

**Hockey Regina Inc
Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes
Monday Sep 15, 2014**

Attendance:

Stephen Eger (Chair)
Tom Millette
Michael Ah-Fat
Blair Watson (Staff)

Dennis Cooley
Rick Hagglund
Lester Boey
Courtney Birnie

Andrea Hoffman
Christie Bjolverud
Larry Wees

Regrets:

Brent Bobbyck

Coty Hollinger

1. Call to order

Stephen called the meeting to order at 7:04PM.

2. Approval of previous minutes

*MOTION: To approve the previous minutes. Moved Larry, Seconded Michael
CARRIED*

3. Female Committee recommendation (Appendix A)

- Andrea presented recommendations for Atom + Pee Wee female division for the upcoming year.
- The female committee wishes to expand on the program that was put in place for the PW AA team last year in that they played Ex games against the P2 boys teams
- For year one the committee wishes to form "Tier" Atom and Pee Wee female.
- General discussion brought up a few challenges for implantation:
 - Timing: 11 days before evaluations
 - Communication to membership
 - Increase cost
- Also being recommended is a separate governing body for the female division. More discussion on this needed. Committee versus a separate Board.
- *MOTION: To form a dedicated Pee Wee Female AA team that will play in the P2A division. Moved Andrea, Seconded Rick. CARRIED*

4. Next Meeting

Monday September 9
7:00PM @ HRI

**ANALYSIS OF FEMALE DIVISION
STRATEGIES – OUTCOMES 2014 2015 2016**

1 OBLIGATION AND AWARENESS FOR EQUITY IN HOCKEY REGINA

- A Definition of Equity and Obligation as a governing body to implement
- B Strategies and Outcomes: Meeting the Obligation to Create Awareness in Equity in Hockey Regina
 - I) Inter-dependent Governing Body in the Female Division
Mirror the existing board in the co-ed division

2 OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT

- A UNDERSTANDING FEMALE DEVELOPMENT
- B Strategies and Outcomes: Meeting the Obligation To provide an Opportunity to Participate in a Developmentally Appropriate Environment
 - I) AN OVERVIEW OF THE HRI EXISTING PROTOCOL IN THE FEMALE DIVISION
 - II) FEMALE DIVISION OUTCOMES in a TIER STRUCTURE
 - III) Proposal - Tier Structure in Female Division

3 OBLIGATION TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION NUMBERS & RETENTION

- A Create optimal conditions and systems that support AND INCREASE numbers of women and girls to be active at all stages of participation and competition as athletes, coaches, officials, leaders and in other roles in Hockey Regina
- B Strategies and Outcomes: Meeting the Obligation to Increase Participation Numbers & Retention
 - I) New Programs, Advertising and Cross Branding
 - II) Bantam & Midget Needs and Changes

The Female Committee is a group of parents and volunteers who are working together to promote the participation of females as players, coaches, officials and leaders.

Our goal is to provide every female athlete the opportunity to develop in a fun, safe and supportive environment while growing the female game.

1 OBLIGATION AND AWARENESS FOR EQUITY IN HOCKEY REGINA

- A Organized sport in Canada has a social responsibility.** As an essential part of our national identity, sport is a primary way for us to express our culture. The importance of sport and physical activity to mental and physical health is widely accepted; nevertheless, girls and women do not participate fully and are afforded much less access, and derive far less benefit from sport than men and boys. In a fair and equitable society women – who constitute 52% of our population – would participate at all level of sport in proportions at least equal to those of men. This is not YET the case.

Sport organizations can play a significant leadership role in two areas;

- Ensuring the right of girls and women to equitable participation in sport;
- Validating the importance of a lifelong experience of sport and physical activity for all members of society.

Sport organizations have much to gain by committing themselves to gender equity programs and opportunities because;

- Attracting more girls and women to sport enhances the revenue base and increases the market segment to which the sport appeals
- Fully representing the population base and tapping the resources of every member results in a larger, stronger and more effective organization
- Skilled women provide the sport organization with an important talent pool of administrators, coaches and officials
- Changing the image of women in sport attracts public interest and private investment – in turn more members are attracted to the organization
- Working together women and men can learn to build equal partnerships
- Providing opportunities for mothers and daughters to get involved can enhance both the chosen sport and family relationships
- Sport can provide opportunities for girls to understand and respect their bodies which in turn helps them to deal with health issues such as eating disorders and smoking
- By fulfilling their legal responsibility to treat fairly everyone involved in the organization and making a commitment to gender equity, sport organizations avoid a negative public image as well as the time and expense of dealing with unnecessary lawsuits
- Government funds will be increasingly tied to equity issues and the realization of gender equity objectives

Women and girls, who account for more than 50 percent of the population of Canada, continue to be underrepresented in the sport and physical activity system. Awareness about biomechanical and physiological considerations unique to women and girls has increased,

providing a foundation to improve training methods and competition programs for athletes. However, large gaps persist in knowledge and practice relating to the psycho-social factors that influence women and girls as participants, athletes, coaches, officials, leaders or administrators.

As a catalyst for change, **CS4L** offers an opportunity to address the recognized shortcomings of conventional sport and physical activity programming, and the Long-Term Athlete Development framework, to adequately address gender differences. It is time to create optimal conditions and systems that support women and girls to be **active at all stages of participation and competition, as coaches, officials, leaders and in other roles related to sport and physical activity.**

Actively Engaging Women and Girls – CAAWS
Appendix CS4L document

This focus on the female division is not meant to diminish gender-specific issues influencing the CO-ED program, an area also requiring further attention. Only through talking with women and girls to learn about their unique needs, interests and experiences can the board, coaches, officials and other decision makers create optimal conditions and systems wherein our females can develop and have fun.

Appendix Long-term Development Model

B STRATEGIES AND OUTCOMES: MEETING THE OBLIGATION TO CREATE AWARENESS AND EQUITY IN HOCKEY REGINA

I) Inter-dependent Governing Body in the Female Division **Mirror the existing board in the co-ed division**

There are hockey associations in Canada, both larger and smaller than Regina, that have adopted Female Associations that run inter-dependent with their regional governing bodies and Hockey Associations.

Bringing about gender equity involves structural changes, a new set of values, norms and policies, new management practices and changes in the attitudes of individuals towards inequity.

Bringing about gender equity means ensuring that there are goals and plans in the areas of;

- Systems and structures
- Leadership
- Resource allocation
- Programming
- Education, awareness and promotion

It is time to create optimal conditions and systems that support women and girls to be active at all stages of participation and competition as athletes, coaches, officials, leaders and in other roles in Hockey Regina.

- a) In order to effectively assess, recommend and manage the existing programs in the Female Division it is logical to implement a governing body that mirrors the co-ed division. Numbers cannot be used against the formation of a governing body, as all evidence shows that the needs of the Female Division are unique and need a unique planning, organizing and decision making body.
- b) The strategy to increase and retain female hockey players requires adequate governing and management. In order to manage the growth and continually assess the strategies and provide evolving management that understands the needs of the Female Division an active and informed governing body needs to be established.

Positive sport experiences can contribute to the full inclusion of girls and women by enhancing their health and well-being; fostering their self-esteem and empowerment; facilitating their social inclusion and integration; changing gender norms; and providing opportunities for female leadership and achievement.

CANADIAN CENTRE FOR ETHICS IN SPORT, 2008

***Gender Equity** is the process of allocating resources, programs, and decision making fairly to both males and females without any discrimination on the basis of sex...and addressing any imbalances in the benefits available to males and females.*

Gender Equity is the process of allocating resources, programs and decision-making fairly to both males and females. This requires ensuring that everyone has access to a full range of opportunities to achieve the social, psychological and physical benefits that come from participating and leading in sport and physical activity. It does not necessarily mean making the same programs and facilities available to both males and females. Gender equity requires that girls and women be provided with a full range of activity and program choices that meet their needs, interests and experiences. Therefore, some activities may be the same as those offered to boys and men, some may be altered, and some may be altogether different. Human rights legislation, including the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, has affirmed the principles of equity while making provisions for affirmative action programs to eliminate disadvantages.

Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity

2 OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT

A. UNDERSTANDING FEMALE DEVELOPMENT

Female hockey in Regina is facing declining numbers, in both new registrations and retention.

Studies show (EGHA website through USA hockey), females playing on boys' teams are more likely to quit than females playing on a females team; however the current structure grouping all developmental levels of females and drafting to play because of low participation numbers is detrimental, see '*social-ecological model pg 12 & Table 2: Psycho-Social Factors that contribute to and hinder participation in Sport and Physical Activity*'

The Long Term Athlete Development report provided by Sport Canada

What IS best for your child?

What's best is simple: Children learning skills and taking part in activities that match their stage of development. This is called Long-Term Athlete Development, or LTAD.

What is LTAD?

Human development from birth to adulthood is a continuous process. To understand the process better, experts divide human development into distinct stages with specific characteristics; these are called stages of development.

In Canadian sport, experts have identified seven stages of development, each with its own physical, mental, emotional, and cognitive characteristics. This is our Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model, and it's the basis for the optimal training and competition kids need to enjoy sport the most and perform their best.

Why do we need the LTAD model?

- Because participation in recreational sport and physical activity has been declining and physical education programs in schools are being marginalized.
- Because the international performances of Canadian athletes have been declining in some sports
- Because other sports are having trouble identifying and developing the next generation of international athletes
- **Because NOT matching skills and activities to a stage of development has serious negative consequences, and Canadians and the Canadian sport system have been suffering from them for some time**

Children don't have fun WHEN;

- They develop bad habits because of the over-emphasis on winning
- Their skill development is poor
- They don't reach their optimal performance level

- Many burn out and drop out of sport.

APPENDIX “Long-term Athlete Development for Parents” Coaching Association of Canada

www.coach.ca/resource-library

Children don't think like adults. They view success differently and these views differ with age, gender, and the type of sport they play. British researcher Dr. Jean Whitehead asked 3,000 youngsters aged nine to 16 years to describe what success in sport means to them. She received these answers from primary school children.

“I did my first back dive ever in front of my brother and my dad.”

“I swam a length with nobody helping me.”

“We were practicing and I was the only one who could do it.”

“I practiced and practiced, and then one day I did it!”

These replies show that children don't see winning as the only kind of success. In fact, winning is most often cited last when children are asked about their reasons for participating. In an article in *Coaching Children in Sport* entitled “Why Children Choose to do Sport — or Stop”, author Whitehead writes: “Young children are more concerned with mastering their own environment and developing skills than with beating others — at least until someone tells them that it is important to win.”

Up to about age 10, children believe that success and doing well are based upon effort and social approval. Because their capacity to assess their own ability develops very slowly, they cannot have clear expectations about how successful they will be in sport. They believe that those who try hard are successful, and if you are successful, you must have tried hard. Children in this age bracket tend to think of success as finishing the race, regardless of whether they placed first, second, or 20th. At about six to seven years of age, children start to compare their skills with other children. They start to wonder whether others can do the same things they can. Things that are ‘hard’ are those few others can do. It is not until about 12 years of age that children are able to tell the difference between skill, luck, effort, and true athletic ability. Because children are not good at judging their own ability, they depend on others to tell them how well they are doing in developing skills and how they compare with their peers. This places enormous responsibility on parents and coaches not to set standards that are too high.

Children and Sport: An Introduction Straight Talk About Children And Sport”, Coaching Association of Canada

This brings to the forefront the question of what methodology was used to build the structure of our Female Division.

The 'pooling' and 'drafting' of our female athlete works against every study and article;

- the motivation of females to participate in a sporting environment
- the ability to retain our female athletes through their growth
- the opportunity for the female athletes to thrive in skill development and excel to their maximum potential
- the environment to foster a love of the game and females to build a lifelong commitment to activity and sport

B Strategies and Outcomes: Meeting the Obligation TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT

I) AN OVERVIEW OF HR EXISTING PROTOCOL IN THE FEMALE DIVISION

- 1) In HR in order for a female athlete to have 'more' competitive hockey experience and to advance their skill to age appropriate development levels, the current culture in HR is to recommend the female athlete play in the coed division.
- 2) Girls registering to play in the Female Division are evaluated, pooled together and drafted to 'equally competitive teams' regardless of skill, development level, ability, maturity, experience or potential of the athlete.
- 3) A coach is forced on the ice with 12 – 14 skaters that have skill level that ranges from learn to play athletes to very skilled and experienced players. Practices have to cater to either the more advanced, experienced players OR the less skilled in hopes that some of the athletes will grasp a concept or develop from repetitive drill work
 - A coach experiences personal frustration, parent's experience frustration and those to which we are responsible to provide a positive development experience, the athlete, are experiencing frustration
 - New and less experienced players are forced into an environment that is proven to deliver a negative emotional experience. The environment causes feelings of inadequacy, self-consciousness, and peer judgment resulting in a lack of effort, lack of contribution and less peer acceptance. (as per all attached literature)
 - The more skilled and experienced player is stagnant in their development and dominant on the ice.
- 4) Game play is dominated by the stronger athletes. We currently have only 2 to 4 dominating skilled players on a team which involuntarily causes an unconscious reinforcement of selfish play; team play isn't an option with such a huge discrepancy of skill level on the ice at any given time.
- 5) Due to low numbers Female Atom and Pee Wee division teams play in a 'South Sask' league in order to have competition. Travel for young athletes is time consuming, costly these are additional stress factors on the athletes and families

II) FEMALE DIVISION OUTCOMES in a TIER STRUCTURE

Purposeful development (Improvement), Participation, and Level Appropriate Task Oriented Goals are paramount in the **self-perception** that a female athlete has achieved success.

1) Skill Development in a Tier System

It has been determined and recommended t via Hockey Canada and implemented by HR's coed division, that the process of 'tier' programming is necessary for long-term development; when a 'like skill level' group of children, engages in repetitive, consistent, skill practice in a positive environment, it will foster improvement which in turn fosters a feeling of having fun, encouraging growth and retention.

- i) All Coaches, in all divisions and all tiers, is able to execute a concrete and consistent annual plan and execute a practice plan that is built around the skill level, commitment, and task oriented goals needed for all players to develop and experience success
- ii) All athletes, in all divisions and all tiers, will experience developmentally appropriate practices; tiered with developmentally appropriate team mates and opponents. Fostering skill development and competition and a desire to improve.

2) Participation, Recruitment & Retention

- i) A range of barriers discourage girls from becoming more active, such as concerns about body weight, poor body image, limited role models, lack of choice, and a poor variety of female only programs.

To overcome these barriers, CAAWS has found the following factors have been successful in motivating girls to become more active:

- Provide female only opportunities
 - Emphasize fun and participation in a safe, positive and social environment
 - Find program leaders who are positive role models
 - Develop physical literacy and fundamental movement skills to increase confidence
- ii) We have dozens of females currently registered in the co-ed division, although this doesn't increase registrations for HR, it offers an equitable opportunity for the females to play a tiered system in an all-female environment. As per all the literature it will provide a structure that fosters growth, skill development, peer relationships which in turn will influence longevity in the sport and a love of the game, thus improving retention.
 - iii) Utilize the systems and programs already in place
 - Cougars, Rebels and Capitals cross branding and mentorships on the ice for skill development days, partnerships with teams and in the locker room
 - Skill development days with SHA

3) Impact on Hockey Regina

- 1) The Hockey Regina Membership has asked for improvements on the female side. The board has answered that call from the membership and expressed their support for positive change in the structure of the Female Division of Hockey Regina by forming a committee to determine the gaps and propose solutions. The proposal from the committee meets the goal of HR for implementing and acknowledging there is a need for adjustments in the female division and that HR is hearing the membership that identifying the gaps is important, but a call to action will truly show that your intention is to provide equity amongst the membership and all the programs HR offers.
- 2) Implementing a tiered program along with the outline of the other objectives of the female committee we will see the results in;
 - Enrollment increases
 - Retention all divisions
 - **Community leadership growth of female participation of athletes, officials, coaches, leaders**

It has been determined that emotionally there is no impact if the girl's teams are playing against boys or girls teams as opponents. The impact is the environment created from the majority of the team being comprised of females; promoting larger growth, discipline from peer influence and the 'social' piece that is proven in all literature for Female sport involvement and retention.

III) Proposal - Tier Structure in Female Division

Two phase (year) plan.

****Phase one, Year one:**

Communication Plan

- i) Emails to families of ALL female players; Novice, Atom & Peewee, inclusive of females who are registered in the Coed Division. The email will include;
 - An introduction to the committee, background of the program and desired outcomes
 - Explanation of a tiered system and the opinion & recommendations of Hockey Canada
 - An outline of the design of the new structure
 - A simple explanation of the options for the athlete with deadlines for changes
 - All information posted on the Hockey Regina Website
 - Contact information for a sub-committee that will deal with phone calls and emails from families requesting more information or assistance in moving forward
 - The subcommittee will also be present at Coed Evaluations in each division as well as Female Evaluations for questions, comments and to provide additional information
 - A general meeting during Female evaluations will also be held at the Co-operators to do a presentation on the tiered system roll-out
- ii) Communication to all coaches that have applied in the Novice, Atom and Pee Wee divisions to explain the changes and allow them the option to withdraw their application or move forward with application

Roll Out

- iii) Independent Evaluation of all Female athletes in each division. Evaluation will provide a ranking of athletes to allow coaches to tier the athletes.
- iv) A crossover of evaluators from the Coed Division needs to be present in order to have a parallel ranking
- v) Teams will be drafted according to ranking; Top 8 athletes will be required to form the Tiered team the remaining number of athletes chosen will be decided amongst coaches and Director as the numbers and positions of athletes could impact the rest of the Division and will have to be decided at time of draft.
- vi) Atom & Pee Wee Divisions: ONLY ONE team of female athletes will play in the parallel Tier of the Coed Division
- vii) Atom & Pee Wee Divisions: Remaining athletes will be drafted in the same 'pool' format with the goal to create equally competitive teams to remain in the league that currently exists with the rural programs
- viii) All NOVICE teams will play in the Coed Tier that is parallel to the evaluation rankings
- ix) Families will have the ability to change their registration prior to evaluations to move either from the Coed division back to the Female Division or from the Female Division back to the Coed Division
- x) Due to the date of the Female Division evaluations, Sept 27th & 28th, if the athlete chooses to remain in the Coed stream to be evaluated they CAN NOT come back to the female side to play on the Tiered team, they can however return to play in the drafted teams that play in the league.

**Evaluations Year 1*

- HRI includes the Female Division in the contract of independent evaluators, minimum 2 from the parallel Coed evaluators of the same division
- The female coaches will round out the evaluations

**Regina Tournament:*

- Tier 3 teams will play in the Sasktel tournament in their Division
- Tier 2 teams can opt to play in the division above in the Female Division

****Phase two, Year two:**

Program analysis, information gathering, reviews and positive and negative outcomes will be implemented

- 1) Analysis presented
 - 2) Recommendations presented
 - 3) Structure continues or is adapted based on quantifiable data
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- i) Evaluations for Tier 1 Coed in each Division would happen one week prior to the Female Division, allowing those Female athletes the opportunity to make a Tier 1 Coed team, failure to do so would allow them the opportunity to return to play on a Female Team in the Coed Division
 - ii) All Female Division teams will play in the Coed Division. What tier they play and how many teams are formed will be decided amongst the governing body of the Female

Division and the coaches in the division to best handle the numbers at the beginning of each season

- iii) Further analysis needs to be to determine what the options will be for the Female teams and players from Estevan, Moose Jaw, Weyburn, and Prairie Storm

3 **OBLIGATION TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION NUMBERS & RETENTION**

A **Create optimal conditions and systems that support AND INCREASE numbers of women and girls to be active at all stages of participation and competition as athletes, coaches, officials, leaders and in other roles in Hockey Regina**

Increasing the numbers in all divisions will enhance the structure changes to a tiered Female Division.

B **Strategies and Outcomes**: Meeting the Obligation to Increase Participation Numbers & Retention

I) **New Programs, Advertising and Cross Branding**

- i) Create a brand for Female Division, promote sponsorship relationships and forge community relationships for the development of females 'active, positive environments for female growth'
- ii) Maximize Coaching Development through the mentorship program and partnerships with female programs; cougars, rebels, capitals (***Coaching Association of Canada, Investors Group, Community Coaching Conferences Grant***)
- iii) Introduce new programs at the Learn To Play level
 - Shorter program time commitment
 - Cost effective
 - Participation focused
- iv) Increase in Advertising
- v) School partnerships
- vi) Cost of starting hockey
 - \$99 registration year 1 up to Atom
 - 2nd year full price
- vii) Partnerships with other sports
- viii) Esso programs – fun days / bring your friend
- ix) Skill development days

II) **BANTAM & MIDGET PROGRAM Needs & Changes**

The Female Director is requesting the ability and flexibility to assess the program's needs. Numbers are a problem, unhappy experiences from the past 2 years, and issues of advantages and disadvantages of being affiliated with different teams.

We have facilitated and given a platform for the active Bantam and Midget A & AA coaches to begin the process of discussions and the insistence that they must have a cohesive

relationship, to discuss solutions and options, asses advantages and disadvantages of all options and provide a viable solutions to our membership for this upcoming season.

Each year the numbers in these programs fluctuates; the director and governing body of the **Female Division requires the ability to adapt to the registrations and skill level on an annual basis.**

REQUEST PERMISSION TO DO THE FOLLOWING

We are currently discussing the current options for midget division number issue:

- 1) Open forum parents meeting at the first evaluation session for the Midget AA program, Wednesday Sept 17th
 - Explain the role of the committee
 - Emphasize and reinforce that we are aware there are 'hurdles' in the midget program
 - Opportunity to gather information
 - Voice for the membership
- 2) Numbers at evaluation and additional A registrations is the basis for some quick decisions that will need to be made by the coaches and directors on the formation of teams.

The Bantam & Midget coaches are actively trying to seek out 4 – 6 new midget athletes to play hockey in Regina Midget

#1 option as numbers sit based on the feedback of the midget representation and the coaches discussions;

- *The Capital Midget AA team will go with smaller numbers (8 forwards, 5 defenses and 1 goalie)*
- *Mandate the Capitals must AP players every game and practice. This will require a few more players register, but will give smaller rosters and more ice time to players for development of the A players to prepare for AA program the following year.*

*Hockey Canada supports the 'affiliation' model as an accepted method of enhancing development, exposure and experience for top ranked athletes in the division below to be moved up and have exposure and development in the next level of hockey.

#2 option if we are unable to gain a few more registrations we will have to go with two midget teams, (1 AA / 1 A), we will have disgruntled parents, however, if we show that we are committed to assessing the program and implanting steps for positive changes in the program we feel we can retain the families and potentially have a larger drawback next year.

Assessment and needs to be addressed in the Bantam & Midget programs

- Number of participants need to be increased
- Rec program and co-ordination with Midget girls to enter a team for those less committed to the South Sask. League
- Travel
- Cost
- Commitment

Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS) CS4L Engaging Women PDF

Sport Canada, Coaching Association of Canada for The Long-Term Athlete Development Model PDF

Toward Gender Equity for Women in Sport, Gender Equity Appendix2

Toward Gender Equity for Women in Sport, Gender Equity Appendices3-6

Toward Gender Equity for Women in Sport, Gender_Equity_Appendices7-12

Coaching Association of Canada Straight Talk Children & Sport PDF

Women's Sports Foundation, Issues Related to Girls and Boys Competing With and Against Each Other in Sports and Physical Activity Settings, The Foundation Position PDF

Bauer, The Big Assist: Helping Kids Fall in Love with Hockey, Overview PDF

Bauer, The Big Assist: Helping Kids Fall in Love with Hockey, Application PDF

Bauer, The Big Assist: Helping Kids Fall in Love with Hockey, Program Logistics PDF

Saskatchewan Hockey Association, Development Welcome Week 2014

Coaching Association of Canada, Investors Group, Community Coaching Conferences Grant

<http://www.coach.ca/investors-group-community-coaching-conferences-s12763&language=en>

Brilliant coaches...

- 1. Cherish the child over the athlete.** Brilliant coaches know that being an athlete is just a small part of being a child. Brilliant coaches never do anything to advance the athlete at the risk of the child.
- 2. Treat their, and all other, athletes with respect.** Brilliant coaches treat all of the kids in the gym, on the field, court etc. with total respect. No matter what.
- 3. Communicate with parents.** Brilliant coaches understand that parents are not the enemy and, in fact, are an important ally in the development of the athlete.
- 4. Listen to their athletes concerns.** Brilliant coaches don't tune out athletes worries, fears or mentions of injury.
- 5. Connect before they direct.** Brilliant coaches understand the importance of emotional connection. You matter. You belong. You are important to me. Not you the athlete; rather, you the person. Our most fundamental need is safety. When we feel safe we can trust and when we trust we can learn. Brilliant coaches know that this foundation of trust is essential.
- 6. Begin with the end in mind.** Brilliant coaches keep their focus on the big picture of the goal of the athlete. They have a plan, but are flexible as they are aware the road to success is filled with twists and turns.
- 7. Are obsessive about fundamentals.** Brilliant coaches understand the value of fundamentals as the core of all skills. The stronger the core, the more successful the athlete. Legendary basketball coach John Wooden would spend his first practice with his players instructing them how to put on socks. Correct wearing of socks prevents blisters, and feet absent of blisters can attend basketball practice.
- 8. Break skills into chunks.** Brilliant coaches don't simply teach a cartwheel. They break that cartwheel into several key sub-skills and instruct on those skills first before putting them together to perform the cartwheel. Brilliant coaches know that by isolating the individual elements that are woven together to achieve the skill athletes will succeed faster.
- 9. Embrace athletes' struggle.** Brilliant coaches understand that learning is a curve. Like muscle needs to break down before building up, athletes need to struggle to push forward. A brilliant coach doesn't panic when this struggle happens.

10. Make the boring interesting. Brilliant coaches connect the tedious to the goal and make games out of those things that can be counted. They issue challenges and create missions. The goal is to make these dull, but necessary moments more engaging.

11. State corrections in the positive. Brilliant coaches say "do this" not "don't do this." Don't bend your arms is less effective feedback than "push your arms straight."

12. Find the bright spots and build from there. Brilliant coaches are aware of weaknesses and try to improve them to meet minimal standard but spend much more focus on the areas that an athlete excels. Trying to turn a strong pitcher into a better batter is less effective than trying to make him better at his curve ball.

13. Don't try to break bad habits; rather, they build new habits. Brilliant coaches know that the most effective way to break a bad feedback loop is to replace one habit for another.

14. Give feedback in short, clear spurts that are precise and action oriented. No long speeches. John Wooden was once followed for a whole season so his motivational techniques could be studied. Wooden's average "speech" was four sentences. Furthermore, brilliant coaches do not engage in observational coaching. ("Get your arms up." Up where? "Your knees are bent." Tell me how to fix that.) Concrete feedback ("Your arms need to be right behind your ears." And "Squeeze this muscle and this muscle in your leg to make it straight.") is given instead.

15. Are careful about how they measure success. Brilliant coaches do not use scores or win-loss records as their sole measure of success. Brilliant coaches understand that doing so can erode the long term development of the athlete. Brilliant coaches instead develop competencies for the long run, even if that means sacrificing success at the beginning of journey. If you had to choose, would you rather have your child be the strongest student in the first grade or in the twelfth grade?

16. Use the right mixture of attainable and reach goals. Brilliant coaches have zoned in on the sweet spot of challenge.

17. Keep momentum moving forward. Brilliant coaches understand that objects in motion stay in motion, so there is not a lot of waiting around time in practice.

18. Constantly are seeking continuing education. Brilliant coaches never believe they know it all or that they cannot improve themselves. Quite the opposite. Brilliant coaches read journals, articles, books and scour the internet for training ideas. They attend professional workshops and seek mentorships from other coaches.

19. Create, instead of finding, talent. Brilliant coaches appreciate natural aptitude but know that it can only take an athlete so far. Furthermore, brilliant coaches are humble enough to admit that they are not perfect at predicting success, so they just get in there and work. Finally, brilliant coaches concede that extraordinary talent is not a fair assessment of their value as a coach; rather, they measure their coaching efficacy by taking an athlete who is less gifted and helping that athlete succeed.

20. Observe intently. Brilliant coaches are always trying to figure out what makes people tick so they can better reach them.

21. Understand interpersonal relationships of the team are important. Team building and bonding is not a waste of time but an essential element for success.

22. Use imagery in coaching. Brilliant coaches paint pictures in the athletes' minds. "Jump as high as you can," becomes "Push the floor away from you like a rocket blasting into space and reach that rocket to the stars."

23. Separate learning from practice. Brilliant coaches understand that practice begins after the athletes learn. As a result, they do not have athlete "practicing" something they have not yet learned so as to avoid creating bad habits. Learning takes place with close observation and direct instruction.

24. Focus the athlete on what to do, not what to avoid. Brilliant coaches tell their athletes things like "Shoulders squared and body tight" versus saying "Don't fall."

25. Focus on the multiple ways of learning. Brilliant coaches use auditory, visual and kinesthetic modes of teaching each skill, acknowledging that people learn differently.

26. Understand child development. Brilliant coaches have a working knowledge of the milestones of childhood and tailor their actions and expectations to meet the athletes where they are.

27. End practice before athlete is exhausted. Brilliant coaches know that bad habits and short cuts ensue when athletes are drained.

28. Give plenty of time for new skills to develop. Brilliant coaches allow at least eight weeks for athletes to learn a new skill. As the athlete progresses in the sport that time frame will actually get longer, not shorter, as the skills are increasingly complex.

29. Use positive coaching techniques. Brilliant coaches do not yell, belittle, threaten or intimidate. They do not need to bully to get results. While short term success may occur under such pressure filled environments, a brilliant coach knows that in the long run these techniques will backfire and are dangerous to the development of the child.

30. Have a growth mindset. Brilliant coaches believe that our basic skills can be developed through dedication and hard work. They reinforce this with their athletes over and over so their athletes feel motivated and are productive.

31. Know what they don't know. Brilliant coaches are not afraid to admit that they don't have all the answers. They do not allow their ego to prevent them from getting additional help, training or even suggesting to an athlete's family that the athlete needs to move to a more experienced coach.

32. Educate their athletes. Brilliant coaches go beyond instructing their athletes, instead educating them in an age-appropriate ways regarding the purpose of and objective of various drills, skill sequences and conditioning circuits.

33. Have clear rules and logical consequences. Brilliant coaches do not keep their athletes guessing with respect to the standards of conduct or the result that can be expected for breeches of those standards. Rules are applied justly without shame to all athletes, including the stars.

34. Understand that fun is an essential element in training, no matter how elite an athlete becomes. The number one reason that athletes quit sports, even sports that they love and in which they are succeeding, is because they are no longer having fun. Fun is not a frivolous sentiment but is the foundation of an athlete's healthy commitment to a sport.

35. End practice on a positive note. Brilliant coaches always find a way to seek the positive at the end of even the most awful workout. Even if it is as simple as "Tomorrow is a new day," brilliant coaches know that both success and failure are temporary states.

It is clear that content knowledge is just the beginning of what makes a brilliant coach (or teacher). Yet, absent these other qualities, all of the knowledge in the world does not make a smart or effective coach brilliant.