

Why wrestlers need their coach?

By Steve Fraser

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All athletes need a coach to help them improve and develop their athletic knowledge and skill. It goes without saying that coaches will guide and train their athletes, constantly pushing them to new heights and constantly evaluating their progress. Coaches can show their wrestlers the way to success a lot quicker than wrestlers could ever do without a coach. A coach's experience is so very valuable when guiding their students to victory.

In addition, coaches play many other very important roles with their athletes. They help their kids develop as great human beings as well as great athletes. A coach plays father at times. A coach plays friend at times. A coach plays mentor and sounding board. A coach plays disciplinarian and sympathetic supporter. A coach plays it **all** for their athletes.

In fact, some of the closest and most respected people in my life are my past coaches. There is a special bond that is formed between coach and athlete. One that lasts forever!

Recently I polled some coaches and wrestlers asking them to share why they think wrestlers need a coach. The following is a compilation of mine and their responses.

Why wrestlers need their coach?

To teach them to be a gracious winner as well as a gracious loser * To teach them how to problem solve for themselves *To teach them how to have fun with the sport *To tell them when they are proud of them *To encourage them when they meet with disappointment *To teach them to always seek for more knowledge *To help them learn from their mistakes *To help them face their challenges with confidence *To tell them there is no disgrace in losing *

To be a father when their father is not there *To encourage them to try harder, do their best, and excel to their full potential *To have someone to talk to when things at home seem difficult and there is just no one else who will listen *To be there... win, lose or draw, telling them how good a job they did, and how to improve as a wrestler and as a person *To help give them the motivation to win *To help them grow as a responsible young man or woman *To give them someone to look up to *To help them master the basics and to guide them as they develop their own, unique style as a wrestler and a human being

For guidance, leadership, and to teach them discipline, and life lessons... oh, and teach them how to wrestle *A coach may be the only stable father figure in a young boy/girl's life *A coach is invaluable to someone who has nothing or nobody *A coach can get a wrestler to go to practice instead of that kid going to a party, being too concerned with boy/girl friends, criminal activity, and other negative influences in life *A coach may be the only thing keeping a young kid from going over the edge *A coach can make someone realize their priorities and the things that are the most important in their lives.

I remember a movie I saw. The name of it was **HARDBALL** with Keanu Reeves. It was about little league baseball on the south side of Chicago. Keanu Reeves took one of the kids home to

the projects and when they got to his door he asked the kid, "What do you guys do for fun around here?" The kid responded, "Play baseball with you." ~ a wrestler

For love, direction and discipline *To teach, motivate, and prepare for upcoming events and how to handle the pressures *For guidance and teaching as well as someone who sets the example for hard work and perseverance *To support and challenge *To develop an understanding of character building skills

A coach sees and analyzes the situation totally different from the wrestler's perspective *To help teach, push, and then measure progress *To help realize the athlete's greatest potential *To hear honestly what he needs to hear...not just what he wants to hear *To inspire them when things seem impossible and to ground them in reality when they get to thinking they are too invincible

An athlete needs a coach who they can trust, admire, and believe in, even when they feel no one else cares *Who can light the path as a visionary, give them values to succeed, and hold them accountable to achieving their dreams *Who loves them for who they are, not for what the coach hopes they will become. And helps the wrestler no matter what, to tackle the challenges that help them win. For "love is not blind, it sees more, not less. But because it sees more...it is willing to see less"

I relate wrestling to learning to drive a car. A wrestling coach is like a DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) driving instructor. The coach has knowledge and instruction to pass on but must be careful. The coach is entrusted with a great responsibility in teaching today's youth about a unique subject. At the same time the coach has to spur interest and not scare them off. I know kids, of driving age, that are scared and will not apply to get their driving license. A coach has a responsibility to relay information and instruction in a healthy and safe manner. And they have to buy what the coach is selling. If you, as a coach, are not a student of the sport of wrestling, the wrestlers you coach will soon recognize this fact and your influence will be lost forever. A good wrestling coach will tell his wrestlers what they MUST hear ...not what they want to hear. ~ a coach

To show them the right direction *To correct their mistakes *A coach can see better from the outside, tell the wrestler their weakness, encourage them when they are not feeling well, give them advice from the coach's own past experiences, and make them feel they are not alone in the match

To give constructive criticism *Because the wrestler need somebody who truly believes in them and helps them to squash their self-doubt *To help them celebrate a victory no matter how small, somebody who can always find that victory - even in defeat. *To take them where they could not go by themselves *Who else will give you straight up, non-objective criticism?

To motivate and push beyond what the wrestler thinks possible. *To motivate, mentor, and teach *To inspire for good grades, athleticism, tenacity, and character *To be a partner in developing wrestling and life skills *To get the tips that are not written in the books

A wrestler needs a coach to provide motivation and support, not only when the wrestler is excelling but also when they are down. My son's coaches are awesome. They push them to be the best in all they do in regards to school, home and in wrestling. They emphasis the importance of doing well in school and actually make the boys do extra running if they have had issues in school and at home. They really are supportive of the entire family. And of course they do the

obvious... teach the wrestler proper execution of moves to prevent injury to themselves and others. ~a parent

To teach and encourage them so they can reach their full potential *A coach helps a wrestler believe in them self when they are having doubts *A wrestler needs a guide through the pitfalls and challenges of competition, training, and their personal life.

To teach and nurture virtue *For a truly successful and fulfilled life *For hope

Now on the lighter side...by Bill Scherr

Because there is someone handy to blame if they lose *How else could they make it to weigh-in on time? *Who else would bail them out of jail at three in the morning? *To discuss the problems they are having in their dating relationships

To hand out per diem...whoever said there is no such thing as a free meal? *To ignore the coach, about keeping their weight down, until the absolute last minute *To listen to their lame excuses after they lose *To listen to their parent's lame excuses after their child loses *Who else would the wrestler's parents blame after their child loses?

To spend hours demonstrating technique only to find it ignored because "my other coach did it this way" or "well, I've always done it another way" *To provide remedial educational tutoring *Who else is going to call their professors and ask for the grading scale to "slide a little lower" for them?