

Focus on Fundamentals

Have you ever sat in a gym and overheard parents complaining about the lack of fundamentals? It is always a complaint directed towards the coach. We see it day in and day out any gym. Poor shooting form, losing the dribble, out of position rebounding, terrible looking layups, you name it.

Teaching fundamentals in any sport is critical in maintaining consistency in the athlete's game. It is the foundation for establishing good habits and in time a strong game. Though we may get excited at the slam dunk it is important that we emphasize to the youth that learning the basic principles in their respective sport is MORE important than these exhilarating moments.

What makes a great player excel consistently? How did they get to where they are? How does an athlete, who possesses average athleticism, excel in their respective sport?

As in most cases there can be a number of factors in young kids having poor fundamental habits. Lack of instruction. Lack of enforcement. Lack of athletes taking responsibility for what they are learning. Lack of parents not giving their athlete the opportunities. These are all bad things that can lead to an older athlete struggling with the fundamentals.

Let me break this down for you.

COACHES TEACH & ENFORCE IT:

All coaches in youth sports should become aggressive with teaching the fundamentals of their sport. They are more important than any strategy a coach can come up with. Without proper fundamentals players will be unlikely to execute the strategy, the offense, the play, etc. properly. Continuous focus should be placed on having players repeat the basics of their sport over and over again. Coaches should always talk through the skill being taught, then provide plenty of examples and finally allow the players to learn and understand it. Never speed up the skill until learned, take it slow.

Once taught there must be consequences for not doing it right. A simple example might be using the wrong hand/arm when shooting a layup. We all know this stuff takes time to learn and develop but the longer an athlete is allowed to do it wrong the worse it gets. Coaches need to talk about and enforce the fundamentals. There needs to be consequences.

ATHLETES DO IT:

One thing that drives me nuts is to watch an athlete on their own time, whether it is before practice or in their own driveway, doing things wrong. They do know the difference but they choose not to do it right. They are more interested in making shots rather than do it right. The athletes who learn at a young age to focus on doing it how they are taught will excel. Athletes take personal responsibility.

PARENTS BE INVOLVED WITH IT:

I believe parents have a responsibility in making sure their athletes get the fundamentals. I've approached many a parents in my career instructing them what their youngster is being asked to do. I want the parent to understand it, monitor it and help enforce it. Help with the homework so to speak. Parents, who are actively involved in their child's sport, getting them to camps and monitoring them, make a huge difference in their development also. The parent who understands the patience and benefit of learning it right way and taking it slow will in time have the better athlete.

Continue on page 2

Focus on Fundamentals (continued from page 1)

The great athletes we love to watch in professional sports today started somewhere and that somewhere is in the fundamentals. At some time in their career someone took the time to teach them properly along with parent's reinforcement to create a great athlete.

Many summer camps get the kids playing games, which they love to do, but if they struggle with bad fundamentals they are only getting better at bad fundamentals. At HOOPZONE Basketball our camps focus on fundamentals.

Without the fundamentals your game will never get off the ground. Good luck in doing it right!



FOCUS ON FUNDAMENTALS

It's those little things that make the best teams and players.
If you can master the fundamentals, they work no matter what!

"Without the fundamentals your game will never get off the ground!"

Learn more at <http://www.hoopzonebasketball.com/fundamentals.html>

Visit our online store at www.hoopzonebasketball.com/store
full of motivational artwork, eBook, balls, HZ apparel, window decals and more!