

48 Years on the Course
Warren Mills
North Tahoe High School

Contents

Intro 2

 The Starting Line 2

 Education:..... 2

 Coaching History 2

 Influence 2

Ideas and Insight..... 2

 Why are you coaching? 2

 Who are you as a coach and mentor? 3

 How do you see them? 3

 The Way You Coach..... 3

 Who am I coaching? 4

 The Runner..... 4

 Recruitment 4

 Workouts - “You will hurt, but I will not hurt you.” 5

 Posted Info 5

 Establish Pride through Tradition..... 6

 Team or Cult? 6

Student of the Sport 7

 Know the course – In Coaching and in Competition 7

 Know the Competition..... 7

 Act as if you have been there before 7

 The Undefeated..... 7

Wrap up..... 7

Intro

The Starting Line

- Started coaching at Bellarmine-Jefferson High School, Burbank, CA
- Offered the position with no experience.

Education:

- Lynwood High School, Lynwood
- Compton College, Compton,
- California State University, Los Angeles

Coaching History

- 2 Years - Bellarmine-Jefferson High School, Burbank, CA
- 1 Year – Truckee High School, Truckee, CA
- 45 Years – North Tahoe High School (NTHS), Tahoe City, CA
- Lost first League Meet 15-50
- That woke me up
- Never happened again
- 1974 - 1st league Championship – NTHS
- 1974 - 1st CIF Champion – Ron Prouty – NCIF
- 1981 – North Tahoe entered Nevada Interscholastic Athletic Association (NIAA)
- 22 Nevada State Boys Team Titles
- 12 Nevada State Girls Team Titles
- Only coach in Nevada who has had 5 children race on one or more State Championship Teams

Influence

- Jim Hunt
- Jim Jones

Ideas and Insight

Why are you coaching?

- A. Love running, runners, and competition
- B. Passion for the sport and its lifetime results
- C. What you did is interesting, but what the runners do is more interesting.
 - It's about the runners.
- D. The best part of my teaching day:
 - Look forward to seeing them

- Consider it a continuation of teaching
 - Defend coaching to your colleagues as teaching
- E. For me it has to be about Cross Country and Track, not training for another sport.
- F. I have to believe totally if I expect them to believe.

Who are you as a coach and mentor?

- A. Tell them about who you are.
- Family beliefs
- B. They need to know what you stand for & respect.
- Hard work, commitment, sacrifice, expectations
- C. I want them to know what I will do or say in situations,
- What Would Madman Mills Do? (WWMMMD?)
- D. Believe in them
- Tell them! Be honest.

How do you see them?

- A. Know them, connect, you are in this together.
- B. They are why you are here.
- C. Their success is the only thing that matters
- Define success
 - Not just wins, but improvement, life lessons, and teachable moments.
- D. You believe in them and it takes two to make that belief a reality.
- E. Make sure they know you are on their side
- Yes, it is hard, I know

The way you coach

- A. It is you and your personality.
- No one style fits all
- B. I am always positive
- They need to see the good in all their experiences.
 - It is sometimes hard
- C. My negativity comes through in silence.
- D. I'm trying to find an answer through a coaching example
- E. I use humor, kidding them, them kidding me
- It is easy when they can laugh at me being old and “out of it”.
 - I let them know I never mean things in a negative way and they let me know if they don't like it
- F. As in teaching, you need to adapt to your students
- I have seen loud, quiet, obnoxious traits in a lot of coaches and if it works for you and your team then it is your method.

Who am I coaching?

- A. North Tahoe, no one else!
 - My kids need to know that
- B. Not the Parents
 - The parents know that my objective is their son or daughter and my team.
 - I don't talk with parents at races
 - I do talk with parents before or after practice
 - Race day I am too concerned about my team

The Runner

- A. As Forest Gump said, "You never know what you are going to get."
- B. Runners vs Kids who run
- C. Acknowledge each one
 - Know each one
 - Value each one for their abilities
 - Jake – Heart Issues
- D. Who will step up?
- E. Trust them with injuries
 - You will hurt, but I will not hurt you.
- F. Give them pride:
 - In the team
 - In the sport
 - In the school
 - In themselves
 - No time outs, no substitutes, no excuses, just toughness
 - Everybody hurts
 - How tough are you?

Recruitment

- A. Take anyone
- B. Invite all through your runners
 - Have them bring out friends
 - New students looking for a place to be
- C. Have something to entice them
 - Trips, good people, pride, history
- D. They will be valued
- E. No one gets cut and all get to race
- F. Seniors talking to incoming freshmen
- G. Have counselors on your side looking for new kids

Workouts - “You will hurt, but I will not hurt you.”

- A. Practice is every day (school day), no excuses
- B. Running up a down escalator
 - No work = down
 - Normal = little improvement
 - Hard up = getting somewhere
- C. Name your workouts
 - Three Hills, Finish Laps, Varsity Hill, Antoine Meadows
- D. Exploration runs
 - Hide if you want to but we/you will know come race day
- E. Workouts:
Daily Routine
- F. Warm-up & plyo’s
 - 3 MILES
 - Ladder Drills
 - Team Time
- G. Mindful Mondays & Thoughtful Thursdays
 - Coach K – Science / Physiology Teacher
- H. Daily explanation of workouts
 - What it will accomplish, how it will help
- I. Always encourage mental toughness as well as physical

Posted Info

- A. Top Ten list of important courses
 - Pride and a historical perspective
- B. Madman’s Memos
 - Times & places/medals
 - Observations of each runner
 - What did you see both positive and critical
 - Time comparison to previous year\
 - Race of the day, and why
- C. Laker Legends
 - State Championship Teams
 - State Championship Individuals
 - Undefeated
 - All State Athletic
 - All State Academic
 - Multiple State Champions
 - Individuals and Team
 - 4 Year Varsity Athletes
- D. Seniors communicate with all via media
 - Departure times

- Pasta feeds
 - Who, Where, What, and When

Establish Pride through tradition

- A. Team Shirts – wear them
 - a. Let team suggest, design, and plan
- B. Yearly catchphrase
 - a. Believe
 - b. Initowinit
 - c. History repeats itself
 - d. Let those puppies run
 - e. Back in Black
 - f. Pink Power
 - g. Madman's Milers
 - h. Tower Power
- C. NTCC Pride
 - a. All that has to be said before each race
 - b. Run the tunnel after each practice
 - c. High fives
 - d. No one leaves until all runners are in
 - i. Value the individual
 - e. Have pride in who you are and what you do
 - i. Quiet pride walking down the halls
 - ii. You know you can do what others cannot
- D. Two week promise
 - a. Commit to two weeks
 - b. Will ensure buy-in
 - c. In two weeks they will understand
- E. Share Leadership and responsibilities with team
 - a. They will live up to expectations
 - b. So don't have low expectations
- F. Individual goals
 - a. Each runner will write out goals, desires, and expectations to be shared with only me

Team or Cult?

- A. Accusations from parents in other sports when they see and don't comprehend why kids would run and hurt
- B. I explain commitment to my kids & runners that this is about us and the whole pride concept

Student of the Sport

Know the course – In Coaching and in Competition

- A. If you train hills you will race hills and have no fear
- B. Athletic.net
 - a. Great info, but sometimes too much info
 - b. One courses times cannot be compared to another courses times
 - i. Explain this to the athlete
 - c. Downhill run
 - i. Times are crazy and really messy with less confident runners
 - ii. You have to know and explain reasoning

Know the Competition

- A. Team history
- B. How teams run
- C. Who to keep an eye on and why
- D. Always emphasize how prepared your team is for the competition

Act as if you have been there before

- A. Warmup
- B. Attitude at the race and on the line
- C. Win graciously, lose graciously

The Undefeated

- A. A team or Individual may have an undefeated season but they cannot be undefeated for ever

Wrap up

- A. It is about how you communicate and prepare your runners mentally and physically.
- B. Your last runner is as important as the first!
- C. Make their journey in this sport a lifetime memory. One day you may get the opportunity to coach their children, and for some, their grandchildren.