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THE ATHLETE'S VIEW

CORNER

ATHLETE'S

When we're down by a point with 20 seconds remaining in a game, one time-out left, and the other team has the ball, we're pressing. If we force the turnover, we immediately call time-out.

(Co-head coach and husband) Bill and I give the kids probably 10-15 seconds to get back to the bench, get their water, kind of settle down. Because of the tension of the game, and with music blaring and the crowd going nuts, there needs to be a sense of calmness in the huddle.

Part of the calmness has to come from our voices. So we might say, "You know what, 20 seconds is a long time. Don't feel like you have to catch and take the first shot. Take a good shot."

Besides creating a sense of calmness in the huddle, the kids need a sense of confidence from us. We let them know we know they can do this. Confidence will also come from the players that are going on to the floor, having been in that situation before.

Because things are really hectic, we also need to make sure the kids understand what we're trying to do, so we try to keep the time-out very, very simple. We want to make sure they know what play we want run and who they're looking for. But we first have to give them the play to inbound the ball.

For me, personally, when all this is going on, I'm so focused on what's happening on the court that I don't even pay attention to anything around me. I can't tell what song is being played or what cheers are going on. I just don't hear it. I hear the noise, but I'm so focused on

Athletes Are Not Role Models —They're More Than That

- Latrell Sprewell, three-time All-Star guard for the Golden State Warriors, chokes his coach P.J. Carlesimo in a fit of anger during a practice session, leaving marks on the coach's neck. Other than the markings, Carlesimo is not hurt. The story captures the attention of the entire nation for several weeks. Two days later in San Jose, two people are shot to death by the co-owner of their home, a longtime family friend. The killer then turns the gun on himself. Three dead; no further mention after one day's news coverage.
- Before his death, we find out that Mickey Mantle has a drinking problem and was a heavy drinker during his heydays with the New York Yankees. Americans everywhere can't believe it, don't want to believe it. A brain surgeon gets drunk at night and is in the operating room the next morning. "Wow, I wouldn't want him operating inside my head. By the way, how'd the stock market do today?"
- Tanya Harding hires a thug to bash in Nancy Kerrigan's knee with a crowbar during the 1994 U.S. Figure Skating Championships. Around the world, the scheme and attack are viewed as cowardly, unconscionable. Michael Milken bilks hundreds of millions of dollars out of the system, does a short stint behind bars, and is now back lecturing at UCLA and handing out foundation grants to nonprofit organizations. What a nice guy.
- Isaiah Rider of the Portland Trailblazers is hit with a marijuana conviction and everyone is disgusted. In the United States Congress, House speaker Newt Gingrich playfully fesses up to smoking marijuana (inhaling fully) during his college days, calling it something akin to a rite of passage. Everyone has a good laugh.

Why does this happen time and again? Why are professional and high-ranking amateur athletes held to a higher standard than longtime friends, brain surgeons, financial investment kingpins, or members of Congress? Shouldn't we judge these athletes by the same standards we judge others?

Maybe we should, but this is certainly not the case. When these athletes do something wrong, we say they're not fulfilling their roles as models for others, especially kids, but we don't ask that of people from other disciplines.

Karl Malone of the Utah Jazz, last year's NBA Player of the Year, may have unwittingly shed some light on the matter. In a national magazine, Malone responded to his friend Charles Barkley,

then of the Phoenix Suns, when Barkley stated in an athletic shoe commercial, "I am not a role model." Barkley was saying he was just a basketball player, not the godfather of all idolizing kids, and implied that parents are the real role models and should see to the well-being of their kids.

Malone's simple yet poignant response: "We (athletes) do not choose to be role models. We are chosen."

So why in America are professional and high-ranking amateur athletes viewed in a way unlike other professionals? Why are they, as Malone says, *chosen* and for what have they been chosen?

The answer may rest in the core of our humanity, in the very nature of our spiritual and physical being, in our many levels of consciousness, in every



Mary Hile-Nepfel

SEE CORNER, INSIDE

SEE ATHLETES, INSIDE

Message from the Director...

I recently visited a PASS class and witnessed students studying rhythm, one of the eight *Fundamentals of Athletic Mastery* (FAMs) that make up the core of the PASS curriculum. After participating in a physical activity, students discussed how rhythm applies to academic achievement.

"When you get into a rhythm, work is effortless," Stephanie explained.

"It's like physics," Andrew chimed in. "A body in motion tends to stay in motion."

ASI establishes its organizational rhythm by combining discipline, practice and routines. Extended rhythm leads to momentum. Momentum equals success. ASI has been fortunate to have a dedicated group of volunteers be part of its rhythm. For example, the PASS Benefit depends on the effort of numerous people, and I want to thank the following:

PASS Benefit Steering Committee:

Kevin Bartram, *The Wilkinson Group*

Dave Morrison, *Consolidated Freightways*

Matt Denko, *Autodesk*

Leland Faust, *CSI Capital Management*

Sea Houston, *Wells Fargo Bank*

Craig Isaacson, *Merrill Lynch*

Fred Meis, *Meis and Burgess*

Howard Pruitt, *ORBIT Semiconductor*

Rich Robbins, *Wareham Development*

Chuck Rund, *Charleton Research*

Matt Taddei, *Taddei, Ludwig & Associates*

Bob Wilmot, *Franklin Templeton Group*

Michael Wilder, *Arthur Andersen*

PASS Benefit Volunteers:

Ron Boose, Carolyn Borgelt, Grant Borgelt, June Carr, Susan Conklin, Damon Conklin, Bryan Costello, Parker Dusseau, John Esplaña, Kevin Fudge, Gisela Geisler, Marty Giblas, Joan Goldberg, Lisa Hartigan, Craig Isaacson, Marnie McArthur, Dee Modglin, Leon Monroe, Tim Navone, David Perry, Karen Raftery, Jeanne Rappaport, Eric Riswold, Nate Smith, Joe Stevano, Matt Taddei, Diane Taddei, Christina Walcoff, Bob Wilmot, Ralph Wilson, and Robyn Yilmaz.

Besides those named, thanks to the rest of you who contribute to ASI's rhythm and to our success.

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



Dusty Baker and Russell Maryland address the crowd at the Ninth Annual PASS Benefit

Athletes Supporting PASS

Dusty Baker, manager of the San Francisco Giants and the National League's Manager of the Year, addressed a crowd of 500 at the Ninth Annual PASS Benefit. Besides serving as celebrity co-chair of the PASS Benefit, Russell Maryland, defensive lineman for the Oakland Raiders, went to Oakland's McClymonds High School to

talk to the PASS class. Along with Maryland, Chicago Bears offensive lineman Andy Heck and New York Mets outfielder Brian McRae made generous financial donations to support PASS expansion. Thanks to these and all the other athletes who share time, perspective, and financial resources to help expand the work of ASI.

Exploratorium Forum Series a Success

The Forum series ASI presented in conjunction with the Exploratorium's Sport! exhibit was a great success, and featured a wonderful group of panelists. Special thanks to the Exploratorium and to all of the participants:

Sport Culture in Education: Jo Baker, Director of Academic Programs for Student-Athletes at UC Berkeley; Jack Hayes, Executive Director of the California Interscholastic Federation; Joel Kirsch, President of ASI; and George Leonard, author and social theorist.

What Motivates Athletes: Shawn Estes, pitcher for the San Francisco Giants; Mary Hile-Nepfel, Co-Head Coach of Women's Basketball at the University of San Francisco; and Tim Martin, sweeper for the San Jose Clash.

Sports Medicine and Sports Psychology: Dr. James Garrick, Director of the Center for Sports Medicine at St. Francis Memorial Hospital and Dr. Bruce Ogilvie, "oldest living sports psychologist."

Transcripts are available by calling (415) 383-5750 or by e-mailing info@amersports.org.

New Special Events Coordinator at ASI

As soon as Ashley Seymour accepted the position of ASI Special Events Coordinator, she was attending volunteer meetings and overseeing logistics of the 1997 PASS Benefit. Luckily, she joins our staff with great credentials, having previously worked with the San Francisco Giants on the Play Ball luncheon and on the Giants' celebrity golf tournament.

Ashley is now busy planning the Third Annual ASI Golf Classic at The Olympic Club and a special celebration for the 10th Annual PASS Benefit. We're delighted to welcome her to the ASI staff.



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Sport and the Soul of a Culture

I took three years of Greek in high school. While I have only vague recollections of some high school classes and lessons, I do remember clearly translating a phrase which means *the soul is deathless*.

It was a phrase, uttered by a Greek orator and philosopher, that served as a tenet for a rich, renowned, thriving culture. Maintenance of the spirit of the culture, its soul, was more important to that culture than the more tangible elements of the society—the economic structure or the military structure.

The soul of that culture lives on today. It has served as a foundation for many Western cultures and blends nicely with many Eastern cultures. Its soul rests in the education of children, in the continued enrichment of all within the society, and in the maintenance of a strong, ethical base to guide the direction of society.

Sport was a valued part of that culture, part of its soul and spirit. Sport was an integral part of the education of youth, and successful athletes were honored as leaders.

The soul of the culture depended on the full development of humanity—body, mind, and spirit. All elements of humanity were viewed as intertwined, part of the whole, inseparable, and complimentary. Participation in sport was valued not only for the development of the body but for the resulting nurturance of mind and spirit as well.

In American culture, sport became an important element in school programs early in this century. Today, no nation in the world has a stronger scholastic-athletic program. However, the spirit of school sport is in danger. Unless we reaffirm and protect the value and place of sport in the education of youth, we'll suffer a severe wound to the soul of our culture.

The soul of the culture depended on development of the body, mind, and spirit.

What's caused the wound? I offer these *culprits*:

- ◆ Loss of direction and appreciation of the place of sport in the education of youth.
 - ◆ Creeping professionalism into amateur and school sports, fostered by corporations seeking elite athletes and programs for *brand identity*.
 - ◆ The image and behavior of the professional athletes, upon whom the media focuses, who don't know, don't appreciate, or willfully damage the value of sport.
 - ◆ The desperate perception that the value of school sport lies only in winning or only in the elite youth who represent the two percent who are to be recipients of collegiate athletic scholarships.
- ◆ The behavior of coaches at all levels who display blatant disregard or contempt for the rules of sport, or officials who foster the notion that winning through intimidation is the model for successful coaches.

Can we stop the damage to sport, to the education of our youth, to part of the soul of this society? I believe we can, with some will and some work. At the California Interscholastic Federation, we want to proceed in the following ways over the next months and years:

- ◆ We will work with the Associations of School Board members, school administrators, school activity directors and coaches, and teachers to help each group as it redefines the value and place of high school athletics.
- ◆ We will work with the legislature to develop ways to support—not control—the efforts to reaffirm the value of high school athletics.
- ◆ We will continue to train and teach coaches about their role in educating youth.

◆ On behalf of high schools around the state, we hope to work with corporations that are interested in the high school market to promote messages that foster what is valuable in high school sports and encourage participation. We will also be forthright about our disdain for messages that distort or detract from the goals and values of high school sports.

◆ Through our national organizations, we will continue to work with the NCAA and the major professional sports leagues to establish programs and means to counteract or eliminate the behaviors and attitudes that detract from the value of sport and send damaging images and messages to young people.

We hope to enlist the help and support of all those interested in the preservation and enhancement of high school sports, and all who recognize its value in fostering self-respect,

respect for others, leadership, self-discipline, teamwork, success in the classroom, and success in life. We have to encourage participation, not elitism or *winning for winning's sake*.

We know the role sport can play in enriching the spirit and soul of a culture. I believe that soul is deathless and that all of us have an obligation to define and enrich the influence of that soul, that spirit.

There are more than 520,000 athletes competing in high school sports in California, the largest number ever. We must act now to

reinforce and reaffirm the values that should drive our efforts to serve youth and society.



Jack Hayes is the Executive Director of the California Interscholastic Federation

cell of every body. Athletes may be the messengers who, by their actions, call us to future and otherworldly places that transcend ordinary space and time which we mere mortals know of intuitively but cannot get to or have yet to get to.

It may be that athletes, at least some of them, are manifestations of humankind's future presented in the here and now. The athletes may be currently performing at levels that a much higher percentage of people will be able to in a few hundred or few thousand years.

Every time a chosen athlete does something that detracts from this evolutionary journey, we are all let down, for the journey of the species has been temporarily derailed. Our natural, evolutionary process and never-ending quest for spiritual fulfillment are deterred. Conversely, when those who are chosen do live up to their bestowed choosing, we all benefit, we all grow, the species evolves.

Does not Michael Jordan show us that we can fly and transcend our earthly bounds? Isn't Jerry Rice the god of uncompromising effort and artistry? Doesn't Chris Evert symbolize the very essence of grace, honor, and dignity? And isn't Cal Ripkin a conduit by which we are connected to that which is everlasting?

Possibly related to why athletes are chosen to be messengers of humankind's evolutionary journey is our fascination with the making and keeping of athletic records and our desire to witness such feats, to *be there when it happens*.

Are records set by athletes like the Jordans, Rices, Everts, and Ripkins really made to be broken? This may be so, but not merely for the sake of breaking a record. It may be that every record itself is a milestone, a single evolutionary leap, and that every time anyone does better than ever before, another leap is made.

Athletes are accountable for showing us what the future holds.

Cumulatively, it may be that all records—from great athletes setting world records to a six-year-old making her first shot ever on a 10-foot basket—are made and witnessed, kept and honored, to set standards by which all of humankind can gauge its physical and spiritual development, as evolutionary benchmarks by which we mark our long, long journey toward fulfilling our potential.

When Henry Aaron hit home run numbers 400, 500, even 600, each milestone got press. But when Aaron hit number 700, leaving him only 15 shy of breaking the immortal Babe Ruth's 714 lifetime home runs, the media followed Aaron day and night. Yes, a new record was about to be set. More importantly, another major step was being taken in our evolutionary development. The media was telling us one thing and, at the same time, chronicling another.

Athletes are not perfect role models, as we all know. They, too, are subject to the same human shortcomings of violence, greed, and drug abuse as anyone else.

However, despite the fact that a number of athletes fail as role models, there are those among the selected few who, in a unique way, show us what our future capabilities may be and where we may be headed. These athletes may be incarnated visions of our human potential manifested in the here and now.

Athletes enjoy power and good fortune in our culture. But there is also a reciprocal amount of responsibility that comes with this status. Because of who they are and what they do, these athletes are held accountable for showing us what the not-too-distant future of our species portends. It is hoped that these athletes will realize this, for they are meant to be more than role models. They have been chosen.

ATHLETE'S CORNER CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

the situation and the play that I just tune everything else out.

When the buzzer goes off, ending the timeout, the players get up out of their chairs and walk on to the court. I'll watch and make sure they're going to the right spots, that they know where they need to be, and if I need to make any adjustments. But I try not to fill their heads with too much stuff because sometimes you can say too much and they don't hear anything. At this

point, we're ready to inbound the ball.

I love these moments. It's kind of what it's about. Your adrenaline's going, you're pumped, and it's coming down to this one play. And that's why you play—to compete, to win and lose. That's where all the excitement is. And that's... I love moments like that.

Mary Hile-Nepfel is Co-Head Coach of the Women's Basketball team at the University of San Francisco.

PASS Profile

When I enrolled in the PASS class over the summer, I had no idea what to expect. I just knew my friends would be in the class and we would have some fun. Now we're four months into the school year and I've learned a whole lot more than I expected. I've also had some great experiences.

(PASS teacher Rudy) Guevara got the PASS class going on the first day of school. We began our concentration drills, clapped in, and did our exercises. Some had no clue what was going on, but I knew that we just had to give Coach Guevara a chance. Coach began to teach us why we were doing the things we were doing, and it started to make sense.

I love sports with a passion, and if there is something to help me out, I'll always give it a shot. All athletes realize sometime in their career that there is a mental aspect to sport as well as a physical. The sooner we understand the mental part of games, the better off we are. Coach has helped me go to the next level.

Coach emphasizes daily how important it is to breathe through center the proper way. He takes us one step at a time, realizing that we're eager to learn, but we're new to the whole concept. I'm almost positive a couple guys in class aren't too serious about what were doing, but Coach will never give up on them. The majority of us do appreciate the whole concept. The PASS class I'm in is early in the morning, so I start my day eager to learn.

I've played sports all my life, but have never been as confident as I currently am. I have the utmost respect for Mr. Guevara as my instructor, as a coach, and a mentor. Coach has made it a priority to make it out to my football games, and I'm positive he'll be at my basketball and baseball games.

The PASS class has helped me with my experiences off the field as well as on. I'd be lying if I said that about any other class. I don't know if I'll ever be a complete athlete, but thanks to this class and Mr. Guevara, I believe I'm on my way.

Jason Smith is a senior in the PASS class at Santa Teresa High School in San Jose, California.



PASS[®]

PASS Adapted for Advisory Period

It's 8:00 a.m. at Gage Park High School on Chicago's southside. An uncanny stillness fills the three-story, brick building that serves a student population of 1,300. Secretaries, uniformed security guards, teachers, and students sit in perfect silence. A visitor might ask, "What's going on here?"

Dr. Audrey Donaldson, fifth-year principal, explains, "Everybody knows it's time for concentration practice at Gage Park High School. We get to be quiet, do nothing, focus."

During the summer of 1997, the Chicago Public Schools mandated a 25-minute, daily Advisory period for all high schools, what many of us might remember as homeroom. The goal was to provide a time for academic support, character development, and career guidance, in addition to managing the daily maintenance activities of taking attendance and giving announcements.

Donaldson thought of the PASS program, which had begun at Gage Park in 1994, and was making an impact on character, behavior, and grades. So Donaldson contacted Dr. Joel Kirsch, president of the American Sports Institute, to see if PASS concepts and activities could be adapted to work in the Advisory period. In response, ASI created the *Advisory Teacher's Guide* and three training sessions. Sixty Gage Park people participated in the training, including 48 teachers.

Sterling Spencer, a veteran teacher with 24 years experience in the Chicago Public School system, participated in the training. He says he first had mixed feelings about the Advisory. "I knew I was going to have some students who were going to rebel. I took that as a challenge. I coach basketball and softball, so I took on a coach's mentality. When you coach, you blend different types of personalities and cultures to make a team. You've got to pull them all together so they realize there's no 'I' in team, no 'me' in team."

Brian Bedford, a student in Spencer's Advisory, likes it. "We've got different ethnic groups in the class and it brings us together to respect each other. It makes us all feel like we're one family. It's not, 'He's red or he's black.' We're all here to do one thing and that's to get an education."

We've got different ethnic groups in the class and it brings us together to respect each other.

—*Brian Bedford*
PASS Student

The Advisory period is filled with components of the PASS class. It begins with Mrs. Dobbins, the school secretary, announcing over the loudspeaker, "Let's get ready to clap-in." The teachers stand before their classes, arms fully extended and parallel to the floor, palms together. Students attentively mirror their teachers. "One, two, three," says Mrs. Dobbins. Throughout the school, 1,300 students, in unison, give two, sharp claps, one right after the other.

Mrs. Dobbins reads a success quote of week. It might be from Plato, Shakespeare, Michael Jordan, or Eleanor Roosevelt. Then the entire school population goes into the concentration practice.

"I like the concentration practice," says Spencer. "We've built up from two to five minutes, and it's helping students learn how to focus."

Deangelo Brown thought Advisory was going to be boring. "But when I got the hang of it, I started to like it," says Brown. "Now I look forward to coming to Advisory and doing the concentration."

At first, Ariana Santos thought the concentration was ridiculous. "But Mr. Spencer explained that concentration skills would help in school. He was serious about it, and I started to like it," says Santos.

Another popular component of the Advisory is the Student of the Day. James Virgini explains,

"When I was Student of the Day, I stood in front of the class. They said positive stuff about me, no negative stuff. That's probably the only time somebody said something positive and nothing negative about me."

Brian Bedford transferred to Gage Park. "I was scared about it, but they welcomed me pretty good, and they showed courtesy to me, being a new student," says Bedford. "They didn't make me feel uncomfortable."

The Student of the Day enables every student to be known and recognized by his or her peers. After getting a round of applause, the student ends the Advisory by leading the clap-out.

"Every student is a leader, for at least one day," says Spencer. "I have some introverted students who never speak in front of a group. Now they're up there learning how to take control and gaining confidence."

"The Advisory period met with some resistance," Dr. Donaldson says. "Teachers were skeptical about how the students would respond."

In a school-wide meeting in October, PE teacher Barbara Polasek announced that she was a failure and just couldn't get the kids to concentrate.

Donaldson called on PASS teacher Tommy Miller to give her some coaching. In December, Polasek submitted this message for *The Communicator*, the teacher's newsletter: "I am a failure no more! Thanks to Mr. Miller's help, we have mastered the art of concentrating. Both juniors and seniors are observing the concentration

period in the gym. If we can do it, anyone can!"

Principal Donaldson concludes, "My goal was to present a routine that would engage teachers and students every day. I wanted something that was significant and I wanted structure. That's just what I got."

Special thanks to Mr. Spencer's eleventh grade Advisory class for their help with this article.

The concentration practice is helping students learn how to focus.

—*Sterling Spencer*
PASS Teacher