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## Connecting Coaches Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 9 April 2011

Coaching Tips Research ASDC Services Resources

Welcome to *Connecting Coaches Newsletter*,  
 Inside you will find:

- Services:** ASDC Services, Media Tips .
- Research:** Half-time in sport: psychology
- Upcoming Events:** Learn By Doing with Coach Tellez: Practical sessions for track and field
- Coaching News:** Excellent article—Three Pioneers: Women Who Coach Male Athletes
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Alberta Sport Development Centres  
[www.asdc.ca](http://www.asdc.ca)

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## ASDC Services

### Media Tips from Troy Gillard

- 1. Types of stories...** There is never a shortage of topics with Alberta being such an active sports province. The challenge is to find stories that are unique. There will always be hockey to talk about but any chance I get to learn something new about other sports I am excited to do so. In my career, I have done stories on everything from fencing and wrestling to horse racing, rodeo and pickle ball (now's that for variety). Everyone has a story to tell and there is always someone out there looking to hear it.
- 2. Informing media of events...** As much as I try to keep my ear to the ground and stay on top of things, there is always something else out there. Something as simple as sending in an e-mail or making a quick phone call goes a long way toward getting your story some recognition. And it is always greatly appreciated when someone takes the time to fill us in on what's going on.
- 3. What types of questions...** Here is what I like to tell athletes and coaches... when speaking with a reporter for a story, treat it like a conversation you are having with friends. Be friendly, be excited, and let your personality come out in your answers. Avoid answering questions simply by saying "yes" or "no." (If a reporter is doing their job properly by asking open-ended questions, this should be easy for the athlete to do). The more colourful and descriptive you can be, the better your story will turn out. Because really, an interview is nothing more than a conversation between two people. Take away the cameras, recorders and note pads... relax and have some fun ☺



### ASDC Network Partners





# Research

## Coaching Styles



**Autocratic Style**



**Democratic Style**



## Half-time in sport: psychology

The half-time period in a match is the only direct opportunity the coach has to speak to all the players once the match has started, and to influence the second half performance and result. Effective communication between the coach and players is therefore essential, as Jim Petruzzi explains...

What a coach says to the players during half-time will depend on both the score, and the perspective of the match. If a team is winning

2-0 at half-time, it will almost certainly go into the changing rooms with a more positive attitude than the opposition. However, suppose the opposition score just before break; although still losing at half-time, they may well feel very positive, believing that they now have the momentum. The type of game also affects psychological perspectives; knockout games are different to league games and top of the league teams tend to have different expectations to those at the bottom! Whatever the perspective however, the half-time period is crucial because players will have their first opportunity to reflect consciously on the game for an extended period, and the role of the coach is critical.

Maximising second half performance is the goal of any coach and this will entail discussions about tactics, state of the pitch, player formations etc. However, just as important as what is said is how effectively it is communicated. Communication is a 2-way process and while most coaches are good at talking to players and giving out instructions, some are less accomplished at listening! This is unfortunate as coaches can often get a good feel for what's going on by asking players questions and instigating a 2-way discussion.

How a coach communicates with the players is partly reflected in his or her leadership style; ideally this style should be adapted to the circumstances of the dressing room. For example, a hostile attitude among the players may require a more autocratic style, whereas a friendly and co-operative attitude may favour a more democratic style. The characteristics of these two styles are summarised below:

**Autocratic Style** (eg Portugal's national football team manager Phil Scolari)

- The coach decides what needs to be done;
- The players do not participate in the decision-making process;
- The coach clearly defines how what needs to be done should be done.

**Democratic Style** – (eg ex-England manager Sven Goran Errikson)

- The coach sets out what the players need to achieve;
- He then invites the players to put forward ideas or make suggestions on how to go about it;
- The coach decides the best course of action based on the suggestions the players have made.

## Half-time psychology and substitutions

Whether and who the manager decides to substitute at half-time can make an enormous impact on the second half psychology. If a team is ahead at half-time, substituting an attacking player for a defender may suggest that the manager lacks confidence in holding the lead and has decided to 'batten down the hatches'! Substituting the team captain can have a devastating

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# Research

## Neuro-linguistic programming

NLP is about a series of psychological techniques, which can help us gain control over parts of the brain that we normally think of as ‘automatically’ regulating the way we think, behave and perform. And when applied to sport, NLP can help athletes to maximise performance.

## Half-time in sport: psychology

Original article by Jim Petruzzi  
Summary by Andrew Hamilton  
BSc Hons MRSC ACSM  
[Source: *Peak Performance*]

## Half-time in sport: psychology (continued)

impact on a team, suggesting perhaps that the manager is panicking. Putting on a player who’s performed particularly well against the opposition in previous encounters may on the other hand unsettle the opponents! Deciding the best course of action is often a balancing act; if a team is playing well but losing at half-time, should the manager keep the faith and trust that things will come good, or should he or she make a bold attacking substitution, but risk disrupting the flow and cohesion of the first half? In order to make these kind of decisions, it’s important that the manager and players are in the right frame of mind and this is where psychological techniques borrowed from neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) can come in handy.

### Using NLP at half-time

NLP is about a series of psychological techniques, which can help us gain control over parts of the brain that we normally think of as ‘automatically’ regulating the way we think, behave and perform. And when applied to sport, NLP can help athletes to maximise performance. One of these techniques is positive instruction; instead of a coach telling a player not to miss the target when shooting and create negative thoughts in his or her mind, it’s far more positive to tell the player to hit the target. In relation to half-time, there are 3 very useful techniques that can favourably affect the state of mind of players and coach and maximise second half performance:

- **Dissociation** – this technique recreates a past experience but from the perspective of somebody who was not emotionally involved (eg an onlooker). For example, if the team has conceded a scrappy goal, the coach would try and recreate that experience in the mind, but imagine that he or she is a passive onlooker watching the event. This enables a coach to analyse the situation coolly and logically without emotion, and thus come up with a solution that can be discussed calmly and rationally at half-time;
- **Reframing** – this is about changing the frame of reference in order to interpret a situation in a more positive light. A good example of this was in football’s 2005 European Champions League final. Liverpool were 3-0 down to AC Milan at half-time; during the team-talk, Rafa Benitez, the Liverpool manager suggested that his players ‘go out and score the first goal and see what happens from there’. This was a far more positive frame of reference than asking them to go out and score 3 goals in order to draw level;
- **Anchoring** – is a useful practical technique to help create a desired state of mind by applying a simple physical stimulus. This involves recalling a powerful memory where you experienced the desired state of mind and then simultaneously creating an ‘anchoring stimulus’ – eg pressing together your thumb and index finger. With enough repetition and practice, merely pressing together your thumb and index finger can be sufficient to reproduce the desired state of mind, whether it be confidence, relaxation etc.

Applying a combination of these techniques at half-time can significantly enhance the performance of both players and coaches, and increase the second half performance of the team.



## Upcoming Events

**May 7, 2011**

**Learn By Doing with Coach Tellez**

Practical sessions for track and field  
Foote Field, UA  
Edmonton, AB

**July 14-17, 2011**

**2011 International Coaches Conference**

Halifax, N.S.  
Hockey Canada, in partnership with Hockey Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Regional Centre, has announced details for the 2011 International Coaches Conference, scheduled for at the Westin Nova Scotian and Dalhousie University in Halifax, N.S.

**June 25 – July 4**

**2011 Special Olympics World Summer Games**

Athens, Greece

**Dec 9 - 11, 2011**

**2011 Canadian National Endurance Conference**

Vancouver, British Columbia

**April 18—20, 2012**

**Sport Events Congress 2012**

Richmond, British Columbia

**Feb 28 – Mar 03**

**2012 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games**

St. Albert, AB

## Coaching Grants & Opportunities



### CAAWS Celebrating 30 Years of Success

CAAWS is celebrating by Launching the Women and Leadership NETWORK on International Women's Day - Connecting Women Leaders in Sport and Physical Activity across Canada  
CAAWS - The Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS) today launched the Women and Leadership NETWORK to support the development and involvement of women leaders – present and future - in sport and physical activity across Canada.

[View article online](#)

### Women in Coaching

In this issue, of the *Canadian Journal for Women in Coaching* disproves yet another myth, the one about women coaches lacking the ability, knowledge, and commitment to successfully coach male high performance athletes. Their numbers may be small, but they do exist and flourish, as author Claire Carver-Dias discovered.

**Three Pioneers: Women Who Coach Male Athletes**

[\[view online\]](#)

**Sport Matters Group** - With only five days left in the current election campaign, sport and physical activity leaders today urged all federal parties to speak in greater detail about how they will place a substantive focus on sport, physical activity, and overall health prevention in order to support a healthier Canadian society which includes reduced incidences of diabetes and chronic disease and that eases the strain on an ever-burdened health care system.

**Make your voice heard— Vote Monday May 2nd**



### Sport Council of Red Deer Annual General Meeting

**April 28th**

Dawe Centre—6:00pm

[www.scord.ca](http://www.scord.ca)

Open to the public.

### Club Support Services

As a team, sport organization or an individual athlete or coach, you can join the Alberta Sport Development Centre— Central to access excellent development services, tools and resources for your athletes and coaches.

These services include: **Winning Edge Seminars, Mental Training, Strength and Conditioning, Biomechanics, Nutrition, VO2 Max Testing, Custom Programs** and many others.

Membership costs \$15 for an individual and \$50 for a team. Membership are for one year from date of payment.

For more information or to inquire about a membership, please contact the ASDC—Central office at 403-342-3231 or [info@asdccentral.ca](mailto:info@asdccentral.ca).

**Let us know how we can help you!**



# Coaching Tips

## Learning to Practice Sportsmanship

### Scenario:

Two teams have a reputation for doing whatever it takes to win. A week before the two teams meet, the athletic director from each school mandates a *no* win-at-all-cost policy in light of an increasing concern to practice sportsmanship. Any athlete seen cheating or acting violently will be expunged from the team. Out of fear of expulsion, the athletes play a soccer match that is devoid of any violence or cheating. Albeit, there were several instances when opposing team members exchanged menacing looks during both the game the post-game handshake. Nonetheless, both athletic directors and coaches celebrated their accomplishment.

**Was the joint action by the athletic directors successful: Did sportsmanship occur?**

Sportsmanship always seems to be discussed in relationship to the pervasive acts of violence, cheating, and disparagement. It seems the removal of harmful actions is discussed more than the establishment of sportsmanship, or perhaps, many think that if we abolish the violence, cheating, and disrespect, we will automatically have sportsmanship. In its most ideal conception, sportsmanship has been defined as the ability to value athletic competition as a moral practice. That is, each athlete tacitly agrees to play respectfully, honestly, and fairly.

### Eight Important Steps

#### Step 1 -Educate the Coaches

If coaches are targeted as the primary teacher of sportsmanship, then it will be essential for them to have a solid understanding of it. Further, coaches also must value the ideal concept of sportsmanship. Considering some of the examples of poor sportsmanship from coaches, many coaches may need to attend sportsmanship programs before developing sportsmanship among their athletes.

#### Step 2-Establish a Personal Philosophy

As the primary teacher of sportsmanship, it's paramount that the coach establish a philosophy that is consistent and that reflects the ideal nature of sportsmanship. This philosophy many need to be established following the completion of a sportsmanship program.

#### Step 3-Develop Responsibility

Too often, athletes place responsibility on the referee to make the call. In other words, it's fair if the referee doesn't see it. A true sportsman should be able to execute fair play and respect toward opponents. Too often, athletes place responsibility on the referee to make the call. In other words, it's fair if the referee doesn't see it. A true sportsman should be able to

execute fair play and respect toward opponents without the presence of a referee. Further, coaches must teach athletes that they can't justify their actions based on what others are doing. Therefore, the athlete can no longer say if other players are cheating then it's okay to cheat

#### Step 4-Model Your Philosophy

Not only is it important for the coach to develop a personal philosophy, it's critical for the coach to model his or her philosophy. The old adage, "practice what you preach," is paramount.

#### Step 5-Create a Sportsmanship Environment

The coach must create an environment during practice and during competition that supports the ideal notion of sportsmanship. Recently, I witnessed a youth basketball camp that involved a free throwing drill. The drill was premised on encouraging the basketball camp participants to taunt and distract the free throw shooter. Such a practice, hardly promotes the concept of sportsmanship. Inversely, the coach can develop practice sessions that encourage athletes to practice sportsmanship.

#### Step 6-Provide Sportsmanship Education

Much of what we learn is done through some form of formal instruction. Whether it's learning algebra or learning how to kick and throw a ball, someone had to teach us. The same may hold true with sportsmanship. Educators recommend learning tools such as videos, books, and team discussions on sportsmanship-related issue or dilemmas (Spencer, 1996).

#### Step 7-Teach Sportsmanship/Ethics in the Classroom

The practice of sportsmanship or the general practice of morality can be extended into the classroom. Teachers can take opportunities to teach ethics and morality when the opportunity arises. Schools at all levels may want to consider as a part of the school's curriculum.

#### Step 8- Educate the Fans

This last step is directly related to Step 5, "Create a Sportsmanship Environment." To establish the consummate sportsmanship environment, fans also must be sportsmanship practitioners. It may be difficult for athletes and coaches to practice sportsmanship amidst a hostile crowd of fans. It also may be difficult to corral fans into a sportsmanship program; however, there may be other ways. One way me be through the development of a media committee that could develop strategies to help fans develop an appreciation and understanding of sportsmanship.

Many folks assert that participating in sport builds character. More than this, many parents, coaches, and administrators justify the importance of sport participation as a result of its character-building aspects (Docheff, 1997; Sage, 1998). If we can teach young athletes how to be fair, respectful, courteous, and even generous individuals, perhaps we legitimately can claim that sports builds character.

[Written by: [Andrew Rudd & Sharon Kay Stoll](#)]