
USAR-IP NEWS



WHAT IT TAKES TO BE THE BEST COACH

To be the best racquetball coach, you need to be trained in several disciplines. Today's demanding sports environment requires that the coach be knowledgeable in various disciplines: sport specific techniques, psychology, physiology, counseling, legal issues, parental and administrative relations, and first aid.

APRIL, 2017

ISSUE SPECIAL- Hall of Fame Month

Pg2-Sport Specific Techniques

Pg3- Psychology/Philosophy

Pg4- Physiology

Pg5- Sport Safety/Legal Issues

Pg6- Parental Responsibilities

Pg7-This month's lesson by the Master Instructors



IN THIS ISSUE!!

The requirements of each the above disciplines will be outlined in this newsletter. Professional teams hire specialist in each of the above disciplines to assist with the coaching duties. Unfortunately, most amateur teams and athletes do not have this type of budget, thus it is important that athletes and administrators scrutinize future coaches to be sure they are educated in what is required in today's sports environment.

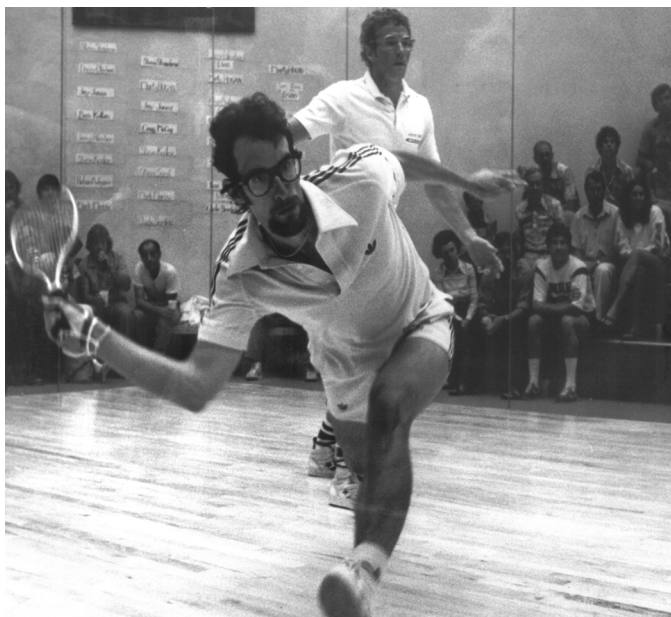
SPORT SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES

It is important that coaches be familiar with proper stroke mechanics and other sport specific techniques. Juniors require special attention since different age groups require different learning techniques (see the last USAR-IP newsletter).

To teach proper techniques the coach must be able to assess the student's abilities. Teaching too advanced techniques will only deter progress by creating frustration and even causing injury. It is important that the coach match the training program to the physical and emotional level of the student.

Basic Skills Required for Teaching Racquetball

1. Stroke Mechanics – You should be able to determine when a player's mechanics will lead to injury or inconsistent performance. eg.-the difference and benefits or drawbacks of a pendulum stroke vs. a more horizontal stroke.
2. Strategy- Understand the different strategies when playing players of different game styles – e.g. Power player vs. control player.
3. Conditioning- Be knowledgeable of the proper training techniques for the sport – e.g. aerobic vs. anaerobic conditioning and dynamic vs. static stretching.
4. Foot work- Good foot work is a major component of good racquetball performance. The coach should be familiar with the benefits of different training techniques to increase reaction time (split step), quickness (agility drills), and when to use certain techniques e.g. cross-over step vs. side step
- 5 Nutrition- Racquetball is a demanding sport. Special consideration must be given to multi-match day, and multi day events. Coaches need to know the proper times for athletes to eat and hydrate, and knowledge of the best liquids and food to achieve maximum performance e.g. Water vs. sport drinks with an electrolyte replacement.



CELEBRATING HALL OF FAME MONTH

Hall of Famer Charlie Brumfield (1988) with Steve Keeley in background.

PSYCHOLOGY/PHILOSOPHY

Every coach must determine a coaching philosophy. What is a coaching philosophy?

The best coaches model their coaching philosophy to complement their personalities, strengths, and overcome their weaknesses. This includes everything from the disciplinary measures they enforce to the style of play or if a team the teams conduct.

A few examples of what a coach may ask themselves regarding their philosophy of coaching or instructing?

1. What is my philosophy regarding athletics (winning) vs. personnel growth?
2. What is my philosophy of academics as it relates to athletics?
3. What is my philosophy of training as it pertains to competition?
4. What is my philosophy regarding parental involvement?
5. What are my thoughts on winning?

GOALS AS PART OF THE COACHES PHILOSOPHY

Goals are a critical part of a coach's success!! As a coach are you familiar with:

1. The difference between a concrete vs. abstract goal.
2. The difference between long term, intermediate and short terms goals.

Though racquetball is an individual sport, it is the coach's leadership that will determine the goals and success that your players will set for themselves. The best way in which to have both you and your athlete understand each other and have some agreement in objectives, is to discuss this with them one on-one in private.

SUMMARY

The development of a solid coaching philosophy is a task that takes years, experience, mentoring, education, and trial and error. There are many different coaching philosophies that can produce positive results. Remember, you must believe in what you are doing with unwavering commitment.

However, there are some basic principles of coaching (check out USAR-IP courses) that, when applied correctly, will greatly enhance your chances for success and the realization of your goals. The principles will help to provide a foundation for you to begin your career as a successful racquetball coach.

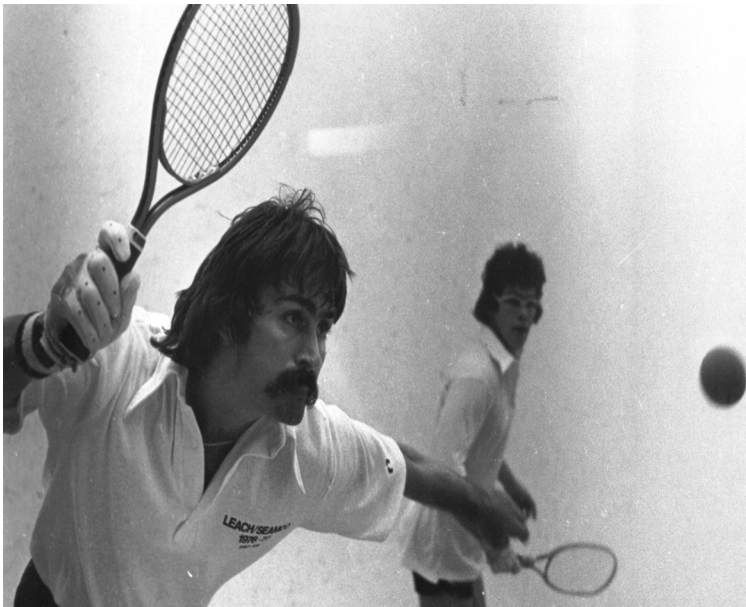
It is important that your beliefs, coaching philosophy, and your goals coincide so that your vision is clear and complete.

PHYSIOLOGY

The tremendous physical demands of racquetball require the conscientious coach to have a thorough knowledge of the best methods to physically prepare for the sport.

Some aspects of physiology that all coaches should know:

1. Is racquetball more an aerobic or an anaerobic sport? What training techniques (routines) would you implement for your team that would prepare them for the physical demands of a weekend tournament?
2. It is obvious that to perform at the highest level, the sport of racquetball requires high levels of strength and more importantly power. What type of resistance training program would you develop for your athletes?
3. To optimize the effect of training, the coach must utilize periodization. Do you know what periodization is and how to implement it with your athletes?
4. Stretching is important for flexibility and to reduce the chance of injury. Do you know the difference between static and dynamic stretching and the best stretches for racquetball?
5. What is plyometric training and how does it apply to racquetball?



HALL OF FAME MONTH (cont)

Hall of Famers Steve
Strandemo (2005) with
Marty Hogan (1997)
background .

SPORT SAFETY/LEGAL ISSUES

The potentially detrimental effects of athletics can extend from athletes to coaches as well. Knowledge of your legal responsibilities and rights as a coach will help you avoid law suits and, if practiced, protect you if litigation does occur. Appropriate insurance (medical and liability) is needed to provide for expenses and/or judgments if injury or litigation occur.

Areas coaches should understand when dealing with sport safety

1. What is risk management and why is it relevant to a racquetball coach?
2. What are the three parts to developing a risk management plan for your team or athletes?
3. What are the legal qualifications or competencies that a coach/instructor should have to teach racquetball?
4. What are the management practices that will help you as a coach achieve your risk management objectives?
5. If your student has an injury are you able to assess the extent of the injury, provide initial care and determine a path for recovery? Are you certified in first aid?

What do you know about waivers etc.?

Waivers Provide Little Cover for Coaches

A long-held belief by coaches is that having participants sign a waiver of indemnity to a practice, tournament, or clinic will protect them from legal action and damage awards. Indemnity waivers at one time acted as a legal exemption from liability for damages. While waivers have had a long history of use in sport programs, it has become increasingly apparent that waivers do not offer the protection that they once had.



Hall of Famers (2002) Dave Peck (1997) in foreground and Mike Yellen (1997) in background.

Hall of Fame Month

Peggy Steding (1988) with Kathy Williams in background



PARENTAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents and coaches/administrators SHOULD have the same interests when it comes to children playing racquetball – providing opportunities for young people to learn, grow, have fun and be challenged. Yet we all know of cases where parents, administrators and coaches have not been working together and other examples where they have been in open conflict. These conflicts can have serious impact on the sport experience for young people, sometimes so much so that children and youth withdraw from sport.

Do you know how to handle basic parent and administrative concerns?

1. What are appropriate concerns to discuss with parents?
2. What are not appropriate areas to discuss with a parent?
3. If a parent has a concern, what steps would you take to discuss the concern with the parent?
4. If a parent bypasses you and goes straight to the administration, how do you handle?
5. If an administrator tries to micromanage your team or athlete, how do you handle?



The advertisement features a collection of various medals and trophies, including USA Racquetball State Championships, USA Racquetball Regional Championships, and USA Racquetball State Racquetball Championships. The medals are displayed in a cluster, with some featuring the USA flag and the Ashworth Awards logo. The background is a gradient of green and blue.

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Skills for teaching racquetball

In our curriculum, there is an entire chapter devoted to teaching. Here are some qualities of a good racquetball instructor.

1. Listen carefully. Often the rookie overlooks something important the student says. Recent injuries, layoffs for conditioning, stress at work, and other such things are important to consider during the lesson.
2. Have the student demonstrate skills, rather than you assuming you know what is wrong their skillset. Often all you may have to do is tweak a forehand rather than break it all down.
3. Do not talk too much. Yes, we are impressed with how much you know but the student wants to learn. "What's in it for me?" is the question in every student's mind.
4. Do get the student moving. They do not understand it? Okay, but let them get moving and explain it!!
5. Safety is of utmost importance – make sure doors are closed, eye guards are on, racquetballs are off the floor – and you have a safe environment to teach.
6. Speaking of safety –injuries occur when bad mechanics are taught. Make sure you are versed in forehand, backhand, and beginning footwork! (Check the USAR-IP Manual Benchmarks)
7. Be creative- often you have to think outside the box. Physical limitations, court issues (like no/limited court available) lend themselves to coming up with solutions in 30 seconds or less.
8. Have fun!! Your students' passion for the game should fuel you on low energy lack of sleep days.
9. Put your own game on the back burner. This is hard to do for many good players. Remember-it is not about you-it is about your customer!
10. Market yourself! If your student liked the lesson, ask them to bring a friend next time. Word of mouth is the best advertisement!
11. Be knowledgeable and versed in all areas of the game.
12. Be clear and do not keep repeating yourself due to lack of knowledge.
13. Stay positive- build your students up.
14. Come prepared with a lesson plan....sample below

BY: JIM WINTERTON (Hall of Fame 2001) AND FRAN DAVIS (Hall of Fame 2004)

Sample Lesson Plan-1 Hour

Introduction of the Topic -5 minutes

Student Assessment - 20 minutes

---- Student's Execution - 2 minutes

---- Instruction's Demonstration - 5 minutes

---- Error Detection - 5 minutes

---- Corrections - 8 minutes

Drills/Play (based on lesson)-20 minutes

Homework 3 minutes

Summary/Review 5 minutes

Appointment 2 minutes

NEW ON LINE COURSE AND TEST

A new course outlining the most common racquetball injuries, how they should be treated outlining specific stretching techniques, and how to train to prevent, is now available in the courses and tests section of your profile.

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Rocky Carson

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