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Views and suggestions of Padmashree and former Indian hockey captain Zafar Iqbal on coaching philosophy and other vital sports issues

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to highlight views and suggestions of Mr. Zafar Iqbal on Coaching Philosophy and other vital sports issues for sports person. He led the Indian team as a captain in various international events, prominent among them were Asian Games in 1982, Champions trophy, 1983, and 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. He was honoured by carrying the Indian flag at the youth festival held in Moscow, and later at the opening ceremony of the Los Angeles Olympics. He received the prestigious Arjuna Award in 1983, the highest award given to a sports personality in India.

Keywords: Sports, coach, violence doping and politics

Introduction

How to be a Good Coach

He strongly believes that the success of a team hinges on the shoulders of a coach. He has recommended the following qualities to be a successful coach:

- Stay calm especially when you are trailing your opponents, being worrisome at the most critical time of the game may prevent you from thinking the best strategy or solution to a problem.
- Try other combination if your plays and strategies are not working. Find the right group of people to bring the momentum to your team.
- Respect your players, hear their suggestions and if their ideas will serve the team in good stead, employ your player's otherwise not. Making someone special by means of empathy will give the team the boost you need.
- Practice, practice and practice. Improve your plays and make research using various references. You may also search for effective plays on the Internet, which has seas of information you may need.
- Carry out your plays very well during practice and make sure that discipline is well observed on the team.
- Instill good values on your team such teamwork, patience, perseverance and sportsmanship. You will gain their respect and trust doing these.
- You must have the ability to make adjustments.
- Familiarity with one another will build trust and confidence in them and will allow the team members to play as a cohesive unit.
- Psyche them up and motivate your players with inspiring, thought-provoking, compelling and powerful words.
- You are the team's captain of the ship, and all of your actions and decisions will affect the performance of the team. Always have the composure and as much as possible be a role model at all times. Minimize your mistakes.
- Be effective with any resources you have and make the most out of them. Don't complain and be modest with your objectives.
- Give your players more room for improvements. Correct their old bad habits, and wrong forms and movements. Show them how things should be done the proper way, like for instance the correct shooting form in basketball, and the right way to toss or hit the ball in volleyball.

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- Show and inculcate them techniques that will set them apart from regular players.
- Explain them their worth in the team. Tell those players with limited playing time why they are not getting much exposure in a nice way and if possible in a private area.
- Win or lose, show them zeal at all times.
- Learn how to take a loss well, for winning is not everything. Learn from your mistakes and try to rebound stronger.

Politics and Sports

According to him, Politics in sports which is also termed as sport diplomacy describes the use of sport as a means to influence diplomatic, social, and political relations. Sport diplomacy can advance foreign policymaking through international exchanges that foster mutual goals. Sports diplomacy may transcend cultural differences and bring people together. It is in this light that the countries consider International sports-focused exchanges or dialogue as a way to promote cultural understanding and improve relations among the countries.

On a global scale, sports diplomacy has most certainly emerged as a powerful force. The use of sports and politics has had both positive and negative implications over the history. Sports competitions or activities have had the intention to bring about radical change in certain cases.

Nationalistic fervor is sometimes linked to victories on the sports field. The clashes between Indian and Pakistani cricket and hockey teams provide an apt example where much more than the game is at stake. The outcomes of these games have an indirect bearing on the political atmosphere of the countries.

While the Olympics are often the biggest political example of using sports for diplomatic means, cricket and hockey, as well as similar other sports in the global arena, have also been used in this regard. In the case of Apartheid, sport was used to isolate South Africa and bring about a major overhaul in the country's social structure.

At the 1998 FIFA World Cup, held in France, Iran recorded their first World Cup victory in the second game, beating the United States 2–1, with Estili and Mahdavia scoring goals for Iran. The match was preheated with much excitement because of each country's political stance after the Iranian revolution. However, in an act of defiance against all forms of hatred or politics in sports, both sides presented one another with gifts and flowers and stood together for a photograph before the match was kicked-off.

Similarly in another match Armenia and Turkey faced each other in a 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying match in Yerevan. In an unprecedented step, Turkish president Abdullah Gul was invited to watch the match, where the presidents of Turkey and Armenia sat together, albeit behind bullet-proof glass. However, the Turkish national anthem was almost drowned out by booing from 35,000 Armenian fans, showing there is still a lot of mistrust between the two countries. However, the gesture "between the presidents showed that they believed football diplomacy had achieved the most important result." This was a first for the two countries divided by the legacy of the 20th century's first genocide.

Boxing Champion Muhammad Ali took up political causes in his refusal be drafted for the Vietnam War amid the civil rights era during the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson.

Cricket has also had a hand to play in sporting diplomacy. Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and Soviet

pressure on India to deflect the tension they faced, in 1987 Pakistan's president at the time, General Zia ul-Haq, attended a test match between India and Pakistan in Jaipur a visit that apparently helped cool a flare-up in tensions. Furthermore, following a fifteen year lull in test matches, cricket tours between India and Pakistan were revived in 2004 in the wake of diplomatic initiatives to bury half a century of mutual hostility. Both sides relaxed their tough visa regulations for each other, allowing thousands of fans to travel across the border.

In an attempt to replicate the cricket diplomacy of the past, General Pervez Musharraf came to India in 2005 ostensibly for a cricket match. The trip, however, quickly took on the air of a summit as the sides were urged "to seize a historic chance to end their dispute over Kashmir." Often this rivalry has been tinged with a religious-political bent to it. In 2000 right-wing Hindus dug up the cricket pitch in New Delhi to protest against the Pakistani team's visit. Following the Kargil conflict, and at various other times, there have also been calls to suspend cricketing ties between the two countries.

In 2011, India and Pakistan played each other in the 2011 Cricket World Cup for the first time since 26/11 attacks in Mumbai and a general souring of relations. The event was spontaneously attended by Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani of Pakistan and Manmohan Singh of India. Following the game, permission was granted for the two countries to play regular series against each other.

Most famously, the sporting boycott of South Africa during Apartheid was said to have played a crucial role in forcing South Africa to open up their society and to end a global isolation.

The country's hosting and winning of the 1995 Rugby World Cup was a powerful boost to post-apartheid South Africa's return to the international sporting scene. The 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa also drew similar parallels and questions as to whether race could be overcome.

Sports and Violence

According to Zafar Iqbal sports violence can be defined as behavior which causes harm, occurs outside of the rules of the sport, and is unrelated to the competitive objectives of the sport. Two forms of aggression are identified in sports. Instrumental aggression is non-emotional and task-oriented whereas reactive aggression has an underlying emotional component, with harm as its goal. Violence is an outcome of reactive aggression.

According to him, he showed his utmost concern about the prevalence of violence in sports. An increase in both frequency and seriousness of acts of violence has been well documented. Violence is most prevalent in team contact sports, such as hockey, football, and cricket. While most occurrences of violence emanate from players, others, including coaches, parents, fans, and the media, also contribute to what has been described as an epidemic of violence in sports today.

Answering whether fans incite player violence or reflect it? He remarked that the evidence is inconclusive. Spectators do take cues from players, coaches, cheerleaders, and one another. Spectators often derive a sense of social identity and self-esteem from a team. Emulation of favorite players is an element of this identification.

He outrightly blamed Mass media also to contribute to the acceptability of sports. On one hand it affords ample exposure to sports-related violence via television, magazines, newspapers, and radio, thus providing numerous examples to

children who may imitate such behavior. It glamorizes players, often the most controversial and aggressive ones. Its commentary is laced with descriptions suggestive of combat, linking excitement to violent action. On the other hand, the exposure given to sports violence by the media has stimulated increased efforts to control and prevent such behavior.

He emphasized that ideally children's participation in team sports should be fun, contribute to their physical development and well-being, help to develop social skills, and promote a desire for continued involvement with physical activity. The objective of physical education in schools should be to encourage development of appropriate exercise habits, with emphasis on the recreational aspects of physical activities. He called upon the physical education teachers and coaches to take lead and lay the spade work for the development of positive attitude in sports.

Doping in Sports

He observed that in the recent years, use of performance enhancing drugs by professional sportspersons have increased dramatically. Various drugs and steroids are used by sportspersons to improve their performance, reaction time, mental concentration, physical strength etc but most of them ultimately pay a very heavy price for these fleeting benefits often with their own life or lifelong humiliation.

He contended that sports is not a contest of medical and pharmaceutical research and there should be no space for any kind of performance enhancing drugs and anabolic steroids in sports to ensure a level playing field to all the participants. In a fit of rage and under the immense pressure to perform from the coach and the country alike, most of the times, the athlete compromises with his own life.

With a happy heart, he asserted that it is a matter of great concern and shame that the Indian athletes' recent achievements in commonwealth Games have been obliterated by a doping scandal. The recent successes had given a hope to the Indian fans of athletics that India will figure in medal tally with higher ranking, but unfortunately that dream may remain still farfetched. For it, not only the athletes, but also the coaches and the administrators are responsible. As all are in lure of money, name and fame and enduring influence over the sports bodies, resort to short term measures. He further emphasized that if we want to see that the confidence of the New India should reflect in sports as well, the government will also have to come out with an effective sports policy with far sighted impacts. For it, the active cooperation of the elite sportspersons who have set examples with their exemplary behavior will also have to be taken into consideration.

He proudly praised that hockey players the world over, are free from this dreaded practice of employing unethical means for enhancing performance and endangering their health and well-being for temporary and fleeting benefits.

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