets make it through the first summer of training (aka Beast Barracks) than a summary measure of cadet quality used by the West Point admissions committee.

How does grit relate to other psychological variables known to predict achievement, such as self-efficacy, optimism, and intrinsic motivation? One possibility is that the propensity to pursue long-term goals with perseverance and passion may be determined in part by these other traits. More research is needed to tease out these relationships.

In a study of the childhoods and training of world-class pianists, neurologists, swimmers, chess players, mathematicians, and sculptors, Ben Bloom noted that “only a few of [the 120 talented individuals in the sample] were regarded as prodigies by teachers, parents, or experts.” (p. 533). Rather, accomplished individuals worked day after day, for at least ten or fifteen years, to reach the top of their fields. Later, work by Florida State University professor Anders Ericsson confirmed that indeed at least ten or twenty years of deliberate practice could not be circumvented for those who aim to be the best at what they do.

My conclusion is that in every field, grit may be as essential as talent to high accomplishment. If substantiated, this conclusion has at least two implications: First, young athletes who demonstrate *exceptional commitment* to their goals should be supported with as many resources as those identified as gifted with prodigious ability. Second, we should encourage athletes not only to work with intensity, but also with stamina. In particular, we should prepare our young people to anticipate failures, misfortunes, and even occasional boredom. We might point out that excellence in any discipline requires years and years of time on task. There is simply no substitute.



THE 2006 COACHES OF THE YEAR

Thoughts from the Best

In May 2006, the United States Olympic Committee honored four coaches in four categories representing coaches from the elite level to the grassroots.

Representing the volunteer level coaches – **Booker Woods** coach of the LA Jets. For 34 years, Booker Woods has been impacting lives through track & field. He has produced 104 national champions and his team has earned over 23 National records. In 2006, he had 43 athletes qualified for the National Junior Olympic Championships.

In the Developmental Coach category – the dynamic coaching duo of **Mark Mitchell and Peter Johansson** have been working their magic for 11 years at the Skating Club of Boston. They have coached 21 national medalists and 22 international medalists. In 2005, their athletes brought home two Gold's, one Silver and two Bronze medals for the US.

In 2006, the **Julie O'Neil** coached/led US Paralympic team won a total of 56 medals at the IPC World Championships, set 11 new World records and the US won it's first Paralympic World Championships. She is the Paralympic Coach of the Year.

Bud Keene as the National Coach had athletes win two Gold's, two Silver's and two fourth places finishes at the Torino Games in Half- Pipe Snowboarding. This was a remarkable near sweep in the medals.

OLYMPIC COACH: What was your background prior to Coaching?

Bud: In 1983, I spied a guy (Lowell Hart) walking down the road with a wooden snowboard. Having done some surfing and skateboarding while growing up, it looked appealing and so I gave it a try, on a borrowed board (a Burton Backhill with water-ski type bindings, a varnished base and no edges or highbacks). I'll never forget it. I competed professionally, but I was a better coach. In 1989, I coached the Mt. Mansfield Snowboard team. For Salt Lake, I was on the Olympic Staff. In 2003 I became the Head Half - Pipe Coach for the U.S. and served as the Olympic Head Half – Pipe Coach in 2006.

Julie: I have a M.A. in Slavic & East European Studies. Following completion of my master's degree I was enrolled and set to begin law school in the fall with a focus on International Law. During the summer between grad school/law school, I coached swim camps at a major university on the West Coast and was offered an age group coaching job in the area. Coaching and swimming had always been my passion and I accepted the job, un-enrolled from law school and the rest is history!

Mark: I had been a successful athlete in Figure Skating, as a U.S. Junior Champion, Olympic Festival Champion, two time member of U.S. Team at World Championships. I have a great passion for skating and wanted to give back to the sport that helped me so much.

Peter: I also had a strong Figure Skating experience as a four - time Swedish Champion, and World Competitor as well as being a 1988 Olympian. I felt that I had a lot of knowledge within the sport that I wanted to give back.



Booker Woods



Mark Mitchell and Peter Johansson



Julie O'Neil



Bud Keene

Booker: I just love Track and Field and kids. I have always been a volunteer coach. My family life changed a lot, because coaching took away from some of the time I spent with my family.

OLYMPIC COACH: Each of you are successful in your own realms. What do you think are the traits that make a successful coach?

Mark: I think intuition is important. Being able to understand and teach a basic method and technique and being able to adapt it for your athletes.

Booker: Understanding and having the knowledge about the developmental skills and rules along with dedication and determination.

Peter: Passion —you have to have a passion for your sport.

Julie: I agree with all of these, but you also have to have the ability to teach, motivate and successfully communicate with athletes – at all levels.

OLYMPIC COACH: Did any of you have a mentor in coaching? If so, who was that mentor and what were the most important things that you learned from them?

Peter: No real mentors, although we have always been interested in hearing what other coaches do and learning from their experiences.

Julie: I did not have an official mentor when I began my coaching career. However, I always sought to learn as much as possible from other coaches that I worked with or for. The greatest influence on my own coaching methods and style when I first entered the coaching profession was the coach I had swam for as an athlete for many years – Jim Anderson, who is currently the Head Coach of the Twin Cities Swim Team. Coincidentally, Jim now coaches one of our World Champion Paralympic swimmers – Anna Eames – and I am thrilled to have him involved in our elite Paralympic program since he was such a positive influence on my career as an athlete as well as an influence on my early coaching career.

Bud: I had a more than one mentor. The two most important were my Junior High and High School baseball coaches in Virginia Beach; Don Daly and Johnny Dollar. Possibly without knowing it, both of them taught me the tremendous potential that a coach has to positively influence a person's life. It is so powerful that it comes with a huge responsibility to apply it correctly. Their confidence in me thrilled me so much that I bought into it, and my abilities soared. Their belief in me instilled in me a confidence in my ability to succeed that I have to this day, and it wasn't just about baseball. It extends to every facet of my life and every challenge I encounter.

OLYMPIC COACH: Could you share with us one of your most successful coaching moments?

Booker: The first time I took a team to a national championship meet was in 1978. My Youth Girls (age 13-14) were involved in a very close race in the 4 x 400m Relay. I recall being very nervous throughout the event and very excited at the end, because they were my first National Champions.

Mark: We started coaching Stephen Carriere when he was a very young boy. We are still coaching him and last season, Stephen won the Junior World title.

Julie: Having our U.S. Paralympics Swimming Team win the overall medal count at the 2006 IPC Swimming World Championships was a huge success for everyone involved with the team. We had never before been higher than 5th in the overall count in a major competition (i.e. Games or World Champs) nor had we ever won more than 40 medals as a team. Finishing with 56 total medals, first in the overall medal tally, and with 20 of 25 athletes on the team winning a medal was a phenomenal achievement.

Bud: I guess it would be easy to just say the 2006 Olympics, and the great success that we had there. I was very confident going into the Games, partly because I knew we had assembled the strongest group of half - pipe riders in the history of the sport, but also because I know that projecting total confidence in the face of a challenge like that is the strongest card that I can play. And I am always going to play my strongest card. As the person looking into the eyes of these riders before they drop in, I HAVE to be that

way, to project total confidence in them. Of course that comes naturally for me, because I am by nature a true believer in people.

Just as meaningful (if not more) are the moments that I had yesterday, or the ones I will have tomorrow, when I teach a 9-year-old girl to do a frontside 360 off of a jump, coax an 8-year-old boy to drop in to the pipe, or convince a 16-year-old that he is capable of doing a 900 - and then watch as they do it. The world may not be watching, but that kid's life is forever changed. And so is mine.

OLYMPIC COACH: In your opinion, name one thing every coach should do and why?

Julie: Share --The more we share information and develop new young coaches in the profession, the more successful we will be as a whole. Additionally, I think that when you research, prepare, and develop materials or ideas in order to teach others that you also contribute greatly to your own knowledge of the subject matter.

Peter: Take up another sport and learn how to do something you can not do. It will make you a better teacher.

Bud: Peter is right. I think you should try and coach at least two different levels in your chosen sport simultaneously or even different sports at an amateur level. My sport is in a constant state of flux. Therefore my craft has to be in a constant state of flux. Though that makes my job harder, I am comfortable with that. I think a lot of coaches in many sports are not.

Booker: With youth sport, I think kids need to know what will be expected of them. I believe every coach create a list of team rules.

OLYMPIC COACH: What advice would you give a young coach?

Booker: Try to instill a winning attitude in your athletes, but never want to win more than they, because if you do, you will always be frustrated when they don't put forth the desired effort, or when they lose.

Julie: Learn as much as possible, find a great mentor in the profession, and maintain balance in your life outside of coaching/sport.

Bud: NEVER let your athletes down, in any manner. It's a tough position to be in, but if you can't handle it – pick another profession.

- Always remain a practicing fanatic of the sport you are coaching.
- Listen to the athletes. They are the ones REALLY in control.
- Don't put your athletes through something because it is what society thinks is something that any "athlete" should be doing. Look at the situation, look at the available options, and then choose the path that will achieve the desired result.

Mark: Whatever athletes you have, make them the best they can be.

Bud Keene's Dozen Traits for Successful Coaching

1. A successful coach must be willing to WORK their tail off so that others may succeed.
2. A successful coach has to be willing to go to ANY LENGTH to help their athletes achieve that success.
3. A successful coach must have excellent PEOPLE SKILLS.
4. A successful coach must have the ability to cultivate intense LOYALTY, TRUST, and RESPECT among their athletes.
5. A successful coach must possess superior JUDGEMENT.
6. A successful coach must genuinely CARE about their athletes' well-being.
7. A successful coach must have excellent MOVEMENT ANALYSIS SKILLS that are matched with a well-developed INTUITION.
8. A successful coach must be FIRM and FLEXIBLE at the same time.
9. A successful coach has to KNOW EVERYTHING about their sport.
10. A successful coach needs to be ORGANIZED.
11. A successful coach must be part mother, part father, part psychologist, part athlete, part mad scientist, part nurse, part friend, part nanny, part teacher, part chauffer, part secretary, part mind-reader, part manager, part therapist, part doctor, and part salesperson.
12. ABOVE ALL a successful coach must possess the ability to INSPIRE their athletes.

How to choose a Nutrition Professional

Bob Seebohar, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS, USOC Sport Dietitian

As a coach, it is expected that you provide your athletes and team the best training methods to achieve optimal performance. Nutrition is a vital component to this but often times coaches do not have the time or experience to provide a full offering of nutrition services. Therefore, it is important to identify well-experienced nutrition professionals to serve on your performance team that will provide your athletes with the services that are needed to achieve greatness and support the physical training you provide them.

NUTRITIONIST VS. REGISTERED DIETITIAN

There are many individuals who know about nutrition. Some are more knowledgeable with real-life experiences while others are not. There are two popular terms used to describe those in the nutrition field: nutritionist and Registered Dietitian. Understanding the difference between the two is important when selecting this person as a member of your team. A nutritionist has no standard of education, training or experience, which means that anyone could use this title even if they have no background in the nutrition field.

In contrast, a Registered Dietitian is a nationally recognized title which reflects a high level of training and experience in the nutrition and health field. To obtain this status, a person must have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Dietetics, must complete a minimum of 900 hours of a supervised internship, must pass a nationally accredited exam, and must maintain a number of continuing education credits within their registration

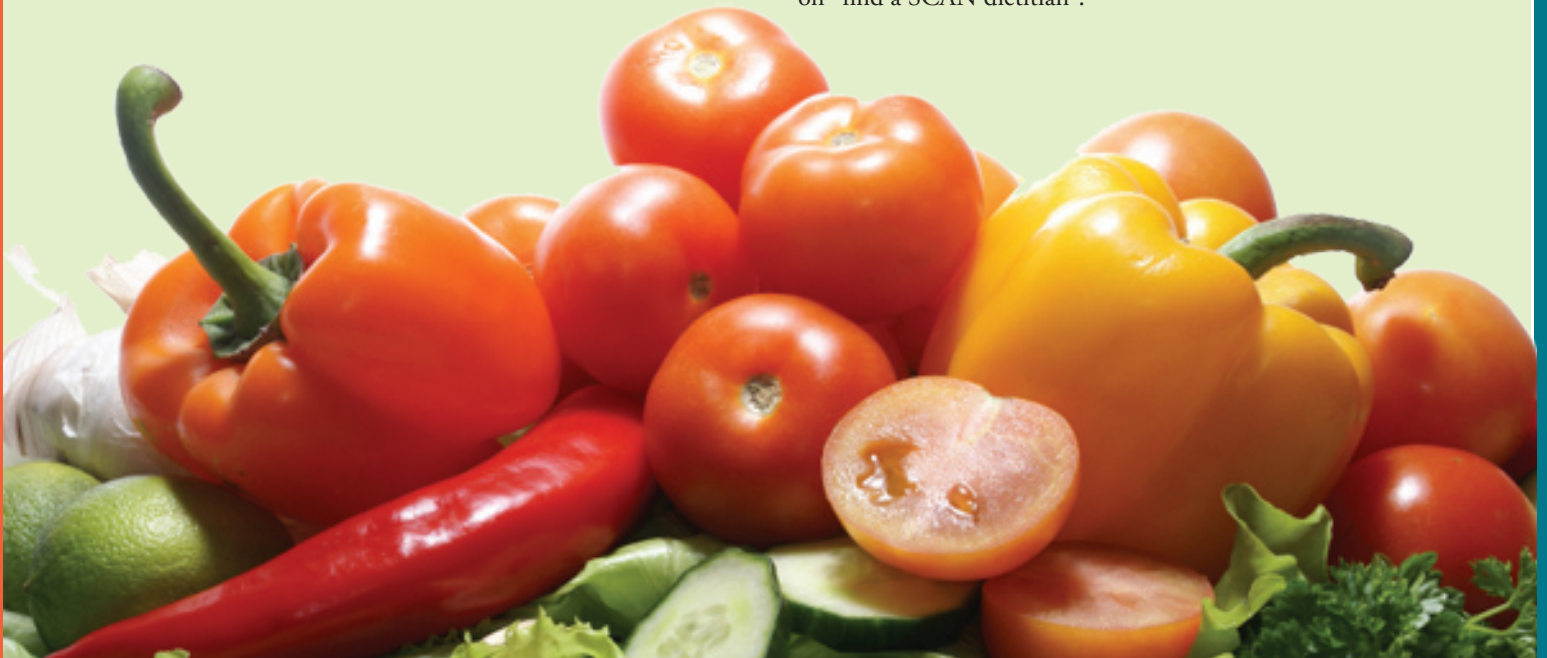
period. Because of the vast majority of nutrition information that is presented in the media and research, Registered Dietitians are more qualified to identify and screen the appropriateness of nutrition trends and products.

Some states require licensure which helps to ensure that only qualified, trained professionals provide nutrition services or advice to athletes seeking nutrition information. Only state licensed dietetics professionals can provide nutrition counseling and prescriptions. Non-licensed practitioners may be subject to prosecution for practicing without a license.

SPORT DIETITIANS

A relatively new credential has been introduced which identifies Registered Dietitians who specialize in working with athletes and sports nutrition (sport dietitians). The certification is offered through the American Dietetic Association and follows stringent qualifying standards before taking the certification exam. Certified coaches should identify these dietitians who are Board Certified Specialists in Sports Dietetics (CSSD) as part of their performance team. These nutrition professionals have demonstrated abilities of working with athletes, coaches and teams and have a keen understanding of sport.

Because nutrition is such a key component with training elite athletes, it is helpful to know how to choose a nutritional professional and what qualifications to look for in an individual. To find a qualified sport dietitian, visit www.scandpg.org and click on "find a SCAN dietitian".



Quick wheat salad with soy beans and avocado

Serves 4

Ingredients:

1 cup	Bulgur wheat
1 cup	Frozen, shelled edamame
1-14oz can	Diced tomatoes, drained
1 ea	Apple, chopped
½ ea	Avocado, diced
¼ cup	Newman's Own Lighten Up Vinaigrette

Preparation:

1. In a bowl, pour 1 cup of boiling water over bulgur wheat, and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Allow to sit for 15 minutes.
2. In a separate bowl, thaw frozen edamame by pouring boiling water over beans and allow to sit for 1 minutes. Drain.
3. Remove plastic wrap from bulgur, and add edamame, tomatoes, apples, avocado and vinaigrette to bowl.
4. Toss well to combine, and serve immediately or cover and store in refrigerator.

Nutrition per serving:

Calories: 300; Total fat: 10g Saturated fat: 1g; Protein: 14g; Carbohydrates: 42g; Fiber: 12g; Sodium: 400mg

Kitchen Tips:

1. Frozen vegetables are simply fresh vegetables, cooked and frozen. Simply thaw them by pouring boiling water over them, and use them like fresh vegetables.
2. Newman's Own Lighten Up or Ken's Light is a great choice for light salad dressing; they both utilize natural ingredients, and no high fructose corn syrup!!

Created by: Adam Korzun, MS, RD, LDN

Pan roasted salmon

Serves 4

Ingredients:

4-6oz	Salmon filets, boneless, skin-on
1 tsp	Minced Garlic
1.5 Tbs.	Olive Oil
½ tsp each	Dried dill, onion powder, and black pepper
1Tbs	Dijon mustard

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 325 F.
2. In a bowl, combine olive oil, mustard, garlic, and dried herb/spices.
3. Pour or brush mixture over flesh of salmon (there is no need to season the skin).
4. Heat a pan over high heat, and once hot- place salmon skin side down in a dry pan (no need to oil pan)
5. Sear skin side down for 2-3 minutes, and then transfer pan to 325 F oven. (do not turn salmon)
6. Roast salmon for 15-20 minutes; or until internal temperature of 145 F.
7. Using a spatula, carefully remove salmon from pan. The skin should remain in pan or come off in one piece.

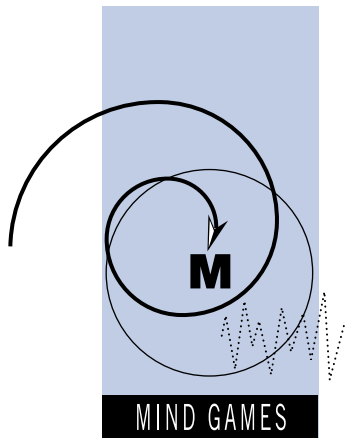
Nutrition per serving:

Calories: 220; Total fat: 12g Saturated fat: 2g; Protein: 26g; Carbohydrates: 0g; Fiber: 0g; Sodium: 100mg

Kitchen Tips:

1. Wild salmon versus fresh salmon? The major differences between the two are: cost, taste, and color. Wild salmon is more expensive, tends to have a richer flavor, and deeper color due to its natural diet. The health benefits are almost identical.

Created by: Adam Korzun, MS, RD, LDN
Food and Nutrition Dietitian
United States Olympic Committee



PREPARING FOR MAJOR COMPETITIONS: Team-Building

By Sean McCann, Ph.D.
Sports Performance Division,
Colorado Springs Olympic Training Center

Our USOC Sport Psychology Program has found that a majority of our National Governing Bodies believe Team-Building is an important factor in performance at the Games and other international competitions. What surprises many people is that this factor is not limited to traditional team sports. In fact, the challenge of team-building is often more of an issue for coaches of individual sports. Unlike team sports, where team building is built into training and competition, individual sport coaches often face the task of working with a “team” of individual athletes thrown together in a short period of time before a major trip. This article outlines some basic team-building rules for coaches who have been burned in the past by a team environment which hurts performances.

STEP 1: DECIDE IF IT'S IMPORTANT ENOUGH TO TAKE THE TIME.

It may be helpful to ask yourself the following question: Does the team environment promote individual excellence, or does it interfere with it? By taking a bottom line approach, many coaches realize that medals may be won or lost based on how well athletes work and live together in training and competition settings. If you work on team-building because it helps performance, not because you want everyone to be happy, your team-building work will be more focused and effective.

STEP 2: DECIDE WHAT YOU EXPECT FROM A TEAM.

Your ideal team environment may not be realistic with the athletes you have. For example, some coaches might prefer to have athletes socialize together and be best friends, but many of the athletes may have developed into rivals as they have competed for team slots. Rather than making the team be a place of friendship or “family”, it may be appropriate to make the team environment one of “professionalism”. In other words, think of your teammates as co-workers, and you are less likely to swear at them or refuse to eat at the same table with them. Once you do decide what kind of team environment you want, as a coach you need to make that environment an expectation, or you will not move closer to achieving it.



STEP 3: TALK ABOUT IT.

Once you decide what you want from your team, you need to communicate that expectation. It is surprising how many team meetings a team can have without talking about anything other than logistics such as practice times, housing accommodations, and travel arrangements. Early on in the team-building process, it is important to have a team meeting to discuss the advantages and challenges to successful team building. Consider adopting the following meeting structure that we have used to start team-building exercises:

- 1) Team strengths: Have the team think out loud about the things that make the group strong. These characteristics can be used as rallying points later in competition.
- 2) Team Challenges: What are the things that might get in the way of a strong team and strong performances? Have the full team brainstorm typical challenges such as team negativity, fear of competition, or bitter rivalries that cause team dissent. By having the team acknowledge factors that get in the way early on, they will become easier to discuss and eliminate as they happen in competition.
- 3) Team Goals: Have the group decide what are goals for the entire group. These should be goals that help make individual goals easier to achieve. Examples might include: better communication; competing with other teams rather than your own team, or; focusing on the team strengths in competition.

STEP 4: WALK THE TALK.

If you have decided that the team environment does impact individual performances, you have talked about it, and have

come up with goals for the entire group, then make those goals important. Remind the team about those goals during competition, and evaluate whether the team is achieving them. Don't be afraid to have a team meeting during competition which focuses on re-charging the team, reminding the team of its strengths, challenges, and goals. Remember, the team looks to the coach to see how important these team issues really are. Once the athletes see that you really do expect the team environment to support individual excellence, they will make efforts to work for the team. If the athletes see you ignoring the team issues, they will become cynical and slip back into the same behaviors you wanted to prevent in the first place.

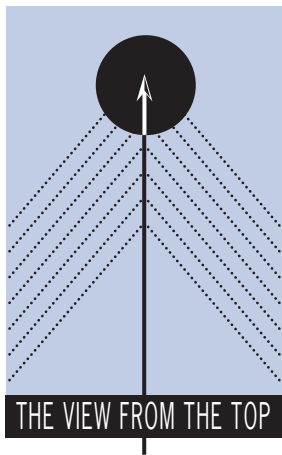
WHAT ABOUT TOUGH SITUATIONS?

There are a number of situations which may interfere with effective team-building. These situations include:

- 1) A history of conflict between two more team members.
- 2) A lack of confidence in your ability as a 'team builder'.

In these situations, it might be worth while to bring in a consultant with experience in working with teams. Bringing in a sports psychology consultate may offer some advantages for a coach in a tough team-building situation. Consultants should not make decision about athletes' playing time or training issues, and consultants should be able to tolerate the strong emotions that sometimes occur in team-building. A good consultant can free up a coaching staff to become part of the team-building process rather than just orchestrating it. Finally, watching a consult work on team building can provided the coach with ideas on handling these issues in the future.





The View From the Top: Lee Bodimeade



In May 2005, USA Field Hockey hired Lee Bodimeade. Their objective in hiring the former silver medalist from Australia (1992) was to qualify for the Olympic Games after they had narrowly missed in 2000 and 2004. As an excellent teacher of specific skills, Lee took a squad of

young players and has turned the program around.

Field Hockey has struggled in the last couple of years, but we have seen a huge turn-around in the program this year with stunning victories over Argentina (one of the top five teams in the World). How did you turn the program around?

The key points to lifting our performance was a process that we wanted to keep as simple as possible. The reason for keeping it simple is ease of implementation and then being able to continue with. We had four key areas that we concentrated on:

1. Identify our playing style (what is USA's way of playing?)
2. Emphasis on player depth
3. Improvement of basic skills to international level
4. Compete against the world's top 4 teams

This is broad description but all aspects of our training feeds into these categories.

What do you see as the key component to changing a team's culture?

One key was providing the players with structure on and off the field that was conducive to success. With the squad embracing this, they believed in what I was selling them and could therefore commit to achieving their best.

Change doesn't happen overnight, how long did it take you to change the team culture?

Team culture was already present in the team when I came into the group. It is a culture that developed over numbers of years competing, all I did was to get them to recognize this culture and then develop it to be the foundation of where we are heading. We become very protective of this culture and anyone coming in to the group had to embrace it to the level that is required to remain a part of the group.

Give us a one-day snap shot of a Field Hockey workout.

- 8:00 Warm up
- 8:30 Begin training, basic skills development, general play/positioning drills
- 9:45 Set plays
- 10:00 Cool down

- 3:00 Warm up
- 3:30 Running program
- 4:15 Small games, goal shooting
- 5:30 Cool down

What are you most pleased with concerning the direction of your team?

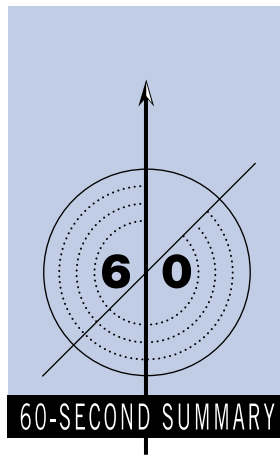
The way that the players have embraced the direction that we are trying to take them in. This has certainly made our structure consistent and has also spread the level of performance.

What are the next steps that you see to improve field hockey in America?

The higher we climb in the world rankings, the more finite we need to be in our skill development, tactical awareness and purposeful goal setting. Our training does not have to shift in focus too much, but we will need to be more advanced in our thinking and skill level.

What was the most important piece of advice that was given to you as a coach?

Being relatively new to coaching at the highest level, there has been an overload of tips and advice which I have been able to take on board, but the one thing that I will always remember being told is that "If you win, it is due to the players. If you lose, it is the coaches' fault". Reminding myself of this has prepared me for anything that comes forward.



Sequencing Your WORKOUTS

by Catherine Sellers, USOC Manager of Coaching

With each daily workout conducted, a coach should have an objective in mind. Most coaches will look at two to three objectives per workout. More than two or three objectives, the athlete struggles and your objectives become watered down. When designing your daily workout, there is a sequencing of activities that has been recommended by a variety of researchers and coaches. The coach can look at the two or three objectives for the workout and place them in a sequence to get the greatest benefit. Brent Rushall and Frank Pyke in *Training for Sports and Fitness* suggested the following order:

1. General Warm-up
2. Learn techniques and tactics
3. Perfect techniques and tactics
4. Develop Speed
5. Develop Power
6. Develop specific strength
7. Develop muscular endurance
8. Develop aerobic endurance
9. Recovery routine

Every coach should always have a warm-up and a recovery routine built into the workout, but how you put together the rest of the work out is extremely important as you will see.

1. Warm-up

We talked a great deal about Warm-up in the last issue of *Olympic Coach* (Spring 2007) and the value and the type of warm-up that should be conducted for the type of event or workout, so we will not focus on that in this article.

2. Learning techniques and tactics

One of the key concepts is the ability to learn a new skill. Fatigue affects the ability to learn skills. So in your sequencing it is

important to place any new skills or re-visiting of previously learned skills early in your workout, so that the athlete is rested and not fatigued from the workout itself. Bompa explains “that learning is more effective when the nervous cell is still rested.” A corollary to this is that the athlete must have sufficient recovery time when doing repeats of the skill.

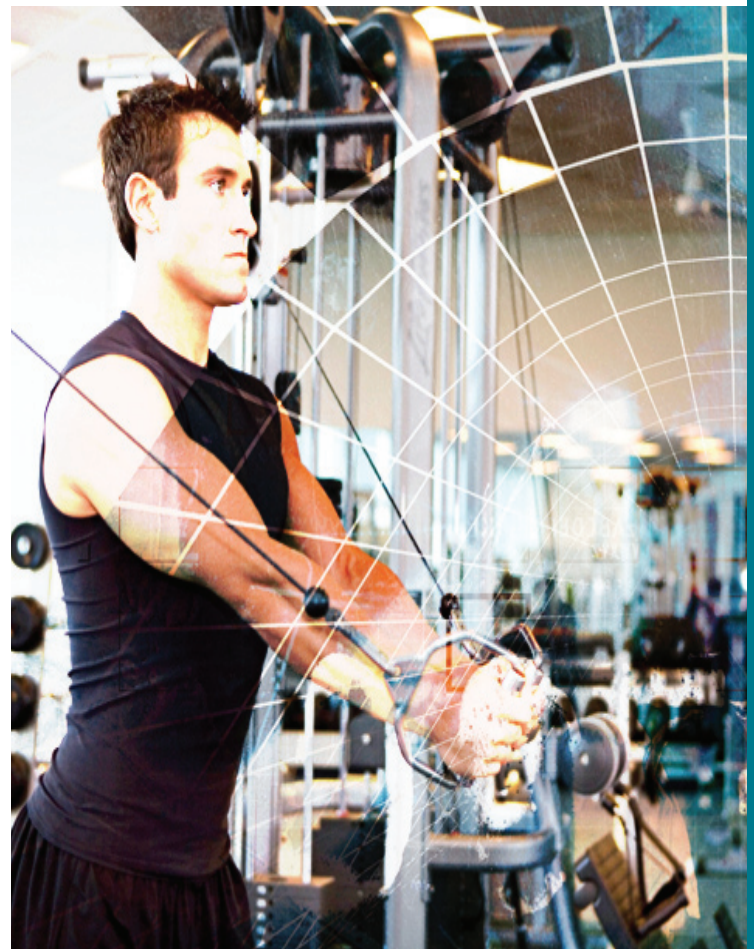
What about residual fatigue? Let’s say you had a real difficult workout the previous day and that the athlete struggled through the workout and is still fatigued for the next day’s workout. This type of fatigue can also be a factor in the ability of the athlete to learn a new skill efficiently.

3. Perfect techniques and tactics

The athlete has an understanding of the skill, but you are trying to perfect the acquired skill and may be simulating competition. This works best in the early segments of the workout, again due to the fatigue issue. However, Bompa notes that “if the perfection of technique requires heavy and fatiguing work then such exercises may be performed later in the lesson, usually following speed exercises.”

4. Developing Speed

Speed activities are of a high intensity (quality) and usually of short duration. Because the purpose of the work is to be of a high quality, the athlete should be rested. If they do the weight training



or endurance first, they will be fatigued and unable to do the quality of work that is the objective, thus defeating the purpose of your workout. The skills section for that day might be eliminated if the focus of the workout is maximum speed.

5. Developing Power

Rushall and Pyke suggest that “activities that require speed and strength (power) should be next” in the sequence. Some of the power activities have a high skill component, so make sure you make that distinction and consider the fatigue factor when doing these activities.

6. Develop specific strength

Another key concept is to place any activity involving strength after activities involving speed, as “heavy loads impair speed” (Bompa). If you are trying to develop the strength component within a training session that includes other components, it is advisable to have the strength work have a “low number or repetitions with high resistance and full recovery between trials”. (Rushall and Pyke)

7. Develop muscular endurance

Rushall and Pyke define muscular endurance as “the ability of specific muscle groups to sustain an activity for a short time in the face of considerable local fatigue”. Resistance should be moderate in nature and begin with moderate level of repetitions. Depending on the condition of the athlete as well as their age and the sport, the resistance would remain moderate and the volume can be increased.

8. Develop aerobic endurance

Endurance work is very fatiguing, so it is reserved for the end of the sequence. The exception is if your sport is an endurance dominated sport, for example-- marathon running, triathlon or long distance swimming. Since fatigue is a limiting factor, it is important to achieve your objective for the workout in the beginning of an endurance session. The coach will see a diminishment in performance and can build that into the latter portion of the workout.

9. Recovery routine

Recovery is the most neglected part of training. What you do for recovery sets the stage for the next day and possibly the next weeks’ workout. Athletes should engage in a cool-down and stretching routine upon completion of the workout. Coaches should carefully evaluate what they are having their athletes do for recovery. Nutritionally, we know the benefits of hydration and eating carbohydrates upon completion of workouts to recovery.

Some Examples Wrestling:

The coach is planning his wrestling workout. The objectives of today’s workout are: Teach the double leg attack, work on the set-up for the double leg attack and work on the muscular endurance of the legs, finish with cool down.

Workout itself would be:

1. Warm-up –Jog and stretch individually and with partner (Coach would have listed what he/she wants done in the stretching).
2. Teach the double leg attack by showing the athletes the whole action – then breaking it down into parts and finishing with the whole action. Athletes mimic the action. (Learning technique)
3. 15-20 penetration steps and lifts. This is initial set-up for the double leg action.(Specific strength)
4. Athlete with a partner - partner holds right leg and forces the athlete to hop backward the length of the mat and then changes leg. (Muscular endurance)
5. Cool-down

Soccer: This is an example of sequencing with a Games-Based approach.

Practice objectives for eight year-old girls soccer: Basic skills and spatial awareness

1. Warm-up - Monkey in the middle - four to six girls versus one or five to seven versus two with the game basically being keep away using spatial skills.
2. Passing Game - groups of two girls with one ball, with six or seven pairs of cones spaced randomly around the field, one to two yards between each cone creating sets goals. All pairs go at once and the objective is to pass with each other and through every set of goals and be the first pair to finish. (Learning Skills)
3. Full field game except with two goals on each corner of the field (total of four goals), same rules as regular game, with the additional goals emphasizing long passing to break pressure and encourages reverse counter-attacks. (Perfecting Technique and Tactics)
4. Cool-down

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USOC DIRECTORY FOR THE COACHING RESOURCES STAFF

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Every now and then, a website comes your way that is really well worth sharing with others. A “Coaching Minute” is such a site. It provides thought provoking ideas for coaches and parents in a short but energetic one minute clip. The program is free and the message is always great. <http://www.coachingschool.org/>

The University of West Virginia is doing an ethics survey as related to coaching. It is a simple survey to take as it is asking about your beliefs and behaviors. We encourage you to take the survey. <http://simpleforms.scripts.wvu.edu/sf/CoachEthics/>

Mike and Meg Stone along with Bill Sands have published a great reference book for coaches. *Principles and Practice of Resistance Training* is chocked full information for elite level coaches. While the name implies it is about resistance training, it is much more than that providing a background in training and monitoring. It’s published by Human Kinetics.

If you are looking for posters to print or video to show athletes regarding anti-doping, USADA has placed their ads and videos on their website. <http://www.usantidoping.org/resources/psa/>

Great five part series on injury prevention developed by the English Institute of Sport. http://www.eis2win.co.uk/gen/news_injuryprevent5weekseries.aspx

Heat and humidity is an important consideration for training as we reach the hottest months. This article includes advice for making sure your athletes are safe. <http://www.texaschildrenshospital.org/Parents/TipsArticles/ArticleDisplay.aspx?aid=1606>

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OLYMPIC COACH E-MAGAZINE

The U.S. Olympic Committee Coaching and Sport Sciences Division reminds you that our quarterly magazine, OLYMPIC COACH, is now available electronically as the OLYMPIC COACH E-MAGAZINE.

This quarterly publication designed for coaches at all levels can now come to you via e-mail. The quarterly e-mail provides a summary of each article in the magazine with a link that takes you directly to the full-length article. The best news is that OLYMPIC COACH E-MAGAZINE is available to all coaches and other interested individuals free of charge.

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