



VOLUME 6
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THE ATHLETE'S VIEW

CORNER

ATHLETE'S

Before a race, especially a big race, I try to clear my mind of mental clutter. I try to forget anybody I know is there watching me or what my mom is doing or what the heckler in row two is yelling at me, which actually happened in the Olympics.

Once I get in my mind a vision of my lane being like a tunnel with nothing else on either side, I block out all other senses except for one—the sound of the click of the starter's gun. No other sense, no other sound.

I don't focus on the pop of the gun but the click of the trigger, because if you can do that—which is very difficult—then you're doing it exactly right.

With complete concentration, I'm able to block everything out from an auditory perspective. I concentrate on moving my body using proper sprint techniques.

This is all I focus on. A lot of times, runners get flustered by their number not feeling right or something somebody said to them. All that stuff is irrelevant to me. Before I get into a race, I don't think of anything except what I'm doing. The fewer things I hear and the more concentrated I am, the better I compete.

It's not even a matter of blocking things out or going on any of those things, because that is concentrating on more than one thing. If you're thinking about blocking this out or blocking that out, then you're not focused.

I don't think in negative terms. I think in one positive, and that one positive is the first sound I hear, the sound that releases me safely out into the world.



SEE CORNER, INSIDE

Athletics & Academics

Reuniting Body, Mind, and Spirit in the Public Schools

Subject: Resolution No. 73-25A6

IMPROVING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF SPORT
—Commissioner Keith Jackson

WHEREAS: Changes in sport-related programs need to be made in order to improve the academic achievement and overall growth and development of sports-minded students; and

WHEREAS: The positive aspects of sport culture provide a sense of structure and discipline for students; and

WHEREAS: Coaching strategies are now being used in classrooms to improve teacher effectiveness and the academic achievement of students; and

WHEREAS: The principles that lead to success for athletes on the field and court also lead to academic achievement in the classroom; and

WHEREAS: It has been shown that in order to improve the academic performance of sports-minded students, there must be an increased—not a decreased—emphasis in the academic study and practice of sport, and that this increase must be done in an appropriate way; and

WHEREAS: Sport-related, academic curricula now exist that use the positive aspects of sport culture, coaching strategies for teachers, and principles of athletic success to improve the academic performance of students.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the San Francisco Unified School District Board of Education actively investigates and implements academic, sport-related programs that will improve the academic performance of all sports-minded students in the District; and

FURTHERMORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Superintendent establish a task force to identify sports-related curricula and develop recommendations to achieve academic excellence through the study and practice of sport. This task force will commence on April 22, 1997 to report the results of their findings.

On Tuesday, March 25, 1997, the preceding resolution was introduced to the Board of Education of the San Francisco Unified School District by Board president Keith Jackson. Two weeks later, at the next Board meeting on April 8, the resolution passed by a resounding 7-0 vote. The American Sports Institute and its *Promoting Achievement in School through Sport* program were represented at both meetings.

Educational history was made that eighth day of April. The Board commissioners collectively became the first-known board of education to pass a resolution calling for an *increase* in the

emphasis on the study and practice of sport in order to improve academic achievement.

Today, the overwhelming trend is for school districts to cut back or eliminate sports and physical education programs in a futile attempt to improve academic scores.

In a related manner, history of another sort was made that spring evening. The SFUSD commissioners became part of the first-known, major school district in the country to proclaim that the body, mind, and spirit must be united, need to work in concert with one another for

Message from the Director...

It is with great pleasure that I write this message from the new home of ASI. Located on one of the main streets into Mill Valley, California, the new office combines professionalism with beautiful, natural lighting and charm. We hope you'll stop by for the Open House on Wednesday, June 11.

One of the special features of the new location is a conference space that comfortably accommodates up to 25. Besides our own use for conferences, seminars, and workshops, we will make this room available to other groups who need meeting space.

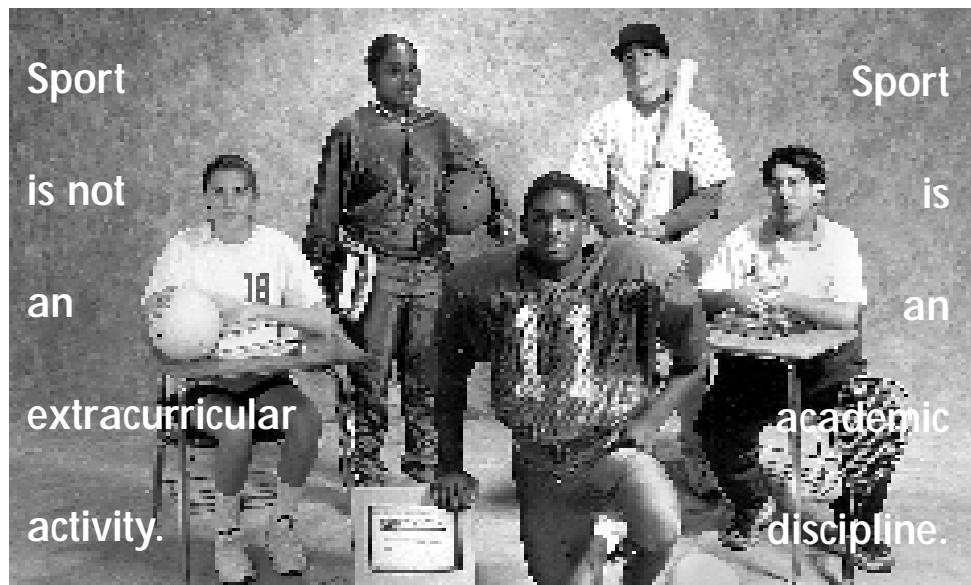
ASI welcomes **Arianna Carvajal**, joining us as secretary, **Michael Munson**, an intern working with us on the Golf Classic, and **Lydia Yinger**, a new weekly volunteer.

Special thanks to **Dave Ellison**, Franklin Templeton Group, for the Golf Classic logo design; **Mike Garcia**, Norco Billings Printing, for printing the golf invitations; **Courtney Cochran**, Sally Walters Placement Agency, for transcription services; to the following people and companies for meeting space: **Bennett Gaines**, McKesson Corporation, **Sue Ostrom**, KGO Radio, **Kevin Bartram**, The Wilkinson Group, and **Steve LaTulippe**, Failure Analysis Associates; and to the **Tamalpais Union High School District** for six years of wonderful office accommodations and professional friendships.

For all of you who have become fans of Peter Jennings while waiting to see the ABC nightly news story about PASS, please be patient. The piece was delayed in consideration of ASI's move, and we're told it should air soon.

Finally, while President Clinton is calling for a new emphasis on volunteerism, many of you are pace-setters in this important effort. We appreciate your volunteer efforts on behalf of ASI and kids. I hope you take a few minutes to reflect on the stories in this issue of *The View* that tell about our collective success. ASI's impact is a reflection of your volunteer efforts, support, and encouragement, for which we are grateful.

Susan Kirsch is the Executive Director of the American Sports Institute.



PSA Carries ASI's Message to 6 Million Households

A public service announcement calling for rethinking sports and academics is airing on SportsChannel in San Francisco and Chicago, as well as KPIX-TV in San Francisco. The 30-second spot is very graphically stylized. The key visual element is students in a neutral studio environment, combining academic and sport icons not normally associated with one another. In the

finished spot, the photo is intercut with text statements about the role of sport in academics.

The PSA, which is expected to be viewed by six million households, was produced by media consultant Al Lipske, with the help of photographer Ed Gilmore who captured the pose of students from Tamalpais High School in Mill Valley, California.

Children's Champions Dinner to Benefit ASI

The Wender Weis Foundation for Children has named the American Sports Institute and the San Francisco Giants Community Fund as beneficiaries of its annual event on Wednesday, June 18 at the Palo Alto Hills Country Club. Honorary Chairs of the event are **Melissa and Dusty Baker** and **Linda and George Seifert**. For ticket information, call 415-321-4142.

PASS Teacher Peter Donoff Honored

The Sausalito School District has honored **Pete Donoff** with the Golden Bell Award, recognizing him as the outstanding teacher in the district. Pete has been the PASS teacher at Bayside/Martin Luther King School since 1993, having been the first to adapt the curriculum for a middle school audience. He is also a PASS Teacher Trainer, leading the training in the San Francisco Bay Area.

PASS Evaluation Done by Independent Agency

Failure Analysis Associates is best known as the leading, independent consulting firm devoted to the investigation, analysis, and prevention of failures of an engineering or scientific nature, such as earthquakes or airline crashes. They have also lent their expertise to analyzing five years of data about the PASS class.

Thanks to the initiation of **Steve LaTulippe** and the expert work of **Carol Cleary**, Failure Analysis completed a five-year evaluation of PASS's impact on student grades. The study shows that consistently, over a five-year period, PASS students outperform their counterparts in a control group matched

on the basis of gender, ethnicity, and grade level.

For example, over a five year period, of the PASS students who began the year with less than a C average, 47% brought their grade point average up to at least a C, compared to 34% of the non-PASS students.



THE **ATHLETE'S**
VIEW

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Valuable Lessons Learned on the Field & in the Classroom

Young students have it tough today. Not only do they deal with the growing pains associated with defining oneself, but they're also forced to battle the mean streets of urban America, sidestep vicious drugs, and deflect random violence. Many feel that education is the surest path to avoiding these particular land mines, while others trust the basics learned from team play to help. I have faith in both.

Athletics and education are intertwined—the fit is natural, the fit is powerful. If there is anything that our kids need today, it is power to find themselves and the power to secure society's future. Academics feed the mind with sustenance necessary to make rational decisions in a complex environment and unleash personal creativity. However, athletics pull together both the mind and body in a way that fights and defeats chaos. The tests intrinsic in the *game* of athletics develop courage, faith, resilience and hope—all items one needs to succeed in society.

I often ponder my own development in retrospect, which is the combined experience of both education and athletics. The union of these two disciplines attributed greatly to any relative success I might have gained on and off the field-of-play. I shudder to think of my life without

either. Academics made me extremely rational, while athletics made me acutely disciplined—a wholeness that's quite formidable. Education gave me a chance to expand my world, providing windows to my deepest thoughts. Moreover, academic courses stimulated my brain in the same way dumbbells stimulated my biceps for athletic adventures. It took discipline and focus to finish books and course work, but the end result was enlightenment. Similarly, the control and daring that results in a great athletic feat also provides personal illumination.

The association of the mind and body is self-evident: After a body works out a number of times it begins to shine and blossom. The mind will do the same when put through the appropriate test. Education is a training camp for the brain.

A kid can have all the books he needs and an abundance of athletic equipment, but these things mean nothing without one important ingredient—the mentor. This person goes by many pseudonyms, such as coach, teacher, advisor, guide, and friend. Overall, a coach must and can teach, and a teacher must ultimately coach because it's their job to move the pupil-athlete toward his potential. Pushing a kid to his ability involves more than merely giving assignments or calling out plays. It

takes a person skilled at transferring discipline, experience, insight, and wisdom to move a young person. The mentor embodies these qualities and represents the vital link that merges the disciplines. The coach and the teacher should absolutely strive to become the mentor in their quests to do their job.

Unfortunately, a chasm still lies between the world of education and that of sports. It sometimes reminds me of an old war waged between religious faith and scientific pragmatism—somebody has to be more right. Yet, it is the union between two forces which can often lead us closer to *truth*. Here again is the reason we should push for our kids to be advanced through both education and athletics. They, too, are seeking truth. The pain and sacrifice inherent in athletics, along with the awakening of education, can guide one nearer to the *truth of self*. This is what we should want for our young people: To *know thy self*, not get lost in the winds of chaos.

Jamie Williams is a former San Francisco 49er and Los Angeles Raider who is in a doctoral program at the University of San Francisco.



ATHLETE'S CORNER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

It's a high level of concentration, a state of focused anticipation.

I get into the starting blocks 30 seconds or so before the gun goes off. I think about executing my race plan. In my case, my race plan is to get out of the blocks as aggressively as I possibly can.

When I get into the blocks, I feel incredible anticipation. I try to be as anxious as possible. My body becomes that trigger on the starter's gun—it's taut, but it's ready to move, if that makes sense.

Once the starter says, "Set," my mind goes completely blank other than to listen for the sound of the gun. I shut off all my senses other than my ears. I look straight down the track. My eyes are open, but I can't tell you what I see.

On the first sound, I move.

Chris Huffins won the 100 meters in the decathlon for the United States in the 1996 Summer Olympics.

You're Invited!
ASI Open House

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

At our new office, 116 East Blithedale in Mill Valley

Please RSVP at (415) 383-5750 by June 7.

ATHLETICS & ACADEMICS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

students to fulfill their scholastic potential as well as their overall growth and development.

Athletes today know that the body, mind, and spirit must be operating together to perform at their highest level. Athletes from two millennia ago knew the same thing, only they didn't have the current research data to validate what they knew intuitively.

The ancient Greeks called this *areté*—a continuous striving for excellence in an inte-

engaged in mental tasks at the expense of physical and spiritual processes, then the student will also fall, as manifested by disenchantment with school.

Reading, writing, computing; thinking, analyzing, critiquing; books, paper, and pens are all extremely important to the education and overall growth and development of everyone.

But when school becomes *overmentalized* and the kids are taught that the mind is more important than the body and spirit, without knowing exactly why, they become bored and disenchanting. In other words, they fall.

Equally at fault for creating an unbalanced approach to learning are the sports programs in our schools that overemphasize the physical aspects of athletics and winning, while neglecting, for the most part, the mental and spiritual aims of sport.

In these all-too-familiar instances, coaches and kids get carried away with their physicality.

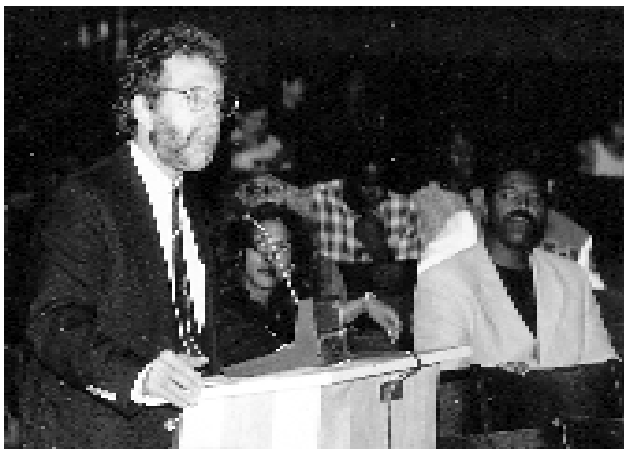
Strong, powerful bodies are forged without a corresponding emphasis on perspective. Sport becomes vindication rather than art, a manifestation of inappropriate behavior rather than science.

In the end, these athletes often throw their weight around and become known as dumb jocks who lack the mental and spiritual qualities that would enable them to connect with all students instead of just their team members.

It is no wonder, then, why, in a survey published in 1996 by the New York research group Public Agenda, only 14 percent of the 1,164 fourth to twelfth grade teachers said that sports were essential in today's public schools.

Academia is not just a mental process and sport is not simply a physical one. With the passage of resolution No. 73-25A6, the San Francisco Unified School District has taken a bold step in potentially reuniting the body, mind, and spirit in our public schools.

If, in the efforts of the SFUSD, a real integration of body, mind, and spirit can be molded into an educational framework centered on the *academic* study and practice of sport, then perhaps students will no longer wake up Monday mornings dreading the upcoming week. Instead, they will be standing outside their first period classes, eagerly awaiting the arrival of their teachers.



Joel Kirsch describes the PASS program to the School Board

grated and balanced physical, mental, spiritual way. Real fulfillment came to those who applied all three elements to every experience.

Most kids are bored with school because the overwhelming learning process is with the mind. For hours on end, day after week after month after year, the educational experience of most students consists of sitting at their desks and using only their minds—read, write, compute; think, analyze, critique; use books, paper, pen; sometimes scissors, scotch tape, paints, but not too much of these things.

Because of this process, over the years, the kids become disenchanting with school and its narrow learning focus. They learn the routine and hidden messages very well: Learning is mainly about reading, writing, computing, thinking, analyzing, critiquing... You can understand why students end up dreading Monday mornings.

As everyone who participates in sports knows, if you are out of balance, you will fall. If a team has a good offense but a poor defense, then it will eventually fall to a more balanced team.

If a football team has a good passing game but poor running game—talk to George Seifert and Steve Young—then it will fall and invite pain and suffering. Likewise, if a student spends an overwhelming majority of his or her time

PASS Profile

When I was introduced to the PASS class, I was pretty skeptical at first, but then I started to get interested in it. I remember the first thing they told us was what PASS stood for: *Promoting Achievement in School through Sport*. I started thinking to myself, "How in the world can you do that?" So in order to find out, I signed up for the class.

I've been in the PASS class and a PASS athlete for eight months now, and have learned a tremendous amount of respect, discipline, and responsibility. To develop these qualities, we perform certain techniques derived from the martial art of aikido. For example, we do the White Crane, Airplane, Hanmi Foot Shift, and Hands Down. These techniques enable us to become more relaxed, calm, patient, and aware of what is going on around us.

One way the PASS class teaches us discipline and control is by having a DMC, or Drunken Monkey Count. For example, a student gets a DMC for disrupting the class, not having his or her folder, or getting out of line.

PASS also has an Athlete of the Day. Everyday, the class gives compliments, advice, or encouragement to a different student. When we are finished talking, the whole class gives a round of applause to the Athlete of the Day.

Also in PASS, we learn about the FAMs that relate to our academic and athletic ability. FAMs stands for *Fundamentals of Athletic Mastery*. The FAMs are concentration, balance, relaxation, power, rhythm, flexibility, instinct, and attitude.

Not only do we have FAMs, but we also set specific goals for ourselves academically and athletically. Our goals are very specific about what we need to do, how we need to do it, and when and where to do it. By setting my academic goal, I raised my GPA from a 3.2 to a 3.6 in less than a month. By setting an athletic goal, I increased my free throw shooting from 3 out of 10, to 8 out of 10.

The PASS class helps me a great deal whenever I need information or just want to talk. Joining PASS was a good decision. It's fun and it really helps me out.

Vydia Gongaloo is a PASS student at Fenton High School in Bensenville, Illinois.



PASS[®]

Quotes Challenge Students to Be Great

It's a Monday morning in the PASS class at Capuchino High School in San Bruno, California. A student helper arrives a few minutes early and talks quietly with Mr. Krueger, the PASS teacher. Then he walks to the chalkboard at the front of the room, and writes, "Unless you dare to be great, you can't be and never will be. —Julius 'Dr J.' Erving." As classmates arrive, in typical teenage fashion, they laugh about the weekend and tell the latest jokes.

When the bell rings, class begins with the standard clap-in, 10-minute concentration practice, warm-up, announcements, and Athlete of the Day activities. Then, because it's Monday, Mr. Krueger points to the Quote of the Week on the board and calls on Alex Theotikos, a junior, to read and interpret it.

laughed at me and teased that I couldn't do it, I pushed myself and tried my hardest. I never gave up, and ended up able to bench 205 pounds! That was a kind of daring to be great, pushing my limits."

This kind of exchange is typical in PASS classes in all 32 classrooms in the San Francisco, San Diego, and Chicago areas where PASS is offered.

Mark Ring, a first-year PASS teacher who also teaches PE and health at Antioch High School in Northern Illinois, says, "It's typical for the quote to generate a lot of conversation among the kids. You see how one statement can be interpreted in many different ways. And the kids come to realize that one point of view isn't right and another person's point of view wrong. The kids

share lots of personal experiences that relate to the quote. It builds camaraderie within the class."

Stephanie Jensen is in the PASS class at College Park High School in Pleasant Hill, California. She was called on to interpret the quote, "When

strict with oneself, one rarely fails," by Confucius. After discussing the quote, Stephanie, who had never considered herself disciplined enough to enroll in Advance Placement classes, decided to give it a shot.

"My experiences in PASS gave me a lot of confidence. And when Mr. Darr encouraged me to take the AP entry test, I said to myself, 'Why not?' I never would have done that without the perspective and philosophy I learned in PASS, and I passed the test. I made it!"

PASS is known as a course that creates positive attitudes, builds self-esteem, and strengthens character. Among other things, this is accom-

plished through the Quote of the Week. PASS teachers choose from more than 200 quotes, organized according to authors, including William Shakespeare, Maya Angelou, Albert Einstein, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Robert Browning; by national origin; and by themes, such as challenge, defeat, attitude, and honesty.

All PASS classrooms display a banner that quotes the legendary American sports journalist Grantland Rice, who wrote, "For when the one great scorer comes to write against your name, He marks not that you won or lost but how you played the game." This banner becomes the focus of the first PASS class of the school year and sets the tone for what it means to be successful.

Reflecting on this quote at the end of the year, Melissa, a diver, says, "I played the 'game' to my potential. I didn't win, but I came very close and I placed well. I came to a very big block this year during my diving and this also seemed to bring my school work down. I hit rock bottom and was more than ready to give up. I'm proud of myself for not giving up and sticking with it. I came back stronger, and I'm still working my way back up. My confidence is high and I'm strong. I didn't just go from good to better. I went from good to horrible to great."

"What I like about the quotes is that they're posted on the Quote of the Week board as a reminder of what we've studied," says Jason, a senior. "For example, I interpreted the quote from Albert Einstein, who said, 'My primary process of perceiving is muscular and visual.' I like having my name linked to Einstein and posted for everybody to see."

At the end of the school year, PASS students, parents, and teachers gather for a year-end PASS graduation celebration. In a special ceremony, students remove the quotes linked to them. Some toss them away. Others, however, carefully transfer the quotes to their folder, sometimes reposting them on their bulletin board at home.

Dr. J. Confucius, Grantland Rice, Einstein, and many other athletes, philosophers, journalists, and scientists speak with words of universal wisdom and inspiration. Through quotes, PASS students are challenged to be great and are given the tools to do so.



"What I get out of this quote is that you have to try. If you don't at least try, you'll never succeed. Even when you're scared of failing or making a mistake, you have to try. This is true in sports and in life. Sometimes you have to take risks to get what you want." As Alex pauses for a breath, students nod their heads in agreement.

Another student, a slight, blond boy, raises his hand. "It reminds me of first coming into this class and being intimidated," he says, pointing to the African-American lineman from the school football team who smiles in kind amusement. "My athletic goal was to increase my bench press from 165 to 200 pounds. Even though the guys