

Players Coaches Love

by Rick Crotts

The purpose of this article is to encourage you as an athlete to think of what you can do for your coach. All coaches love certain kinds of players. It does not matter whether you are a weight lifter, gymnast, or tennis player, all coaches love specific qualities in athletes. Most players go the way of least resistance and take the easy road to working. Coaching involves making sure the athlete does not think this way, most of the time unsuccessfully. So the question is "what can I do for my coach to get more playing time or to be successful, etc.?"

First, you need to be self-motivated! Give a total effort every time you compete. Coaches look into what shows up in a player's heart as evidenced by the way he/she plays.

Secondly, be willing to give the kind of physical and mental effort necessary to win, in practice as well as games. Make it personal excellence time.

Next, listen to the meaning of the message from your coach, not how it is said. The next time your coach gets in your face and embarrasses you a little, stand back and listen to the message. Don't make judgments or make it personal. If he/she doesn't care they wouldn't bother.

Furthermore, carefully pick your idols. Professional athletes are performing or putting on a show and this changes their perspective. Be aware of these actors and you decide what is right or wrong.

Next, think of what your coach wants or needs from you. The basic underlying factor is playing time. Your coach is looking for specific things. It is not what he/she needs to do for you. Stop laying your hand out for them to give you something. My college coach said, "It is your job to figure out what I want you to do!" He was a very honest man and put it bluntly. Sometimes, as often-criticized teenagers, you can be selfish and say, "What are you going to do for me?" Give me a new car? Buy me this or that? Let me play? Be a coach's player and give instead of take and you will receive your just rewards.

Finally, know what your role is. If you don't know, ASK! Most of us like to be the scorer but coaches love great defenders, great rebounders, players who give of themselves and ask nothing in return. There is always room in the line-up for these kinds of players. You are forcing the issue with playing time. You give and he/she has no choice but to play you because they love you.

There are three things that your coach would love from you. (1) love the game. "The game" might be what is in season at the time. Convince your coach that this is the important time in your life. (2) WORK HARD! Good things happen to people who work hard to make good things happen. Vince Lombardi said "the harder we work, the harder it is to give up". You can always offer hard work. (3) Be loyal to your coach. Believe in your coach and he will believe in you. Jerry Tarkanian said, "The only bad kid is one who won't be loyal to his teammates and coaches". Respond positively to challenges from your coach and your opponent. You will grow and develop, win or lose. These challenges will linger in your memory long after the game is over. When your coaches get in your face, they are looking for a positive response. Give them attention! Great players don't have to be inspired by the coach to get "up" for a game; all you need to know is that any game is important, and how you should play it. Let your coach sit back and enjoy the ride!