



## KEVIN EASTMAN - DUMMY OFFENSE

Kevin Eastman

<http://kevineastmanbasketball.com>

We all teach our set plays by running them 5-on-0 (with no defenders). The reason is we want to get the patterns down as well as all the other intricacies of the set. Unfortunately the players don't seem to think it is as important as the coaches do. With this lack of interest the coach often finds himself or herself doing an equal amount of prodding as well as coaching while trying to get the players to run the sets at game speed.

The NBA level is no different, but there are differences between the teams that win and the teams that don't win in terms of how they go about this aspect of practice. As coaches we have to get them to understand that Dummy Offense is critical to becoming a finely tuned offensive team.

There are 3 levels at which teams go about running their Dummy Offense:

Running through the set: this is a team that actually goes through the proper patterns of the sets but with no purpose; they feel that getting the patterns down is all there is to it

Execution: this is a team that understands it's more than just getting the patterns down; it's an emphasis on timing and spacing, putting passes on time and on target, cutting hard with game speed cuts, cutting with a purpose. It's an emphasis on the details of the pattern and the fundamentals of the pattern that separates them from other teams

Perfection: this is a step that only the very best understand. Only the best know it's not just a warm up and that it's execution with perfection — (1) on every rep....(2) from every player....(3) every time!

We feel that the only way to stay on top is make sure we strive to perfect our offensive sets. Every repetition of Dummy Offense we run is to simulate game speed and game focus. Every set we go through has one and only one goal in mind: to run it perfectly!

## 2009 TEAM CAMP



**SUMMER 2009**  
**JUNE 13-14, SATURDAY-SUNDAY**  
**JUNE 26-27, FRIDAY-SATURDAY**

PLEASE CONTACT MARIO MERCURIO FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:  
513-745-3149 - [mercuriom@xavier.edu](mailto:mercuriom@xavier.edu)



## SKILL DEVELOPMENT - WINGS

JIM BOONE - TUSCULUM COLLEGE BASKETBALL

<http://www.coachjimboone.com/>

The goal is to shoot at least 1.000 shots per day a minimum of 4 days a week. Begin each workout with at least 10 minutes of ball handling.

Shots should be broken down as follows:

Form shooting-Stationary

- 20 from right block
- 20 from left block
- 20 from middle

Form shooting- 1 step and Shot

- 20 from right block
- 20 from left block
- 20 from middle

(Over emphasize all aspects of the shot: follow through, extend high, drive toes to the floor, elevate, release at top of jump)

### Shooting

We will spend 30-40 minutes on shooting each workout. Repetition and going 100% are the keys to success. Shoot and work at game speed, replicate the game. If you have a partner to work with great, if you have a shoot-a-way to work with great, if not you can still get in a great shooting workout. The drills we have put together for this work-out are designed to be done on your own.

#### 1. Square-up Series: 8 Shots

Spin the ball out and cut to receive, square-up, execute 2 direct drive and 2 cross over moves from each side of the floor. Drive it hard to score, get there in one dribble if possible, but no more than two. We want all clean lay-ups off the glass.

#### 2. Intermediate Jump Shot: 8 Shots

Spin the ball out and catch to shoot jumper in 12-17' area. Follow all misses with power lay-ups.

#### 3. Three Point Shot: 8 Shots

Concentrate on shooting the three from the guard spots and wing areas, finish all misses with power lay-ups.

#### 4. Free Throws (1+1) Do something to penalize misses.

#### 5. Shot Fake Series: 8 Shots

Spin out the ball, catch and execute the shot fake, one dribble and pull-up jump shot. Execute 4 made shots from each side, 2 going in each direction.



## SKILL DEVELOPMENT - WINGS

CONTINUED

### 6. Shooting off Screens (Chair): 8 Shots

Place the ball in a chair, make a two step set-up and cut off the chair while picking up the ball to shoot. You are replicating the movement involved in shooting off screens. Place the chair in different positions as per the screens you are working on.

### 7. Shooting off Screens - Shot Fake: 8 Shots

### 8. Free Throws: (3's and 2's)

This is the end of our shooting portion of the workout, we will complete the workout with a game of 32 and our defensive slide drills.

### 9. 32 Shooting

Each shot is initiated from the three point arc at the top, each wing, and each corner. The player spins the ball out and executes a shot fake and drive for a lay-up (1 point), a shot fake and pull-up jumper (2 points), and a three point shot (3points). You are working to achieve the highest score possible under a pre-determined time limit. If you make every shot you receive 30 points, plus two free throws to end on worth one point each for a perfect total of 32.

### 10. Free Throws: 10 in a Row

There are no secrets, there is nothing magical. It's just hard work and repetition at game speed that develops your perimeter skills. Chart your shots and keep a journal of your improvement. Work on becoming quicker and quicker as you progress daily through the workouts. The faster you can go without sacrificing technique, the easier it will become in the game.



TUSCULUM COLLEGE  
GREENEVILLE, TN

JIM BOONE  
HEAD COACH



361 Career Victories Over His 21  
Year Career  
12 Seasons of 17 or More Wins  
6 Regular Season Conference  
Championships  
4 Tournament Conference  
Championships  
7 Post Season Tournament  
Appearances  
2 Elite Eights  
2 Final Fours  
95% Graduation Rate

## BASKETBALL THOUGHTS - JOHN CALIPARI

I have found that it is hard to score in transition with the secondary break. I spend a lot of time teaching secondary and my teams don't score off of it.

I want to emphasize the "dribble drive" with my team because my guards are my strength.

If my team doesn't have 12 or 13 turnovers, we're not being aggressive enough.

My goal as a college coach is to have 5 players in double figures. As an NBA coach, I wanted 6 players in double figures.

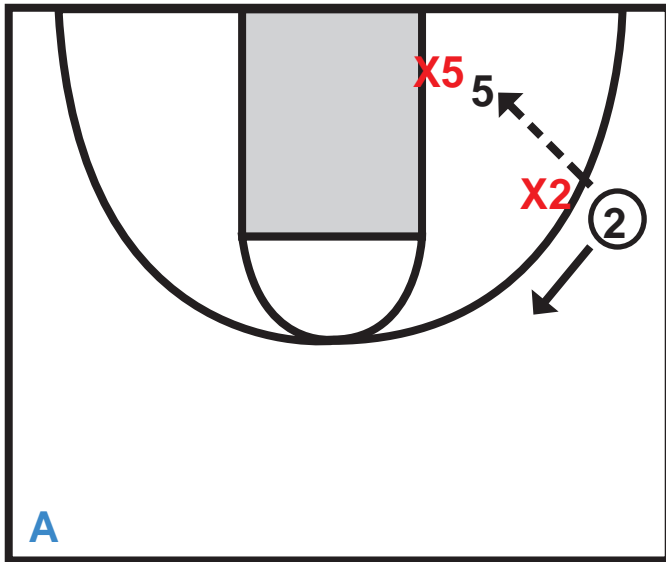
The problem with motion on offense is that the wrong player has the ball at the wrong time. It seems like your limited offensive players are always open.

## MAN DEFENSE

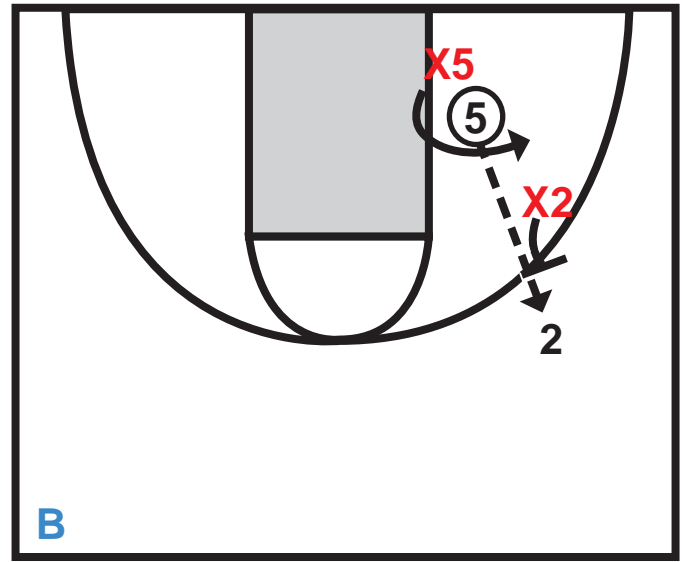


### DEFENDING THE REPOST

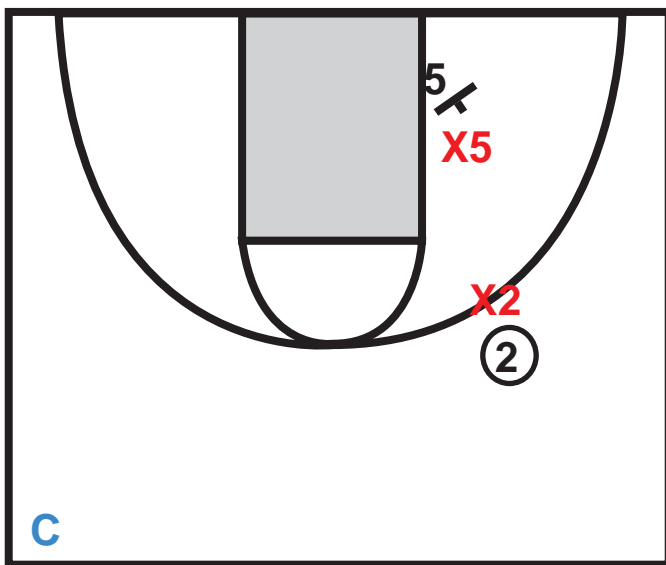
On any pass out from the post, immediately full front to take away the repost for the offense.



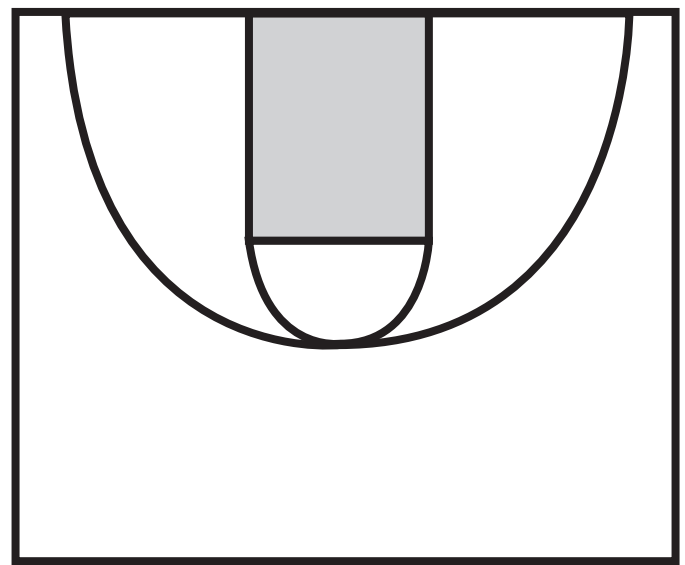
As X2 pressures 2, X5 is caught behind 5 in the post defensively. 2 passes into 5.



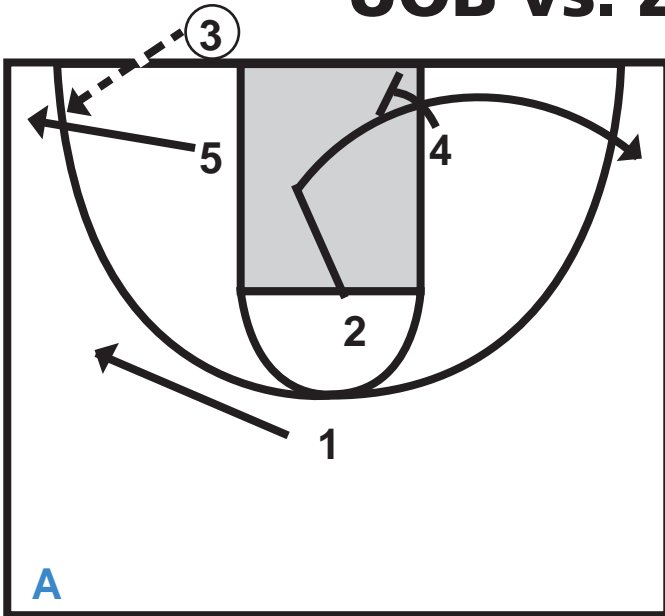
5 passes the ball back out to 2. X2 closes out and as 5 attempts to repost deeper X5 releases and fronts him.



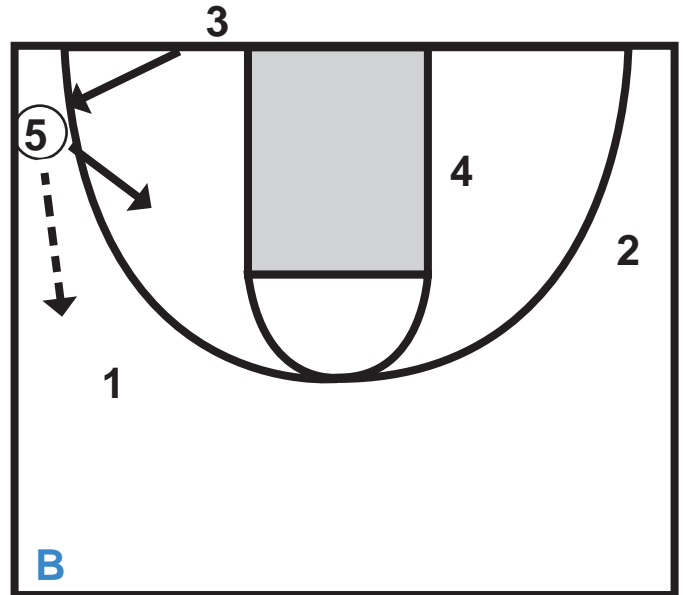
X2 again establishes ball pressure. X5 full fronts or 3/4's 5 to prevent the repost.



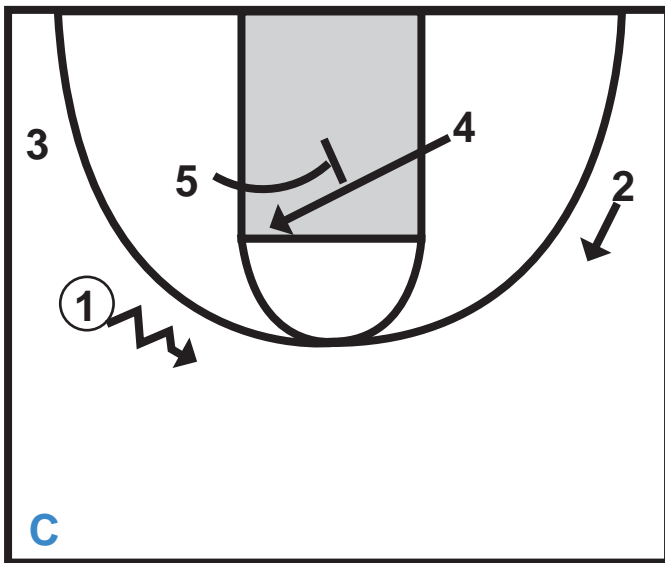
## UOB vs. ZONE - RAVEN



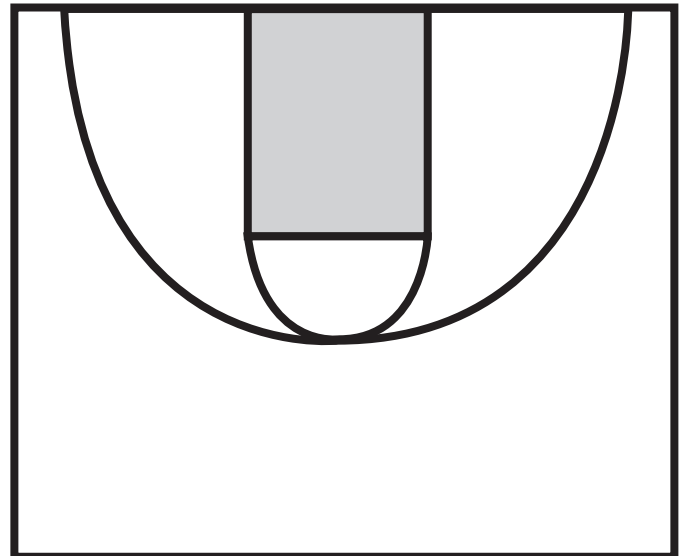
5 pops out and 1 breaks wide to be a receiver for 3. 2 cuts down the lane and out weak side. 3 passes to 5.



5 passes to 1 and then cuts into the middle of the lane. 3 replaces 5.

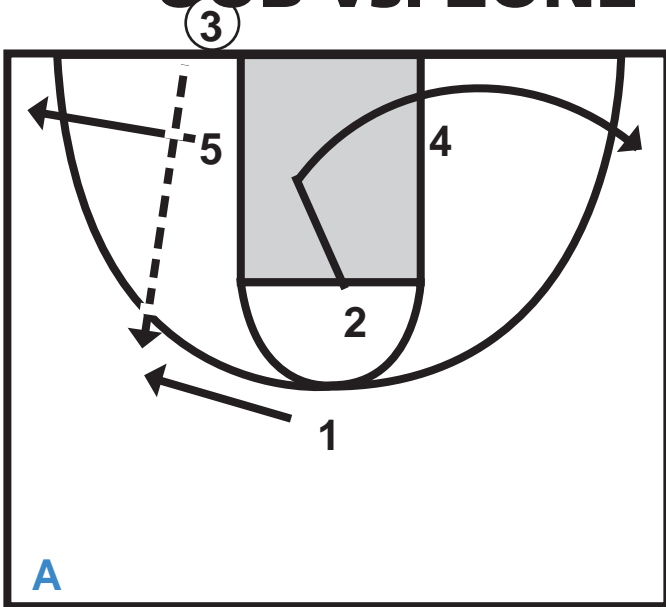


As 5 screens the middle of the zone, 4 flashes. 1 can pass to either 3 or 4.

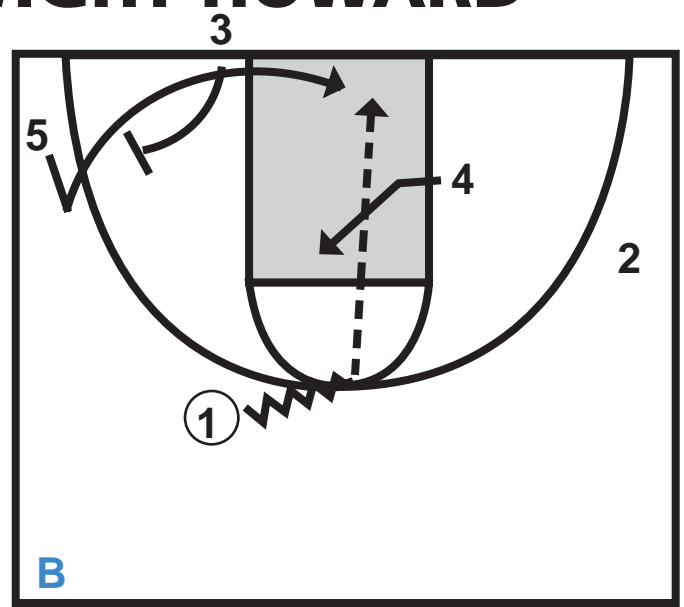


## PLAY OF THE WEEK - UOB OFFENSE

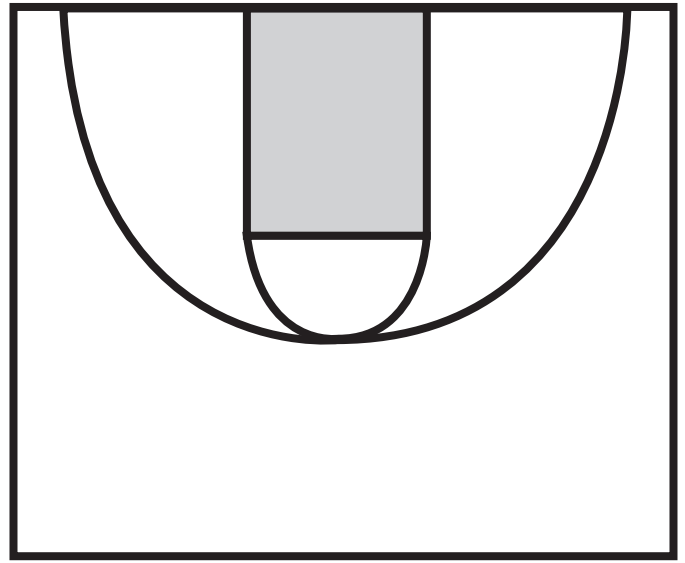
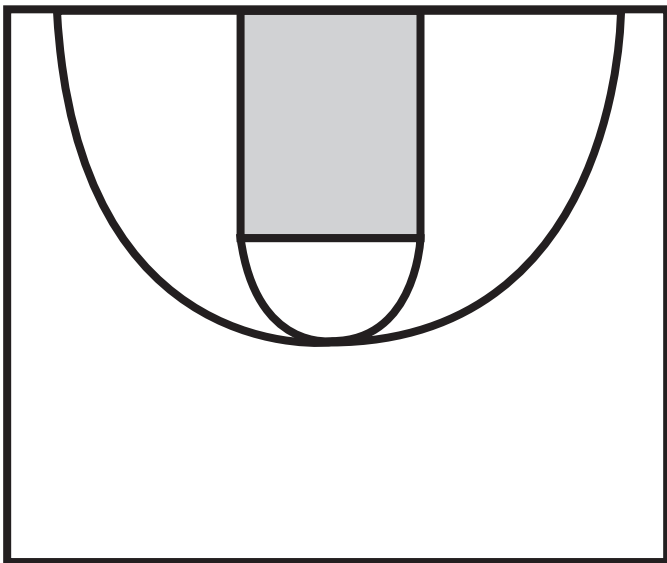
### UOB vs. ZONE - DWIGHT HOWARD



5 pops out and 1 breaks wide to be a receiver for 3. 2 cuts down the lane and out weakside. 3 passes to 1.



4 flashes to the middle as 1 dribbles middle. 3 back screens for 5 for a lob from 1.





James Posey has been a member of two of the last three NBA championship teams. So when he arrived in New Orleans in the off-season, he was immediately regarded as a team leader.

Said Hornets head coach Byron Scott:

**"He has changed our culture because we came into training camp talking about how our defense has to get better in order to win a championship, and no one knows that better than James.**

**And he's always the first guy off the bench to scream and yell. We needed that. All the guys ask him questions, and you know they're going to listen to him because he has two rings and these guys want to win one.**

**He's like a few players in this league that can affect a game without scoring. He's going to take the charge, he's going to guard the best players, he's going to communicate at all times. I loved him for all those reasons. He's won where he's been. He hits big shots in big games, he defends the best players almost every night."**

As for Posey, he contends that winning is an attitude and a process:

**"It's a mind-set, and I'm trying to get my teammates to buy into that. I'm just trying to share some of the things that I've learned on those two teams where I won and the mind-set as far as preparing yourself to actually win a title. What I keep telling them is: It's a process. You can't get bored with it.**

**You have to prepare for it each day by practicing hard, getting better and looking at the bigger picture of what you're trying to achieve. You can't get too high in this game in this game and you can't get too low. You've just got to keep working and keep pushing."**



---

# Free Report from Devin Durrant

Author of

## RAISING AN ALL-AMERICAN: HELPING YOUR CHILD EXCEL IN ATHLETICS (AND IN LIFE)

[www.raisinganallamerican.com](http://www.raisinganallamerican.com)

---

### *Secrets of an All American: 9 Ways to Succeed Where Others Fail*

#### INTRODUCTION

Michael Jordan, Charles Barkley, Hakeem Olajuwon, Patrick Ewing, and Devin Durrant. Which name doesn't belong? The answer is obvious. It is my name, Devin Durrant. However, 21 years ago, in 1984, my name did belong in that group. That is when I, along with the others mentioned above, was named by the national media as a college All-American in the sport of basketball.

I made All-American when I logically should not have. I was a skinny, six-foot seven-inch white kid with only average speed from the state of Utah. How did I do it? I did it by interlocking all the pieces of what I call, The All-American Puzzle. The All-American Puzzle consists of 9 ideas that you as a parent can use to help your child succeed where others may fail. Let me explain.

#### **LIKE ASSEMBLING A PICTURE PUZZLE**

Imagine you are about to put together a 500-piece picture puzzle. You know the process. First, you separate the pieces into logical groups. If you were going to put together a puzzle that depicted a mountain scene, you might group the pieces as follows: In one group, you would place all the border pieces. Next, you would gather all the blue sky pieces. You would also create a pile for all the mountain pieces. Then you would have a pile for all the pieces that made up the mountain stream. You get the idea. Individual pieces, grouped together, are then interlocked to make up the various parts of the puzzle. All the parts, when connected, make up the puzzle. A puzzle is not complete unless every piece is placed in its correct location. To raise an All-American, you, as a parent, will need to do your part to help your son or daughter locate and place each piece where it belongs in his or her All-American Puzzle.

#### **THE ALL-AMERICAN PUZZLE IS MADE UP OF NINE PARTS**

In a careful analysis of my sports career and the careers of other successful athletes, I have found that in order to become an All-American there are nine basic principles or parts an athlete has to put together in order to complete the All-American Puzzle. These nine parts are:

1. The Dream
2. Be Your Own Coach
3. Be Coachable
4. Work, Work, Work
5. Rodeo Tough
6. Dare Mighty Things
7. Love The Game
8. Make Your Own Luck
9. Gifts From God

There are no shortcuts in assembling a picture puzzle. The same is true in becoming an All-American. In both cases the assembler has to put the end product together one piece at a time. The interlocked pieces make up the various parts, and the parts make up the puzzle. Finally, after tremendous effort, all the parts come together. The dream becomes a reality.

All the pieces of the first eight parts of the All-American Puzzle can be put together by your child if he or she desires it. It is up to your child. However, the pieces of the last part of the puzzle are gifts from above. Neither you nor your child has any say in this part of the puzzle.

In this free report, I share with you a few ideas from one of the most important chapters in my book, *Raising An All-American: Helping Your Child Excel In Athletics (and in life)*. The chapter is entitled, Be Your Own Coach. I hope you find the excerpts useful and I encourage you to buy a copy of my book at your local bookstore, your online bookstore, or at my website at [www.raisinganallamerican.com](http://www.raisinganallamerican.com). Thank you for your interest.

# BE YOUR OWN COACH

## **THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE PUZZLE**

If you asked me which part of the All-American Puzzle is the most important, I would answer that this part—the part dealing with being your own coach—is the most important. Your child can miss some other parts and still do well athletically. However, if he does not become his own coach he will never reach his full potential. Other coaches can get an athlete started up the mountain, but to reach the summit of greatness he must, on his own, go far beyond where a coach can lead him. He must ascend to a height where only his own will and work can take him. To become an All-American, an athlete must learn to be his own coach.

Coach Bolus gave my basketball dreams a great boost when I was in the eighth grade. But for me, things really took off a week or so after the season was over. It was then that I knew that he was no longer there to force me to do anything or to drive me to keep playing even when I was tired. It was that day—not because I had to but because I wanted to—that I set out on the road to becoming a player. On that day I put the ice cream spoon down, turned off the television, picked up a basketball, and went out into the heat and the humidity of a Kentucky afternoon and started to play. That was the day I became an All-American.

## **THE HEART OF THE ALL-AMERICAN DREAM**

In the summer basketball camps I conducted over a nine-year period after I graduated from college, I did many things I thought were important for the young people who attended. I learned the name of each camper. I gave each of them individual attention. I encouraged them. I hired coaches with excellent teaching skills to help with the camp. Together we taught the campers a variety of skill improvement drills. I gave them a booklet I had compiled that included drills that they could do after the camp and a few motivational stories.

I loved those young kids who shared a dream of greatness. But the gift I tried to give them that was of most value was the understanding that in order to get better and better as a player, they had to be their own coach. To help them remember the importance of being their own coach, I would tell them the following story—Bossing Johnson. I also included a copy of this story in their camp booklet. To me this story conveys a very powerful message.

At least once a year, Dr. Spencer J. McCallie, a great southern educator, told the story about a little red-haired freckled-faced boy named Johnson who got a job at a large plant as an errand boy in the shipping department. Every day it was “Johnson, do this” . . . “Johnson, do that” . . . “Johnson, go here and . . . Johnson go there” . . . “Johnson, bring this to me” . . . “Johnson take that to him.” Everyone in the plant bossed him. After several weeks of this, his temper started to churn and he went to his boss and told him that He Had Had It! The boss could take his job, and go jump in a lake.

The boss, being rather amused at the kid’s spunk, said to Johnson, “How would you like to have someone to boss?” Johnson’s eyes flashed, and a little cynical smile crept across that freckled face as he said, “More than anything on earth. Where is he? I’ll kill him.” The boss said, “His name is Johnson and he is in your department.” Johnson looked rather amazed and said, “I am the only Johnson in the shipping department.” The boss smiled and said, “I know. See what you can do with him.”

Johnson went home that night and couldn't get out of his mind what the boss had said. The more he thought of it, the more he liked the idea. At least he could take his wrath out on someone. The next morning the alarm clock rang, and Johnson said, "Aw, we got another 20 or 30 minutes to soak here in the bed." . . . "Not on your life," he said, and jerked Johnson out of the bed and into the bathroom. "Wash between your ears, comb your hair, and put on a clean shirt. Lately you've looked like a bum. Then go to the plant at least 30 minutes early."

When the other employees arrived, the shipping department was swept clean, the boxes and corks neatly stacked in place on the tables, and Johnson was working his little head off at his post. Days, weeks, and months passed. He was so busy bossing Johnson, he never really remembered his first raise or his first promotion . . . raise followed raise and promotion followed promotion.

In time, Johnson sat at the head of that great corporation. He wasn't there by accident or because his family owned controlling stock. No, he was there because years earlier a little red-haired, freckled-faced boy booted him rung by rung from the bottom to the top of the ladder.

This story so easily translates into sports. As long as your child's coach is someone else, he will go as far as the coach can take him. But once your young athlete decides to be his own boss, up the ladder he will go, all the way to the top, all the way to All-American.

### **MOVE TO THE FRONT OF THE PACK**

I loved basketball growing up and I also loved to run. If you watch any long-distance race, it seems like three groups of runners are generally formed. The leaders of the pack form the first group. The next group is the middle of the pack. The rest of the runners are at the back of the pack.

As you think about it, where would you place your child right now as an athlete? Is he a leader of the pack, in the middle of the pack, or at the back of the pack? Wherever he is, he may be content with his position and that is fine. However, if you feel he wants to improve his position you will have to help him understand that he has to practice on his own. He has to become his own coach. He will have to be willing to do what it takes to move to the front of the pack.

My hope is that the principles taught in *Raising An All-American* will help you encourage your child to become his own coach. However, nothing taught in the book will work unless your young athlete works. He must be, as the Bible says, a "doer of the word and not a hearer only." No coach, no parent, no friend can do it for your youngster. He must have a fire within him that will give him the self-discipline to follow the principles of the All-American Puzzle.

### **THERE IS NO OFF-SEASON**

You need to help your child understand that the day after the last game of the season is when the individual practices begin. It is during the off-season that individual skills are honed. Greatness is developed when a player coaches himself. This individual development in the off-season does not end until retirement. Cycling legend Lance Armstrong said:

If you asked me when I started preparing for the next Tour, my answer was, "The morning after." To my way of thinking, the Tour wasn't won in July; it was won by riding when other people weren't willing to.

That meant there was no such thing as an off-season. I rode year-round. <sup>1</sup>

Discuss with your son what he plans to do during the next off-season to develop skills in preparation

for the next season. Your youngster's off-season planning and the execution of his plans will be critical to his success.

During my basketball days I understood the principle of coaching myself. It was my self-discipline that always gave me hope as a player. I felt if I worked harder and played in more games than the rest of the guys in the off-season, then I would be that much further ahead when the next season started.

Bill Bradley, former All-American, NBA great, and U.S. Senator, said this about coaching himself:

I couldn't get enough. If I hit 10 in a row, I wanted 15. If I hit 15, I wanted 25. Driven to excel by some deep . . . urge. I stayed out on that floor hour after hour, day after day, year after year. I played until my muscles stiffened and my arms ached. I persevered through blisters, contusions, and strained joints. When I got home I had to take a nap before I could muster the energy to eat the dinner that sat in the oven. After one Friday night high school game, which we lost to our arch-rival, I was back in the gym at eight on Saturday morning, with the bleachers still deployed and the popcorn boxes scattered beneath them, soaking my defeat by shooting. Others had been in this place last night, I thought, but now I was here by myself, and I was home. <sup>2</sup>

Why? Why did he do that? If he hit 15, why did he want 20? Why, when his "muscles stiffened and [his] arms ached," when he had "blisters, contusions and strained joints," why didn't he quit at the first sign of pain? Was his coach standing there forcing him on? Who was driving him? He was driving himself. His coach was there because he was coaching himself. He was on his way to becoming an All-American.

Evgeny Marchenko, coach of the amazing gymnast Carly Patterson said:

What has gotten Carly so far? Her toughness, her motivation, and her discipline. She pushes herself very hard. She never lets go. Even in practice, if the last routine of the day doesn't work, Carly will keep at it until she gets it right. She can't bear to go to sleep knowing she has failed. Sometimes I can't kick her out of the gym. She'll be begging, "I want to do one more. I want to do one more." Her parents get upset because we have to wait while she overruns the practice time by an hour or an hour and a half. <sup>3</sup>

Carly Patterson is her own coach and a tough one at that.

## **SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO PLAY**

Without my junior high friend, Alex, I may not have ever made All-American. He and I spent two years together, from age 12 to 14. Our lives revolved around basketball in Louisville, Kentucky. We played one-on-one and all kinds of shooting games on my court. Whenever we could, we would go hunt for a game. Alex had an older brother who drove us to different city parks in Louisville where we got involved in some great pickup games.

Anything that related to basketball we did. Whenever there was a big game on television, we would have a pizza baking contest at his house before the game to see who could make the best pizza and then we would watch the game. After the game, we would go outside and try to duplicate some of the moves we had seen during the game.

We loved basketball. Anytime we could play ball, that's what we did. We even built ourselves a hoop that we could adjust up or down in six-inch increments from seven feet to ten feet. Our new hoop was located at the opposite end of the court from our normal hoop.

We spent many hours dunking the basketball on our "homemade" adjustable basket. I can't remember a time when I enjoyed basketball more. Without Alex it would have been difficult for me to have all that

fun. I could play against my older brother, but that wasn't much fun because he or his buddies would kick me around.

Alex was the right friend at the right time for me. We played into the night on the lighted court by the side of my house, which was located on a very busy street. (We lost a few basketballs that bounced into the street and were run over by cars.)

As we played out there and enjoyed our time together, we had a dream that one day Denny Crum, then the coach of the University of Louisville basketball team, would drive by and see us. We dreamed he would pull over and ask us our names. He would offer us some tickets to a University of Louisville game and tell us that he would keep his eye on us as we got older.

Coach Crum never stopped to talk with us. He never saw us. But that didn't keep us from dreaming. It was five years later when Coach Crum sent one of his assistants halfway across the country to watch me play and offer me a scholarship when I was a high school senior. He could have had Alex and me signed and sealed a few years earlier.

### **ATTEND INSTRUCTIONAL CAMPS**

As a young player, I loved attending sports camps, and over the years I have observed the different camps being offered to young people. There are some great camps and some not-so-great camps.

Before you enroll your son or daughter in a camp, ask the experienced parents in the community what camps they recommend. Usually the home-grown camps are better as far as individual attention and instruction goes. Area high school coaches will do a better job than most professional athletes because they will be able to spend more time with each child in the camp.

It is also a good idea to attend the camp of the coach of the high school where your child will be attending and to attend the neighboring high school coach's camp. One of the best basketball camps I went to as a young boy was directed by the coach of our high school's biggest rival. A primary benefit of attending sports camps is during the days preceding the camp, your child will be more motivated to practice to get ready for the camp. When the camp is over, he will be motivated to practice what he has learned.

At each camp I attended as a boy, I would learn a series of drills to do on my own. Then I would return home and be my own coach. After basketball camps, I would practice ball-handling drills, shooting drills, jumping drills, defensive drills, and more. There is no shortage of basketball drills a young person can do on his own. One of the beauties of basketball is that you really can have a good practice all by yourself. Unlike football or baseball, basketball gives you that opportunity.

Basketball camps were a source of great motivation for me. I would leave every camp feeling like there was hope for me to be a successful player. I was driven to go out and practice the things that were taught at these camps. However, the most important thing I got out of the basketball camps I attended was an increased desire to play and compete. If I could find a game—one-on-one, or five-on-five—that is where I would try to spend my time. As any young athlete knows there is not always a game ready to be played. If I couldn't find a game, I would work on drills I had learned at camp.

All skill development drills are good. The problem is that some drills become boring after a time. When playing by myself I would try to create some type of competitive situation. To coach myself, I needed to feel like I was making some progress. If I could make 17 out of 20 foul shots, I would keep

shooting until I could make 18 out of 20. If I could make 20 jump shots from 15 feet in five minutes, then I would try to make the same amount of shots from the same spot in less time. When I was by myself, I always needed to create a competitive situation. Otherwise, my practices weren't that productive.

Along with group sports camps, you may find it beneficial to provide some individual instruction for your son and enlist the services of a local coach or an older player. These teachers can help your son hone his skills. They can teach him proper technique at a young age so that he won't have to break bad habits later on. They can also give encouragement and provide motivation. However, the primary benefit of individual instruction is an increase in your child's confidence.

### **SET HIGH GOALS**

At the end of my freshman year at BYU, the basketball team met together before the summer break. The coaches challenged us to work hard over the summer and to prepare well for the following season. As part of the summer program, they asked each team member to make 20,000 shots. (For those of you who have ever tried to make 100 shots, you know that making 20,000 shots requires a tremendous effort.) They gave us some papers to use to chart our progress throughout the summer. They also challenged us to work on skill development, weightlifting, conditioning, and other things. However, the toughest challenge was to make that many shots. Sensing the enormity of the challenge, I looked around the room to observe the reaction of the other players. I could tell that not all were enthused about what they had been asked to do.

Summer passed and we came back to school that fall. Again, we were in a team meeting. The coaches asked us how our summers had gone and if we were able to work on the program they gave us. When asked for our sheets that documented our progress, only about half the guys still had these papers. The others, for one reason or another, had lost their progress charts although they reported they had shot a lot of shots and made much progress during the summer. Some players had actually charted their work and made the 20,000 shots. I am happy to report I was a member of that group. (My sisters, Kathryn and Marinda, did a lot of rebounding that summer. Thank you, ladies.)

For me, the thing that stood out in that meeting was when the coach asked a teammate, Mike Maxwell, how many shots he had made. Mike responded that he had made 100,000 shots over the summer. Everybody was stunned that Mike was able to make that many shots. If someone else had reported they had made 100,000 shots, I am sure no one would have believed him. But with Mike, if he said he made 100,000 shots, we all knew that he had done it. We knew of his integrity. Besides, he was one of the greatest shooters any of us had ever played with. Mike had been an All-American in high school and was on his way to becoming an All-American in college. Unfortunately, he suffered a serious knee injury that hampered what he was able to do during the rest of his college career.

Mike had grown up playing basketball. His dad was his high school coach and he had given him a desire to be a great basketball player. He had helped Mike develop a love of the game and a love for the gym. Mike had spent more hours in the gym than any of us had. However, the thing that made Mike great is he learned to coach himself. He did not need someone pushing him all the time. No one could push Mike harder than he pushed himself. Only if you push yourself harder than anyone else can push you, will you become the best you can be.

## LIVE ABOVE THE LAW

Counsel your son to go beyond what is expected. I heard a story once about a young man who wanted to take a girl to a dance. He went to the door to pick up the girl and was invited inside by the girl's parents. Before they left, the father asked, "What time will you have my daughter home?"

"What time would you like her home?" the young man asked.

The father replied, "I'd like her home by midnight."

"Okay," the boy said. So they left and had a good time but the young man made sure the girl was home by 11:45 p.m.

Later he was asked by a friend, "Why did you take her home at 11:45? Why not stay out until midnight?" His reply was, "I wanted to live above the law."

Your son can apply that same principle when he is his own coach. A coach gives his players a set of things to do. He may ask them to run a mile a day. If your son lives above the law, he will run a mile and a half a day. A coach may ask his team to make 100 shots each day. Encourage your youngster to live above the law and make 150. Help your child establish a high standard for himself. By living above the law, a player will improve at a faster rate.

When your son loves doing something, he does not need somebody telling him to do it all the time. He wants to do it. If there is a game out there he will want to find it. He enjoys shooting baskets. He likes hanging out with his neighborhood friend, playing one-on-one hour after hour, and playing other skill-development games that will help him be a better basketball player. He has always got someone to play one-on-one with. That is when basketball is probably its most fun—when it is just a boy and his buddy out looking for games or competing against each other.

A great coach is going to do all he can to have a disciplined team. However, the team's success only comes when each player is able to discipline or coach himself.

The master of disciplining himself and living above the law is Lance Armstrong. He tells this story of a cycling workout:

The weather was blustery and I rode the exact route we would take, only there were no spectators and I was alone except for Johan in a follow car. I arrived at the foot of Hautacam, and I began to jog atop the pedals, working my way up the steep hillside. I studied the road as I went, trying to decide where I might attack, and where I'd need to save myself. It was pouring down a mixture of snow and sleet, and my breath streamed out in a white vapor.

After about an hour, I reached the top. Johan pulled up and stuck his head out of the car window. "Okay, good. Get in the car and have some hot tea," he said. I hesitated. I was unhappy about the way I'd ridden.

"I didn't get it," I said.

"What do you mean you didn't get it?"

"I didn't get it. I don't understand the climb."

A mountain could be a complicated thing. I didn't feel like I knew Hautacam. I'd climbed it, but I was still uncertain about how to pace myself up it. At the end of a rehearsed climb, I wanted to feel that I knew the mountain so well that it might help me.

"I don't think I know it," I said. "It's not my friend."

"What's the problem?" he said. "You got it, let's go."

"We're going to have to go back and do it again."

It had taken an hour to get up, and it took about 30 minutes to get back down. And then I rode it again, straight

up for another hour. This time, at the end of the day, in the driving rain, when I was done, I felt I'd mastered the climb. At the top, Johan met me with a raincoat. "I don't believe what I just saw," he said.

"All right. Now let's go home."<sup>4</sup>

I love that story about a champion coaching himself to greatness. It's little wonder that Lance Armstrong has achieved the level of excellence he has.

### **PRACTICE PERFECT**

My high school coach, Coach Jim Spencer, and my college coach at BYU, Frank Arnold, were sticklers on making the most of each practice session. Coach Arnold would tell us, "Practice doesn't make perfect. Perfect practice makes perfect." He would insist that we do a skill correctly and then repeat it over and over again until it became natural for us to do it correctly.

Encourage your son to choose a skill or move he desires to perfect and have him work on it until it becomes a part of him. As a father, make it easy for your child to coach himself. Make sure he has the tools needed to be a good self-coach. Make it convenient for your son to go out and work on his game by himself or with a friend.

### **CONVERT WEAKNESSES INTO STRENGTHS**

My Uncle Bill was a junior high physical education teacher. He had a ninth grader in his class named Dick Nemelka, who went on to become a college All-American at BYU. In the ninth grade gym class basketball games, my Uncle Bill would make Dick tie his right hand to his side so he couldn't use it. This forced Dick to develop his ability to use his left hand. He became so good, under this restriction, he was soon able to continue to dominate the games using only his left hand.

Ask your child, "Are you only good with one hand? Can you defend well? What do you feel are your weaknesses?" Then encourage your child to work on the areas of his game that need improvement. Help him convert weaknesses into strengths.

A great quote to remember is this one, often attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson: "That which we persist in doing becomes easier for us to do—not that the nature of the thing is changed, but that our power to do it is increased."

A basketball player can make his left hand as good as his right if he persists in using it. Are your child's hands so weak that an opponent can rip the basketball away from him? Get him a hand gripper and encourage him to make his hands so strong that no one can take the ball from him.

When Los Angeles defeated Boston in a playoff series in the 1980s it was in part because Michael Cooper, a defensively gifted player, held Boston Celtic legend Larry Bird in check. After the defeat, Larry analyzed what had happened:

Saying the Lakers were better didn't make it much easier to take. But once I decided that this was the case, the next question was: What can I do to get better? The first thing I decided was that I needed to work on my left hand. Whenever I'm trying to improve my game, I analyze my weaknesses first and work on those relentlessly. When Cooper made all those subtle changes on me, I knew I needed to come up with something new.<sup>5</sup>

A future All-American's school coach can point out his weaknesses, but he can't correct them. That is up to the athlete, and the off-season is the time to do it. As your son practices, encourage him to shoot the type of shots he will shoot in a game. It is good to be a good defender and a good ball handler, but it sure

is a plus if your child can put the ball in the basket. A player learns to shoot by shooting. Help your youngster to concentrate on bending the knees, positioning the elbow, flicking the wrist, and following through. Encourage him to do it right and then to repeat it over and over again.

By the time a player reaches the professional level he may have shot a basketball at a hoop a million times. I wonder how many shots a player has taken by the time he graduates from high school? Let's see, how many did my college teammate hit in a summer? 100,000. I can't imagine a high schooler has ever done that. But if your child decides to be his own coach, and if he keeps a record, he could hit 20,000 shots a summer from the ninth grade on. That would add up to a lot of shots by the time he was a senior. Something happens in a player's mind when he sees the ball going into the basket so many times. He starts to believe that every shot should go in. That's the kind of confidence you want your son to feel.

### **NO SUN IN THE GYM**

One of the greatest shooters to play the game of basketball was Kiki Vandeweghe. During our college days, Kiki and I were teammates on a United States team that competed in China. An All-American at UCLA, Kiki led his team to the NCAA title his senior year. He went on to a stellar career in the NBA and now is the general manager of the Denver Nuggets. I heard a story about Kiki that I'm not sure is true but it makes a great point. The story goes that someone asked Kiki one day why his legs were so white. His response was a classic. He said, "My legs are so white because I'm always in the gym and the sun doesn't shine in the gym."

Kiki could have been distracted by a number of things—as is the case with any young athlete, but he was focused on improving his game in any way he could and he was willing to put in the time to do it.

While I'm on the subject of distractions, my wife and I have gone to great lengths to limit video games, television, and internet time in our house. Today's numerous digital entertainment options can be a huge distraction that athletes of the past didn't have to deal with. Help your son or daughter enjoy the advances in technology in moderation. Excess entertainment will deter a pursuit of excellence.

### **KEEP RAISING THE BAR**

On the night the Los Angeles Lakers received their championship rings from the season before, they were humiliated by the lowly (at that time) Cleveland Cavaliers. The Laker players had been told before the game that they had to get better than they had been the year before. To this challenge from Coach Pat Riley, one of the players said:

"Coach, we whipped Boston in their own building [last year] . . . How do you expect us to top what we did last year?" . . . We got taught a simple truth: anytime you stop striving to get better, you're bound to get worse. There's no such thing in life as simply holding on to what you've got.<sup>6</sup>

Coach Rick Pitino adds this advice to those who are satisfied with past accomplishments:

. . . the people who will ultimately pull ahead and wind up on top are the ones who . . . keep raising the bar, becoming neither discouraged by pitfalls nor complacent by success. They understand that the pursuit of excellence is a marathon, not a sprint. It is a journey, not some little day trip.<sup>7</sup>

Do all you can as a parent to help your son or daughter avoid discouragement and complacency by helping him or her to keep raising the bar of athletic excellence.

## **CHOOSE GOOD ATHLETIC ROLE MODELS**

Encourage your son to find an athlete to model his game after. Somebody who motivates him to do all he can to someday play the way his favorite athlete plays.

As a young boy I spent hundreds of hours imagining that I was Julius Erving. Years passed and I found myself playing for the Indiana Pacers. One night my team was playing against the Philadelphia 76ers; I was actually playing on the same court with my boyhood idol—Julius Erving. I even got to guard my hero. I was bumping him and doing all I could to contain him. At one point he said to the official, “Get this guy off me.” I was very tempted to walk up to Julius and say, “Whatever you want, you can have because you have been my hero for many years. It is an honor to be on the same court with you. If I’m pushing and fouling and you’d like me to back off, then that’s what I’ll do. Thank you, Mr. Erving.” What a privilege it was for me to be competing against my hero and one of the all-time greats—Julius Erving!

When we moved to Kentucky my older brother played for Seneca High School. There was a big guy on that team named Wayne Cosby. I was amazed as I watched his games and saw him, a six-foot-six guy, bringing the ball down the court against the press. He had a nice reverse spin dribble. He would come to one defender, reverse pivot and leave his defender standing alone, go to the next guy and do the same. To me it was incredible how he could do that. I dreamed of being able to handle the ball the way he did. I practiced dribbling drills for hours because of Wayne Cosby. Later as a six-foot-seven-inch high school forward, I was often called upon to bring the ball up the court against the press.

When I wasn’t pretending that I was Julius Erving or Wayne Cosby, I was playing as if I was Darrell Griffith. He was a high school player during my junior high days in Louisville, Kentucky. I wish all young basketball players could enjoy the great times that my friend Alex and I had following Darrell Griffith throughout his high school years. He was a tremendously gifted athlete and a terrific person.

## **CHOOSE GOOD CHARACTER ROLE MODELS**

Counsel your son that it is good to choose a character role model as well as an athletic role model. Maybe the two will be the same person. But if not, there should be plenty of people for your son to choose from when looking for a good character role model. My primary character role model was my father. I can’t say that my Dad is perfect but he is as close to it as anyone I have ever known. Maybe your son admires a teacher, a church leader, or another adult who lives an exemplary life. Encourage your son to incorporate into his own life the values he sees in those he admires.

Discuss with your youngster how, as he works towards excellence in athletics, he can use the same principles he is using to excel as an athlete to excel in other areas of his life. He can be a good student by coaching himself academically. He can get his homework done before mom or dad has to encourage him to do it. He can be a good citizen. He can be friendly at home to the family and at school to his classmates.

Help your child understand that it is all right if he is not on the school honor roll. However, it is not all right if his grades are a disgrace. I am always pleased to hear of a great athlete who is also an honor student. I am dismayed to hear of a great one who is academically ineligible. Encourage your child to avoid being known as a “dumb jock.” Instead, instill in him a desire to want to be known as a scholar as

well as an athlete.

### **PRACTICE SELF-DISCIPLINE**

Some have the talent, but they lack the self-discipline needed to become an All-American. They can't coach themselves. Of this Charles Barkley said:

We could sit here and talk about basketball stuff, but it's the management of your life that is really the big difference between making it and not making it for a lot of guys, or hanging on versus making it big. If you don't start with that, you're wasting your time. I've probably played with 20 players who should have played in the NBA for a long time but didn't. It's because their heads weren't together. You see guys with talent all the time who can't make it.<sup>8</sup>

### **MAINTAIN PROPER BALANCE IN LIFE**

As your son coaches himself, make sure he has balance in his life. Help him understand that his chosen pursuit is going to take a huge time commitment. However, this does not mean that he need not have other goals and responsibilities in life outside of sports. Help him to never lose sight of the fact that a sports career is going to end sooner than he would probably think. Tell him to remember that as he pursues his athletic dream to take time to improve his life in other areas. Help him decide what those other areas might be. For my children, balance in life is provided by piano lessons, church service, scout programs, and other academic pursuits. Balance also comes from allowing children to be responsible for their share of the work around the house.

### **TAKE GOOD CARE OF YOUR BODY**

Teach your son the significance of taking care of his body and the importance of proper diet and exercise. Teach him to avoid harmful substances at all costs. His body is the vehicle that will take him to success. That vehicle has to be maintained in top condition at all times.

When Charles Barkley was younger, his role model was John Drew. John Drew was a terrific offensive basketball player. He was a two-time NBA All-Star. Years later when Sir Charles left an arena after a game he ran into a destitute person on the street asking for money. Later Barkley realized that the down-and-out man was John Drew. He had ruined his life by misusing alcohol and drugs. Examples are numerous of athletes who had the ability, yet they did not have enough self-discipline to take proper care of their bodies.

### **PRACTICE PERFECT GAME DAY PREPARATION**

Game day preparation will be different for each player. Your child should begin now to experiment to see if he plays better or worse by eating or drinking this or that at this time or that time. When he gets good results, he'll want to repeat that pattern. It has often been said, if you keep doing what you are doing you will keep getting what you are getting. If you don't like today's results, try something different.

As I got older, what seemed to work best for me on game day was to eat four hours before game time. I would usually have a chicken breast and a baked potato. I always drank water with my meal. I liked to be feeling just a little hungry at game time. If you can taste your pre-game meal as you warm up, you didn't eat early enough.

## **MAKE THE FIRE HOT**

I mentioned earlier that I have an interest in real estate. Recently, I decided to develop the orchard behind my house into building lots. That meant cutting down trees and burning some limbs. One Saturday I went out to a stack of limbs, lit some lower twigs with some newspaper and waited for the limbs to burn. They smoked a little and then went out. I tried again but I couldn't get the limbs to burn because of the moisture in the wood.

The next weekend I took some gasoline out there to pour onto the limbs. Then I threw a match on the gas-soaked limbs. Initially, there was a burst of flames. But almost as suddenly as it started, it ended. I considered the situation and concluded I was not generating enough heat for that fire to burn the moist wood. I put some dry wood at the base and put the moist wood on top and lit the fire again. By doing that I was finally able to get a good fire going. At that point, I could throw on all the wood that I wanted—dry or green—and it would burn. I had finally generated enough heat for the flames to sustain themselves without any more help from me.

That is analogous to what you might have to do with your son. There may be times when you have to get a fire burning within him. It is best to do this when your child is young. Once the fire is burning hot, it is not going to take much additional motivation from you because he will be putting on his own wood to keep the fire burning. Once the fire is burning hot, just stand back, enjoy the warmth, and cheer for your youngster.

## **HELP HIM ORDER FROM HIS OWN MENU**

For three years in college, I was coached by Frank Arnold. He had served as an assistant to the legendary John Wooden for several years. Coach Arnold was a man of details. His hope was to gain every advantage possible over the opponent by paying attention to each detail.

His concern for detail even extended to the pre-game meal. We always had a steak, green beans, a fruit cup, a baked potato, and water. There were no variations. We were also given a small piece of butter for the potato and a minimum amount of ice to cool our water. Coach Arnold found that this food combination had been successful for him and the players he had worked with over the years. A lot of things changed in the world during those three years under Coach Arnold but one thing that never changed was what the BYU Cougars ate for their pre-game meal.

I will never forget the first road game of my senior year with new coach Ladell Andersen. We were in Logan to play against Utah State. We sat down for the pre-game meal, and in front of each of us was a menu. We were all confused because we were waiting for our steak, baked potato, green beans, and fruit cup to be placed before us.

Looking at Coach, I said, "What are the menus for?" He replied, "What do you mean, what are menus for? Don't you know how to order from a menu?"

Sure I did. But not for a pre-game meal. That was not an option for me in past years. Then I realized that what he was saying was we were to choose for ourselves. He was saying, "Isn't it about time you started coaching yourself? You know what you need to eat before a game. If you don't know by now you'd better figure it out. Open the menu and order what you think is the best food for you to eat before the game."

While I didn't mind Coach Arnold's approach—he used his experience to help his players—this new coach was saying, “You need to use your own experience to figure out what is going to be the best pre-game meal for you.” There was a great lesson for me in that experience.

### **PLAY MULTIPLE SPORTS**

Perhaps your child's athletic menu should go beyond the sport in which he desires to excel. As your youngster grows up, encourage him to participate in as many sports as possible—basketball in the winter, baseball in the spring and summer, and football or other sports in the fall. Obviously, your child will be under the direction of various coaches as he competes in different sports. However, his desire to be fully involved will be because he is acting as his own coach and wants to improve his overall strength, agility, speed, endurance, and mental toughness. When the time comes to compete in his chosen sport, he will be better prepared to succeed.

You may ask yourself, “If I want my son to be a basketball player, what benefit is there in having him play baseball?” Baseball will develop his hand-eye coordination. He will learn how to work within the framework of a team. One of the most important things he will learn is how to deal with pressure. While playing baseball, he will feel a lot of pressure when he is at the plate as the spectators, his teammates, and the coaching staff watch him. All eyes will be on him. He has to produce. Later, he is going to be at the foul line and again spectators, teammates, and coaches will be watching him. If he can deal with pressure, he will make the big foul shot to win the game.

I would suggest that any male basketball player play football because he will learn what it is like to take a hit and the importance of being able to be physically competitive. As a youngster, I loved to play tackle football. I believe it made me a better hoopster. Sometimes I regret not having played organized football past the seventh grade. Basketball is becoming more and more physical all the time. If your son is uncomfortable getting hit, he is going to have a hard time driving hard to the basket, going up in the air, and being knocked around by other players. Football will prepare him for that kind of thing.

The reverse is also true. Playing basketball will benefit a football player. If a good basketball player plays wide receiver on the football team, he will do well. He will have a better chance at running down the field 20 yards, going up in the air, and catching a pass from the quarterback than will someone else who has not played basketball. That is because he is comfortable being up in the air doing things with a ball.

I am a big believer in the importance of conditioning. I think basketball players should seriously consider joining the track or cross-country team to develop endurance and lung capacity. It is another way to keep in shape during the off-season. Ever since I can remember, I have loved to run. I never joined the cross-country team in high school but I wish I would have. I found great satisfaction (and pain) in racing against my teammates in college as we went through our pre-season conditioning work.

### **WORK WHILE THE COMPETITION IS RESTING**

No matter how many sports your son plays under the direction of coaches, there is still much downtime after each day's organized practice.

Recently, I spoke with the father of a young female runner who is making a mark in international circles as a distance runner. He told me that many times after the college team practice ends, his daughter

will come home and go out behind her house and run in the foothills. She loves to run in the foothills and is on her way to becoming an All-American because of her tremendous self-discipline.

I like the idea of your daughter or son being their “own coach.” However, a synonymous term is being his or her own “disciplinarian.” To me these two concepts are really one. It will do no good for your child to have a menu if he does not have the self-discipline to make good choices. Your youngster must do it on his own. If you find that you are always the one encouraging your son to go shoot, to go play, to eat right and get enough sleep, then it is your flame that is burning, not his. Such a child still has not learned to coach himself or it may be that he lacks the desire. We’ll discuss lack of desire in Part Seven. On the other hand, once you see he is taking those steps on his own, when there is no one else around, then be sure to give your child the needed positive reinforcement—fan the flame.

I loved the endless hours when I acted as my own coach. However, it was my other coaches who, in the little time they had with me, helped give me a desire and a plan so I could coach myself in their absence.

No coach can do the total job, or even most of the job, of helping an athlete to be all that he or she can be. Tell your child that it is up to him, to say “If it is to be, it is up to me.” And it can only be if he has the strict self-discipline to do what he will need to do when he is on his own.

Consider the words of tennis legend, John McEnroe, on being his own coach:

. . . to tell you the truth, I’ve always been my own best coach. Sometimes it got lonely, but a lot of the time I didn’t mind being by myself.<sup>9</sup>

Help your child become his or her own best coach. You will have more to do with your child becoming an All-American than anyone other than your child. Your child will have to do the work. However, it will be you who will influence your son or daughter to have the self-discipline to coach themselves. Those who learn to be their own coach are those who have the best chance of becoming All-Americans in sports and winners in life.

Read this chapter in its entirety in Devin Durrant’s book, *Raising An All-American: Helping Your Child Excel In Athletics (and in life)*.

#### ENDNOTES

- 1 Lance Armstrong with Sally Jenkins, *Every Second Counts*, Broadway Books, p. 147.
- 2 Bill Bradley, *Values of the Game*, Broadway Books, p. 2.
- 3 Susan Valentine, *Carly Patterson*, Razorbill, p. 145.
- 4 Lance Armstrong with Sally Jenkins, *Every Second Counts*, Broadway Books, pp. 38-39.
- 5 Larry Bird with Bob Ryan, *Drive: The Story of My Life*, Bantam Books, p. 153.
- 6 Pat Riley, *The Winner Within*, Berkley Books, p. 149.
- 7 Rick Pitino with Bill Reynolds, *Success Is A Choice*, Broadway Books, p. 193.
- 8 Charles Barkley with Michael Wilbon, *I May Be Wrong, But I Doubt It*, Random House, p. 226.
- 9 John McEnroe with James Kaplan, *You Cannot Be Serious*, Berkley, p. 118.