

NEW SUBJECT THINGS I TELL NEW COACHES (AND MYSELF)

- 1) FIRST, DO NO HARM (THE HIPPOCRATIC OATH OF COACHING.)
- 2) TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU THINK YOU DO.
- 3) UNDER-TRAIN YOUR ATHLETES, LESS IS MORE; FEWER MILES, SLOWER (THAN GOAL PACE) TRAINING PACES OR SHORTER DISTANCES AT GOAL PACE
ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION. WHEN IN DOUBT ABOUT ADDITIONAL MILEAGE OR REPS, DON'T DO IT. (YOUR DOUBT IS TELLING YOU SOMETHING.)
FOR TOP PERFORMANCE, RELY LESS ON "PERFECT TRAINING" AND MORE ON REST AND RACE DAY ADRENALIN.
SOMETIMES THE BEST WORKOUT IS NO WORKOUT.
NEVER BE AFRAID TO REST.
- 4) DON'T OVER-RACE.
- 5) DON'T OVER-COACH. THERE COMES A TIME WHEN YOU JUST HAVE TO SHUT UP AND LET THE KIDS RUN.
- 6) STAY RELENTLESSLY POSITIVE.
- 7) YOU CAN'T MOTIVATE YOUR ATHLETES, BUT YOU CAN INSPIRE THEM.
 - A) TELL STORIES
 - B) CELEBRATE (EFFORT, IMPROVEMENT, EXECUTION, VICTORY)
 - C) PRAISE (BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY)
 - D) RECOGNITION (MEDIA, SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND BULLETIN BOARDS)
 - E) ~~CREATE A FEELING OF A CENTRAL FAMILY~~ EVERYONE IS VALUED!
 - 1) TRY TO USE EVERYONE'S NAME AT LEAST ONCE EACH DAY.

W. B. B.

2) MAKE SURE EVERY ATHLETE KNOWS EVERY OTHER ATHLETE'S NAME

3) NICKNAMES FOR KIDS WILL NATURALLY ARISE, BUT DON'T FORCE IT. USE THE NICKNAMES, PROVIDING THEY ARE NOT MEAN OR DISPARAGING. THEY HAVE TO BE NICKNAMES THE KIDS ACCEPT WITH PRIDE.

8) BE AN "ENCOURAGER"

9) MAKE PRACTICE FUN

A. VARY TRAINING VENUES AND TRAINING SURFACES.

B. VARY WORKOUTS

1. USE RUNNING GAMES THAT ACCOMPLISH THE GOALS OF A WORKOUT

2. RUN WORKOUT RELAYS. A HIGH SCHOOL FAVORITE OF MINE WAS A 2-MAN, 10 MILE RELAY ON THE TRACK, EACH MAN RUNNING ALTERNATE LAPS FOR 40 LAPS (20 EACH). RELAY WORKOUTS CAN BE INTENSE, ESPECIALLY WHEN TEAM "WORLD RECORDS" ARE AT STAKE OR TEAMS (EQUALLY BALANCED, EACH WITH A SLOW AND FAST RUNNER) COMPETE AGAINST ONE ANOTHER, SO YOU MIGHT USE RELAY WORKOUTS IN PLACE OF A RACE.

10) TRY TO FIND SOMETHING GOOD IN EVERY DISAPPOINTING PERFORMANCE, AND VERBALIZE IT. (YOU MAY HAVE TO LOOK HARD SOMETIMES.)

11) LISTEN TO ATHLETES, PARENTS, OFFICIALS, OTHER COACHES.

12) DON'T BE AFRAID TO REPEAT YOURSELF AGAIN AND AGAIN ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS AND CONCERNS. ATHLETES HEAR SO MUCH FROM US, THE ONLY MEASURE THEY HAVE OF THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF ANYTHING IS THAT YOU'VE REPEATED IT 100 TIMES.

THINGS I TELL NEW COACHES (AND MYSELF) (CONTINUED)

13) ASSUME NOTHING IN REGARD TO AN ATHLETE'S KNOWLEDGE OR UNDERSTANDING OF OUR SPORT.

(BE OCCASIONALLY STUNNED)
(IN SP = OF YOUR BEST EFFORTS, EXPECT TO

14) BE AN ENTHUSIAST. INFECT YOUR ATHLETES WITH YOUR ENTHUSIASM. (IF YOUR SLOWEST RUNNER IS ENTHUSIASTIC, YOUR TEAM WILL BE A SPECIAL EXPERIENCE FOR EVERYONE. PLUS, YOU'RE VIRTUALLY GUARANTEED TO HAVE A WINNING TEAM.)

15) NEVER GIVE UP ON A KID. MANY ATHLETES ARE TE LA BLOOMERS; YOU WILL OFTEN BE SURPRISED. PLUS, THERE IS SO MUCH MORE TO BE GAINED FROM OUR SPORT THAN TOP PERFORMANCES AND MEDALS. COACHES SHOULD GIVE THEIR 100% COMMITMENT TO EVERY ATHLETE.

16) ATHLETES DON'T CARE HOW MUCH TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE YOU HAVE. THEY CARE HOW MUCH YOU CARE. (WHICH MAKES IT EASY FOR US, BECAUSE KIDS WHO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO A HARD-WORK SPORT LIKE OURS WILL BE GREAT KIDS, AND YOU WILL CARE ABOUT THEM.)

17) TREAT ALL INJURIES WITH RESPECT BUT DON'T OVERDO IT. DON'T MAKE IT "COOL" TO BE HURT. (RED-BADGE-OF-COURAGE SYNDROME.) IN THAT REGARD, THE SCHOOL TRAINER OR SOME OTHER PROFESSIONAL SHOULD PROBABLY BE THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST INJURIES RATHER THAN THE COACH.

~~COACH~~

18) INJURIES ARE NOT A NORMAL PART OF RUNNING TRAINING.

IF INJURIES AROUND IN YOUR PROGRAM, REVIEW YOUR TRAINING PLAN. IS THERE TOO MUCH VOLUME OF WORK? IS THERE TOO MUCH INTENSITY? ARE THERE ABRUPT TRANSITIONS IN YOUR TRAINING FROM ONE SURFACE TO ANOTHER, OR ONE LEVEL OF INTENSITY TO ANOTHER? (SEE GENERAL TRAINING, 8). IN CROSS COUNTRY, COACHES SHOULD BE ESPECIALLY AWARE OF INTRODUCING "SPEEDWORK" COINCIDENT WITH THE END OF DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME, WHEN TRAINING OCCURS ONE HOUR "LATER" IN A SIGNIFICANTLY COLDER PART OF THE DAY.

19) TEACH, DON'T YELL. (IF ANYTHING, SPEAK IN SOFT TONES WHEN YOU HAVE SOMETHING REALLY IMPORTANT TO SAY. MAKE KIDS LEAN IN TO HEAR YOU. WHEN THEY DO THAT, YOU HAVE THEIR FULL ATTENTION..)