



Future Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities in International School Athletics

NADC Workshop: Monday, December 16; 10:00-11:00am

Turner Neal, CMAA, CIAA and Scott Hossack, CAA, CIAA



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Workshop Description

1. Implementing Professional Development for Coaches
2. Developing Mental Toughness in Student-Athletes
3. Q&A





Grounding Questions



What does your school do to support your professional development?

Is there more that you wish your school would do for you?

How do you best learn?



Grounding Questions

What do you do to support your coaches development?

Is there more you can do support your coaches?

How do your coaches learn best?





Program Ideas



3rd Party Offerings

Internal Coaching Clinics

Mentor Program

Book Club

AD Breakfast



Delivery Methods

In-Person Events

Online Asynchronous

Zoom

What else?





Professional Development for Coaches



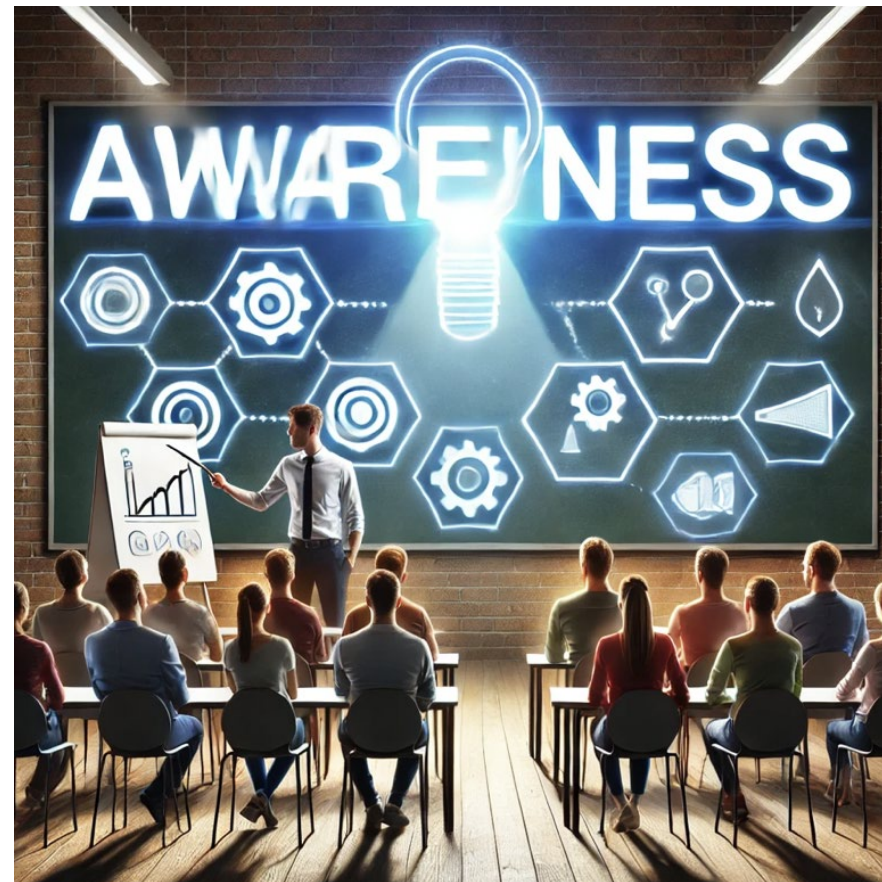


Stage 1: Awareness and Advocacy

Goal: Introduce the concept of professional development for coaches and its importance.

Description:

1. No organized PD opportunities
2. General lack of knowledge or value in this area
3. Not prioritized or asked about





Stage 1: Awareness and Advocacy



Challenges:

1. Lack of Awareness
2. Resistance to Change
3. Limited Resources

Solutions:

1. Education
2. Celebrate/publicize early wins
3. Leverage data
4. Look for excess school PD money at the end of the year



Stage 2: Voluntary Participation

Goal: Create low-stakes opportunities for professional development to build momentum.

Description:

1. Coaches are aware and curious
2. Few coaches express interest, but limited action
3. Leadership support to encourage development





Stage 2: Voluntary Participation



Challenges:

1. Low participation
2. Perception and belief that it doesn't matter
3. Scheduling conflicts

Solutions:

1. Offer incentives, food, affirmation
2. Tailored content to specific challenges
3. Flexible formats



Stage 3: Structured Opportunities

Goal: Introduce structured opportunities and formalize professional development within the school's systems.

Description:

1. Offered but optional
2. Leadership begins to discuss future expectations
3. Majority of coaches view it as “extra”





Stage 3: Structured Opportunities



Challenges:

1. Uneven participation or opportunities across sports and activities
2. Lack of accountability
3. Requires funding/budget

Solutions:

1. Encourage head coach participation
2. Partial funding models
3. Group training sessions



Stage 4: Gradual Mandates

Goal: Transition from optional to mandatory participation.

Description:

1. PD is the norm, leadership includes it in hiring contract, or annual expectations.
2. Newer coaches readily engage
3. Systems for tracking and accountability in early development





Stage 4: Gradual Mandates





Stage 5: Full Integration

Goal: Professional development becomes a non-negotiable standard.

Description:

1. Coaches required to complete PD
2. Leadership provides clear support including budget, time, and calendar
3. Coaches view PD as integral and recognize its benefits





Stage 5: Full Integration



Challenges:

1. Sustaining enthusiasm
2. Keeping content relevant
3. Turnover in leadership

Solutions:

1. Regular updates to programs
2. Incorporate PD into evaluations
3. Cultural of learning and excellence



Organizations Providing PD

1. NFHSLearn.com
2. 3DInstitute.com
3. Positivecoach.org
4. ICoachKids.org
5. Individual sport federations





NIAAA Courses Related to PD

1. LTC 910: Current Issues
2. LTC 704: Recruit/Hire, Mentor and Retain Coaches
3. LTC 705: Coach Centered Educational Athletics - A Character Based Coach To Coach Mentoring Program
4. LTC 706: Coaching Coaches to be Leadership Educators
5. LTC 723: Administration of Professional Growth Programs for Interscholastic Athletic Personnel





Turn & Talk

What stage would you put your school in?

What are your biggest challenges for implementing professional development programs?

What are some possible solutions?





MENTALLY STRONG!

Shanghai American School's journey into creating mentally tough athletes

We encourage you: Take off the training wheels. Focus on true mental toughness. Focus on commitments and controllables, you can't control the results anyway. Love people. Serve people. Provide value. Burn your goals. Fall in love with the process of becoming great.”

— Joshua Medcalf





Why we started this journey:

- **Students feel unable to focus and their minds are cluttered with too many things. (academics, other activities, etc)**
- **Students relate success to winning**
- **Students want to play a lesser team than higher level competition**
- **Often our students lack experience in pressure situations**
- **Athletes were disengaged with their sport and used avoidance behaviors**
- **Mental block against our other campus**
- **Competitive athletics was new to many students due to COVID and lock downs**



RESILIENCE

COURAGE

DETERMINATION

**POSITIVE SELF
TALK**



FOCUS

**SELF
MANAGEMENT**

ADAPTABILITY



How we as an athletics program started the journey:



- Created a behavior code that focused on the concepts of ENGAGEMENT, RESPECT and GRATITUDE
 - Focused on professionally developing our coaches
 - Used student feedback on their wellbeing (AT QR code)
 - Modified communications (community, coaches and students)
 - Captains/leadership group started
- still need to create space in practices to focus on visualization, reflection and mindfulness



5 DAILY ACTIVITIES THAT WILL HELP MENTAL TOUGHNESS:

REFRAMING

MINDFULNESS

SELF EVALUATION

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

MENTAL REHEARSAL

The following activities are from Eli Straw's **5 Mental Toughness Exercises Every Athlete Should Practice Daily**



REFRAMING

The practice of taking negative thoughts and reframing them into a positive. Helps athletes become aware of their thinking.

At the end of each day write 3 to 5 negative thoughts that he had down. Now underneath each negative thought write a reframing of that thought into a positive. Continue to do this until it becomes a habit.





MINDFULNESS

Developing the ability to be present or “in the moment”

Body Scan Meditation

The Body Scan Meditation involves lying down comfortably and focusing on each part of your body, starting from the head and moving down to the toes, while consciously relaxing any tension you feel. As you breathe deeply, take note of sensations in each area, allowing yourself to become more aware of your physical state. This practice promotes relaxation, increases body awareness, and can enhance performance and recovery for athletes.

Meditation

Sit comfortably, close your eyes, and focus on your breath. Inhale deeply through your nose, then exhale slowly through your mouth. Acknowledge distracting thoughts without judgment and gently say "thinking." Redirect your focus back to your breathing. Gradually increase your meditation from 5 minutes.

Mindfulness Walk

Go for a walk in a quiet place, preferably in nature, without any distractions. Leave your phone and other devices behind. Focus on your breathing as you walk. If your mind wanders, gently refocus on your breathing.



SELF EVALUATION

Allows for confirming positive behaviors and setting goals for future games or practices. Intentional thinking helps focus and students to become more aware of their thoughts



Exercise: At the end of the practice or game answer the following 3 questions. Write the answers down.

1. What are some things I can learn from the game or practice? (3 to 4 things)
2. How was my thinking today?
3. What are the good things I did in that practice or game (3 to 4 things)



Setting Performance Objectives

Performance objectives helps to focus on student learning and builds on identifying their weaknesses. Sets a clear intentions so athletes can have a direction. This practice helps athletes to be focused during practice and let go of distracting thoughts for games.

Exercise: Setting Performance Objectives

Student-athletes should establish performance objectives based on their self-reflection. This should be done for every day at practice and games.

Practice Objectives

- Focus on specific skills to improve (e.g., free throw percentage, defensive stance).

Game Objectives and Reflection

- Set strategies to enhance performance in competitions.
- Identify mental barriers to release for better focus.
- Consider distractions and how to overcome them (e.g., maintaining composure under pressure).

By setting clear objectives, student-athletes can create actionable plans for improvement and success.





MENTAL REHEARSAL

The practice of visualizing a skill, a situation or a timeframe. Think it and becomes believable.

Choose a skill to mentally practice performing. This gives the opportunity to gain more repetitions than you can physically do. e.g: The perfect tackle for rugby or the perfect jump shot in basketball.

Choose a particular situation (high pressure, end of the game, or set play) and practice this mentally.

Choose a longer part of a competition and run it through. Put together what it looks like, sounds like and the feels like. Build the steps in your mind that would lead you through the competition.





LEARNING FROM OTHERS

Find at least 2 others to have a quick conversation. We will have 5 mins to learn from each other.

Discuss the following prompt:

In our program we use these resources/tools to help develop mentally tough athletes.

or

I have heard of this tool that I think would benefit student athletes in becoming mentally tough.



MENTAL TOUGHNESS RESOURCES

A few resources I found helpful.

- Books
- Websites
- SAS specific one

Any others I should add?





FINAL THOUGHTS

Mental toughness is a set of skills that can be learned and should be part of every student athletes tool kits.

Student Athletes are often unaware of their thinking and how it can have a negative impact on their performance or their well-being

Goals are good, but focused goals that are based on reflective thinking, and various periods of time and purposes are more important in the development of mental toughness(Performance Objectives, short term, season, long term, etc.).

Daily practice of these skills will benefit high school athletes-Coaches need to find time and build these habits



Questions & Contact Information

Turner Neal, CMAA, CIAA

turner@nealfamilyconsulting.com

Scott Hossack, CAA, CIAA

scott.hossack@saschina.org