

The Olympics, its Religious Roots, and its Capacity for International Renewal: A glimpse at how local communities can foster Olympic-sized change

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Abstract: Power of Sports

The Olympics provides the pinnacle of all sporting events internationally in an effort to unite the world. Over the years, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has realized that its event has the potential to influence and change the world through sport. However, intentions have fallen short to some degree as many efforts have proven to be short lived, unsustainable and have not been as effective as initially perceived. The IOC proclaims that its duty is to provide the opportunity for sporting excellence. Considering the way in which the Olympics are run it is difficult to fully implement the Olympic ideals on a regular basis. There are few resources available to advocate what the Olympics strives to uphold year round, as the sporting event itself lasts the course of three weeks.

The practical realities faced by the IOC have made it difficult to implement their projected international humanitarian outreach initiatives. Despite this, the grand ideals of the Olympics are to be applauded. These conceptual principles recognize the power sports have and the significant impact that athletes have on their communities.

This paper explores the potential leverage that the presence of the games has worldwide. There may even be an avenue for such ideals to be carried out further with greater impact at a local or institutional level. In an effort to show such opportunities that the Olympics could consider I researched current studies of the Olympics. One major discovery was the lack of research done on the effects that faith has had on athletics.

In order to prove that faith-based practices had an effect on athletics, I did a study comparing the initial perceptions of sport/team unity to perceptions of the same athletes after a competitive season focused on cultivating faith-based principles/practices. The results showed that there was an impact on the team as a whole. This research gave light to the idea that a center dedicated to the study of faith in sports would be an opportunity for further growth of sustained athletic development and its impact at a community level.

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The subject of faith in sports has come to the forefront of the nation's thinking in recent years as there has been an increase in the number of high profile athletes, professional and even of amateur status, who have chosen to publicly pronounce their faith, often in front of a national television audience. These athletes are also publicly testifying that their athletic achievement has been a result of their belief in God, thus giving reason to research the impact that faith has on sports. At the recent Summer Olympic Games, held in London, numerous athletes made public testimonies of their faith. This ever occurring phenomenon has provided a new outlet for the investigation of the impact that faith has on athletes.

Overview of the Olympics Games

The Olympic Games are an international sporting event unlike any other, hosting the largest celebration of sporting excellence in regards to the number of athletes competing, the sporting events included, and the ability for all nations to participate in a peaceful and harmonious setting (The Olympic Museum, 2011). These games happen every four years and include both winter and summer competitions. This period of time, between the games, is known as an Olympiad which is the time in between each Olympic Games. Prior to 1992 both Summer and Winter Olympics happened during the same year. Since then, the Winter and Summer Games have been held separately, rotating interchangeably every two years (The Modern Olympics, 2007). Today, both Olympics are held over the course of sixteen days and are hosted in different countries and cities each time. Cities place bids to host an Olympics and are selected based on the proposal submitted by National Olympic Committees who aspire to host the next Olympic Games. The announcements typically are made around seven to eight years prior to the games. However, most of the countries begin working on applications more than ten years in advance of the games themselves ("Rules of Conduct", 2011).

When a city is selected to host the Olympic Games, the responsibility is passed on to that country's National Olympic Committee which creates another committee known as the Olympic Committee of the Olympic Games (OCOG). The OCOG works in direct relationship with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as the IOC acts as a consultant aiding the OCOG throughout the entirety of the Olympic process. The OCOG is in charge of overseeing the games and ensuring fairness for all athletes and competitors in their rightful sporting events, planning out travel and lodging for athletes, taking care of transportation issues, accommodating international media relations, and assuming responsibility for cultural celebrations that the Olympics provides throughout the course of the games themselves. The OCOG has a crucial job in securing the success of the Olympics, making compliance to the Olympic Charter and the IOC, forming a contract to strengthen the focus and structure for the host city ("Rules of Conduct", 2011).

Historical Overview of the Olympic Games

The Olympic Games finds its origins tracing back to ancient Greece after the Persian Wars between the years 490-479 BC in Olympia. There were nine main sporting events. The sporting events were only one aspect of the five day Olympic festival that focused itself on religious tradition and decree. Cartledge stated that the games were designed to honor and worship Zeus Olympios, a god whom the Greeks believed to be the ruler of Mt Olympus (p.11, 2000). "For the ancient Greeks the sport of the Olympic games was quite literally religious exercise – a display of religious devotion and worship" extending to the sacrificing of animals, large feasts, and major celebrations throughout the course of the Olympic festival" (Cartledge, p.11, 2000). The decline of the Olympics took place during the third century A.D. when Emperor Theodosius ordered the cessation of the games destroying the pagan temples; later the area was invaded by barbarians in the fifth and sixth centuries (Hugh, 1998).

It was not until the late nineteenth century that the revival of the Olympic Games happened. Pierre de Coubertin, a French pioneer of education in sport, became an enthusiast for the development of the Modern Olympics. After a number of attempts, Coubertin was able to set up the first Modern Olympic Games in 1896. In 2008, Wassong addressed that from the beginning, Coubertin had to overcome a number of social and political issues to revamp the games and institute them on the world stage, foreshadowing some of the same concerns prevalent today (p.3). Coubertin persevered because he felt that this sporting event would improve transnational understanding on a global level; and nationally, he was inspired to help improve the poor self-image that young males in France were struggling with as a result of the defeat France had to Germany in 1871 during the Franco Prussian War (Wassong, 2008, p.3-4). Many of these social issues remain an affective force today as the global youth population adjusts into society and the confines of societal norms (Capps, p.48, 2000).

Olympism and the Universality of Sport

Pierre de Coubertin once stated "Olympism is not a system it is a state of mind - It can permeate a wide variety of modes of expression and no single race or era can claim to have the monopoly of it." (Thomas & Sheehan, 2012). The Modern Olympics carries with it great symbolism and hope that sport can change the world. While the term Olympics refers specifically to the actual games of competition, the coming together of culture, nationalism, education, respect, and a common purpose (being sport) is what is frequently referred to as Olympism. The harmonious development of humanity is one of the primary goals that Olympism hopes to accomplish by utilizing sport as a service and vehicle by which to do acts of good.

Sport is also an outlet to teach all involved in the games respect for themselves and for others, doing so through the communication and interaction between communities creating opportunities for a peaceful society internationally and domestically (IOC, 2011). Across the world communities participate in sporting events that have the same rules and regulations and, therefore, it is said that sport can be used as a universal language. Jacques Rogge, current (as of 2012) IOC Committee president, said, "Sport fosters understanding between individuals, facilitates dialogue between divergent communities and breeds tolerance between nations" (Georgiadis & Syrigos, 2009, p.9) Sport has afforded the opportunity for mankind to overcome divisions of race and ethnicity. John Davies, current (as of 2012) President of the New Zealand Olympic Committee, proclaimed that "Olympism applies to everyone. We are all born with differing degrees of talent. Olympism makes it clear that anyone who attempts to be the best that they can be is a winner. The Olympic movement is a 'sport for all' movement and is not just targeting elite people" ("Olympism applies", 2001).

The world has had a chance to transcend itself looking beyond difference to appreciate the unity that all man shares which is sport; as the Olympics has upheld it to be a human right (IOC, 2011). These principles and many others are captured in the Olympic Charter: "The Fundamental Principles of Olympism" (refer to Appendix page 47). The Olympic Charter is in essence the constitution for the Olympic Games providing the rules and regulations, the rights of participants, and how the main sport organizations associated with the Olympic movement are required to carry out operations in compliance with the charter.

Those involved in producing the Olympic Games have worked extensively over the years to establish an international sporting event that is highly organized. It is established through the creation of numerous official documents and legislation outlining the context and parameters of the games. The other defining features of the Olympics that will be highlighted in this thesis are the educational values of Olympism. These values extend from those proposed in the original Olympic charter (see Appendix A page 47) illustrating that the skills athletes learn through sports can help them be a proactive contributor to their own community and carry out their life with moral and ethical thought. These educational values of Olympism were created to help athletes strive to do more, giving quality time and effort to whatever it is that they do (Refer to Appendix B page 48).

Since the beginning of the Modern Olympics originating in the late 19th century these educational values have been leading the Olympic movement. This idealism of the Olympics has been a symbol for mutual understanding on a global scale despite the apparent differences that typically separate the countries and their athletes. The Games have been an opportunity for nations to reconcile differences, reducing tension in a friendly context and acting as a force for global unity and change. There still remain many unresolved international political issues but the Olympics can only do so much with its current mode of operation.

Over time the IOC has begun to develop a working partnership with the United Nations, the largest political aid and governing body in the world, most noted for its role in international diplomacy. In 1994, a year after the UN and the IOC began to develop relations, 120 countries agreed to Olympic peace through the unity of sport. It was the first time that the United Nations had considered sport's impact on society and recognized that the Olympics could be a catalyst for change (Wassong, 2009, p.21). The IOC and the United Nations have in recent years partnered and focused their efforts on the development and preservation of peace throughout the duration of each Olympic Games. According to Wassong (2009) the Peace Games in the Congo and the sport education program "Sport for Peace" which aims to cultivate "social harmony, and trans-cultural respect to countries who are suffering inter- and intra- war conflicts" are examples of the successful developments that are a result of the organization's partnership (p.1). There is, however, a lack of research on the impacts and outcomes that such events have had on the communities in which these events and programs have been implemented.

Emphasizing Corporate and Social Responsibility

Throughout its history, the Olympics have upheld ideas that stretch beyond the contexts of the sporting arena. The Olympic Games inspire people and often motivates them, as the catch phrase goes, to "conceive the impossible". Athletes from all over the world test themselves at maximal levels under severe pressure, high stress, and tense competitive environments as very few ever make it to such heights of athleticism. The games are unique in nature as the entire world is watching every move each athlete makes. These athletes are hand selected from their representative country to signify their home nation in front of the world (Guttman, 2002, p. 2). As the modern Olympics evolved, the athletes to some degree have become reifications of their host nation as their performance is symbolic of the country, culture, and ethnicity for which they compete.

In the Olympic Games, there is more at stake than just a gold medal. Often the pride of a nation rests in its placement on the medal podium. Athletic performances tend to be small bragging rights that parallel larger political issues happening worldwide. Frequently overlooked is the fact that all people who are a part of this Olympic process should also uphold the same ideal values as the athletes. There is so much focus on the athletes upholding these Olympic values and carrying them out but all associated should exemplify such ideals. Toohey (2009) noted that those doing so would allow for Olympism to carry out the potential effect that it could if the fans, the coaches, the IOC officials, even the vendor operators were striving to uphold such ideal values in their work and life (p.16). This is where the ethical aspect of the Olympics becomes so crucial. The success of the athlete typically reflects the community that supports them. When delegates, officials, and athletes do not uphold such ethics they deter from the athletes' potential success on the playing field. (Toohey, 2009, p.16).

The Olympics are organized by fallible human beings who make mistakes and uphold various levels of ethical groundings. It is difficult for Olympic officials to always see eye to eye on how certain policies such as economic development should be carried out. Thus a number of problems arise because there have been times when officials have engaged in coerce practices. These poor choices made by IOC officials have the potential to undermine the Olympics' ideal values (Toohey, 2009, p.5). It becomes difficult to solve issues when the leaders of the Olympic movement struggle to do so as well.

Responsibility and accountability come with being a part of the Olympic Games but oftentimes corporate entities forget that their participation has a greater impact. As President Jaques Roggue states, "Our commitment to values starts within our own organizations... We cannot expect others to adhere to high ethical standards if we do not do so ourselves. We cannot expect proper conduct on the field of play if we do not have good governance within the Olympic family" (Roggue, 2009).

Toohey proposes the uniting of corporate social responsibility with the idealism of the Olympic Games in that both should partner in the values that they practice and uphold. Corporate social responsibility aims to make businesses accountable to ethical standards for their business practices (2009). The Olympics upholds ideal values that can be applicable in all contexts. Ultimately, those businesses associated with the Olympics should strive to balance financial sustainability with goals of achieving social and environmental outcomes (Toohey, p.8). Time and again the corporate world focuses its efforts on profit and overlooks the social impacts that its financial decisions create. There needs to be a push for business efforts towards the development of sustainable projects that are not merely profit oriented. Arguably, those partnered with the Olympics should be doing more with their corporation than bringing in profit off of Olympic sponsorship.

The Olympic Games are apart of an organization that aims to uphold corporate social responsibility with many community outreach and educational initiatives but has had leaders and partnered with companies who have struggled to uphold such values. As a result, the ideals of Olympism are under-valued. This leaves quite a door open, one that provides both a challenge and an opportunity for future growth and cultural development if this link between corporate social responsibility and Olympic ideals could be made.

Corporate Social Responsibility and Community Development: The case of Hackney, England (2012)

Besides providing an environment for sporting excellence the Olympics strives to develop a cultural legacy for communities throughout its modern existence. As a result, major renovations and reconstruction happen within a particular community as the community is redefined to develop the necessary sporting venues and businesses to help support the Olympic Games. This process brings with it new challenges and opportunities as these ventures are not always sustainable.

The city of London, England received the bid to host the 2012 Summer Olympic Games and with that the responsibility of upholding all aspects that correlate with the global sporting event. At the time of the research for this thesis, the IOC began to focus its efforts on the community of Hackney, England, a small industrial and economically challenged part of London. The IOC in partnership with the London Olympic Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG) placed great effort on establishing a cultural legacy that will be sustainable within the Hackney community. This regeneration project, though hopeful, has found it difficult to nurture the internal dynamic of the community as most of their efforts only seem to satisfy short-term capacities of leadership development and community growth (Stevenson, 2009, p.4).

Though the IOC has been successful planning a number of cultural events and activities within the community, there have been difficulties in nourishing an ongoing legacy of Olympic status. Stevenson (2009) stated that the ultimate goal for this project is to provide disadvantaged communities with a legacy that will help them regenerate their current status and build upon it constructively (p.8).

Currently, the Hackney regeneration project has found its struggles between national and local goals as each wish to develop its own objectives within a specific timeframe. This could potentially lead to a lack of emphasis and degeneration after the idealism of the games slows down creating a national tension between government and local community (Stevenson, 2009, p.45). The research extracted from the Hackney project illustrates the difficulties with developing a legacy within a community as shared goals must be established along with investment from all parties including those associated with government, business and the community, continually over time. (Stevenson, 2009)

Though the Olympics are developing major business ventures the community of Hackney is skeptical of the future. Reports suggest that many of the local townspeople are fighting to hold on to the edginess of Hackney's culture. It is obvious that these Olympics, as they have in the past, will affect the local communities especially those who live within them. Yet it will be interesting to see how the regeneration plans play out over the coming years and how communities like Hackney will transform, or remain stagnant as a result. Thus the question arises, in what context can society in association with the Olympics Games develop sustainable community growth that balances both the communities' goals with larger governing bodies' aspirations, to create accountable citizens and leaders who will further carry out this process?

From the Scholar-Athlete to the Scholar-Athlete-Citizen

Pierre de Coubertin aimed for the Modern Olympics to act as a venue to offer a lasting educational experience, developing elevated levels of social and moral values which would cultivate respectful and responsible citizens of society (Wassong, 2009, p.12). Coubertin once stated that the scholar-athlete is the "true Olympic role model" for he has cultivated within himself the discipline needed to overcome the challenges and obstacles in his path, and balance his time efficiently to excel in both his academic work and his athletic prowess. Coubertin believed that athletics could fortify individuals by developing moral strength in character as individuals pursued both educational and athletic development in a more holistic process (Muller, 2004).

Today, most athletes who participate in the Games are of professional status, salaried or sponsored for what they do. Many of these athletes have made their sport their career and are either post-graduate or have postponed their education to prepare for the demands of Olympic competition. Coubertin's foundational goal of educating the athlete prior to their next chapter in life was to help cultivate good citizenry which incorporated stable, ethical and moral values. Today countless athletes have become highly influential and publicized for their athletic skill globally by means of various media outlets but do not necessarily have the same education or uphold all values of Olympism as Pierre de Coubertin had originally hoped for.

An opportunity arises to further develop these Olympic athletes. As alluded to earlier, many have role model status as their achievements have set them apart from their countrymen and women (Guttmann, 2002, p. 2). The question is what do these athletes end up doing with their role model status? Most just continue on in their sport until retirement. But what about the potential they have to make change in their communities and utilize their role model status for cyclical and systemic change, where they then go back home or remain a presence on the world stage helping develop the communities they are a part of for the better. Should that not be the goal? Athletes at the elite level of sport are under the media's spectacle and are scrutinized when they deviate from desired behaviors that are not conducive to serving as example behaviors for society and the people they influence.

The Olympics has provided an avenue for a final educational piece, initiating the transition of athlete to global citizen as the games provide an impacting experience for those viewing and participating. However, the games only serve a specific population of athletes and an even smaller number of global communities. Not all athletes in the world are able to receive such an experiential learning opportunity especially of Olympic caliber. Thus there must be another opportunity for which similar ideals can be harbored and instituted.

Role of Religion and Faith in the Olympic Games

Religion and faith were central to the original Games held in Greece. Some even argue that the games are, in fact, secular religious festivals (Rothenbuhler, 2009, p.138). Historically, the Olympic Games have created an atmosphere for the transcendence of man to portray godly qualities of athleticism. The Olympics have a power of Godliness as man strives to go beyond what human nature and capacity allows him to typically do. An alternate perspective on the role of religion and faith in the Olympic Games can be seen through the research of sociologists who would argue that for many, in this modern generation, sport is “their” religion (Bouverat & Chevalley, 2006). They read, breathe, follow and live through sport to an extent on par with individuals of devout religious faith practice their beliefs. Considering the origins of the Modern Olympics, those values implemented by Pierre de Coubertin were derived from religious origin.

By making the connection between sport and religion, these Olympic athletes would symbolize modern day Saints striving to carry out the values and principles that the Olympics upholds. These athletes accomplish incredible feats and are extremely disciplined committing the majority of their time to developing their skill in sport. Bouverat & Chevalley (2006) stated that competitive sports by nature are arguably a religious practice tapping into the spiritual side of things because athletes must continue to trust in the process and persevere through the good and the bad in order to triumph in the end. These athletes have become icons, with their images plastered in all media outlets, and any remnant of their athletic achievements are sought after and upheld with great value (Bouverat & Chevalley, 2006). People want to follow them and want to believe in such talented individuals because of the principles they convey and the feats they have accomplished.

Media outlets and government institutions have utilized the Olympics to persuade and demonstrate a desired message that has impacted the community that views it (Hill & Helmers, 2004, p.41). Its message has been unique in its own right and has changed throughout the centuries of its existence, impacting the world throughout the process. A major part of this transformation has been removing formal religious connections and connotations to the games to secularize and globalize the sporting event, making it more relevant to all who participate. But that leaves the door open to the potential possibility of what would happen if faith was once again a significant part of the games. What would happen if God, a divine creator, was given glory for this event as man goes beyond human capacity in the sporting arena?

Interestingly, more and more athletes mention that they train and compete for a higher purpose; a purpose they themselves believe to be the main factor and reason for their athletic successes. For example, Allyson Felix, a well acclaimed Olympic medalist in track and field, stated, “My running is a gift from God; My success is not of myself. I know that my actions on and off the track should be a reflection of God, because people watch what you do and what you say” (Cazeneuve, 2008). There is an accountability attached to their work and what these athletes of faith portray is that their efforts are not merely for their own self-interest or for anyone else’s giving light to the possibility that faith is that missing element.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the power that faith has in sports, more specifically, in the development of individual athletes over the course of their sporting careers. By doing foundational research, the goal of this study has been to find an avenue that will transform communities in the spirit of the values upheld by Olympism. Today, there are a number of athletes who are publicly proclaiming their athletic prowess as a result of their faith in God. That spiritual component has seemed to be “de-emphasized” in the modern Olympics but many of the values upheld in Olympism are deep-rooted in religious origin.

In order to accomplish the global efforts the Olympics strive to achieve we must look beyond the current arena in which the Olympics operates and put such ideals to the test in another venue. Though programs have been tried in the past, the nature and reality of the Olympics precludes any sustained or effective outcomes. Collegiate athletics may serve as that perfect venue to harness what Coubertin referred to as the final educational experience. Ultimately, we aim to bring those values back to their core origins and connect them to the divine purpose they originally served in order to see the effect that these values of faith have on the development of the athlete.

Methodology

Overview

The purpose of this study is to explore the power of reintegrating faith into a college athletics program. More specifically, to what extent does a training/coaching program grounded in elements of faith have on every aspect of an athlete's experience in their sport and at their university? The results of the pilot study provide evidence of the viability of such programs on college campuses. This pilot study sought to explore the potential for a faith-based program, Diving in Faith, in its efforts to transform both the athletic performance of the participants and their spirituality.

Setting

In order to test the Diving in Faith athletic mentorship program, an observational and ethnographic case study was conducted over the past year with the Swimming and Diving Teams of a small NCAA Division I program housed in a private, Catholic, liberal arts institution in the northeast. Like many small schools, and unlike most larger Division I programs, this university has one head coach for both Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving programs with one assistant coach (a spouse) serving mainly as the diving coach. In other words, at most institutions there are separate coaches for Men's and Women's programs. The situation at this university, however, is rather unique and brings with it its own complications and challenges. Not only is it difficult to coach men and women together, they must also incorporate the diving team, an entity that arguably acts totally separate from the swim team (refer to Appendix C on page 49 for further rationale). With that said, many knowledgeable observers would also state that this program is a "second tier" program, with low funding, poor pay for its coaches, and, comparatively, few scholarships – in other words, it lacks the resources necessary for sustained success. Therefore, it relies heavily on walk-on athletes to step up and train like scholarship athletes. The reality, however, is that the lack of scholarships makes it difficult to hold the athletes' feet to the fire.

Participant Characteristics

Participants in the study included 35 swimmers (12 men and 19 women), seven of whom (4 men and 3 women) were divers. The participants ages ranged from 18-22 years and all would be considered Caucasian. The majority of the participants were familiar to Catholic and/or Christian traditions and beliefs. It should be noted that one male diver broke his femur and was sidelined toward the end of the regular season just prior to conference championships.

Measures & Instruments

For this study, an eleven item Likert-style survey (see Appendix D on page 52) was designed to assess the team members' views on different aspects of the school, their coaches, the training program, and practice. Two questions also asked respondents to assess the academic part of their educational experience. Participants were asked to rate each of the eleven characteristics on a scale of 1-7 using identifiers that most resonate with today's college athletes. For example, instead of using a continuum from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" the survey used identifying phrases such as "changed my life" and "I just can't get enough" as indicators of the most positive responses to phrases such as "weak sauce" as an indicator of the most negative response. The first three responses were deemed as "positive". Response four was deemed neutral. Responses five and six were deemed "negative". Response seven, "no say" was not chosen by any of the respondents. Also, the author uses percentage of responses, in part, due to the mortality effect of the sample size from the pre-survey (time 1) to the post-survey (time 2). A total of 31 athletes participated in the pre-test. However, only 21 athletes completed the post-test. There was no IRB distributed because the results obtained from the surveys did not have any direct link to the participants. The intent of the survey was to discover athlete's perceptions in order to benefit the team holistically.

Procedures

The NCAA swimming and diving season begins in late August and concludes with the conference championships in February. For those individuals who move on to and qualify for NCAA's, their season may extend another month or two. The study period for this thesis went from early August, 2011 and concluded in late March, 2012.

The author made an attempt to triangulate the research; in other words, the realization that no one research approach would fully capture the essence of what was occurring over the course of the year, therefore, the use of multiple methodologies would increase the validity of the study.

At the core of the research, however, was a pre and post survey designed to assess the priorities and current perceptions the team held both prior to and at the conclusion of the season. The pre-survey was given out at the end of August, 2011 and the post-survey was distributed toward the end of March, 2012.

The Role of the Researcher

The nature and circumstances surrounding this research, specifically the role of the principal investigator, warrants comment. The author of the study was a member of the swimming and diving team and actually held the title of the head captain of the team (there are four “swim captains’ underneath the head captain) for the length of the study period. In one sense, the reader could observe or conclude that the author served in some pseudo coaching capacity.

Largely out of necessity, the author adopted a complete participant role for the study. In other words, he fully participated in the swimming and diving season and facilitated the delivery of the program. While attempts were made to insure as much objectivity as possible, the reader is left to his or her own conclusions as to the impartiality of the author.

In the early weeks the team started off very strong with a keen focus on the long haul ahead. The incoming freshmen class brought in passion and excitement which stimulated the program and cultivated the mentality for the year ahead. With five captains leading the way the team began to align itself allocating a new positivity and focusing on new changes to improve the ways of how things were run in years past. Weekly captain meetings were set up with the coaches and with the team to ensure that things were running smoothly, allocating any issues amongst the team, and served as opportunities to plan out events to foster this team dynamic.

Intervention

Elements of the program

Throughout the course of the year a number of faith based practices, some informal and others more formal, were introduced and led by leaders and some members of the team. A few key components of the curriculum were: prayer sessions and discussions of faith; One-on-one consulting and mentoring; and the intentional modeling of behaviors on the part of the coaches and captains. These practices were derived from a draft curriculum called Diving in Faith: Purpose Driven Sports (refer Appendix I to see a more in-depth look at the draft curriculum on page 57). The athletes were present during most of the programs components, participation was optional, and for the purposes of the study all members of the team were included in the final data analysis.

Prayer sessions and discussions of faith

There were small group and large group prayers prior to certain meals or large competitions that sought to center the team for the challenges that lie ahead and unite them as one with the glory of the team’s successes given to the divine power of God. When these sorts of prayer gatherings took place most sought for God’s divine guidance to lead the team forward.

As the team grew closer and issues began to arise there were a number of opportunities in the mornings when the team would meet for workouts. Prior to the workouts there were discussions on faith, not only trusting in oneself, but in their team, and in the possibility that God too could give them strength to persevere and overcome the toughest of obstacles. At times there were even references made to the Bible to give example and light that the issues that members of the team were facing were real and legitimate, that some of these have been longstanding, and that there may be a better way to go about overcoming such issues than the current (and past) choices being made.

Essentially, our talks challenged the team to put these lessons and biblical theory into action by being good stewards and carrying out Christian values in everyday life. The athletes were able to see how their positive choices were correlating with results they were seeing in the pool and in their own personal lives. Besides that, the athletes took action and went out into the community to do service work helping those less fortunate. Many of the athletes saw how fortunate they were and blessed with the opportunity that they had.

This new culture that was developing was a result of the influence and impact that the coaches and the captains had on the team. These values and faith based practices became an intentional way of growing athletes in a direction that would bring the team together in order to create accountability and trust.

Standards were being put into place that before could not have been enforced and the team began to uphold value in respecting these standards that were now set. These standards included the simple things such as being on time, respecting your teammates, supporting the coaches' requests, putting forth their best effort in training and in competition, and making an honest commitment to the requirements of being a division 1 athlete. What was different was the fact that these things were not being forced on the students. These are aspects that the athletes themselves began to embrace and uphold because they saw the benefit of them and how it was proactively aiding in their development as an athlete and as a person. They were not being forced to do anything but because they had the choice, they saw the greater good in choosing to support their team rather than choosing a decision that would only benefit themselves in the short term.

One-on-one consoling and mentoring

During the course of the season there were several instances of one-on-one consoling/mentoring which were provided as needed. When mentoring was provided athletes were struggling with issues that were not only detrimental to their athletic performance but also were poorly affecting life choices. These consultation meetings sought to resolve issues through connecting participant's actions with a greater purpose and reason in hopes of positively changing the individual's current action. It also provided for an intimate setting to discuss Christian ideals and the possibility of actualizing the spiritual side of things within one's self. Athletes would meet with the mentor (one of the captains) whenever it was necessary to discuss issues and seek proactive methods to equip themselves and move forward through current struggles of maturity developing their trust in God along the way. Not all athletes sought this out but captains and coaches were available to the athlete's if necessary to provide a fresh perspective on an issue or situation.

Modeling behaviors

Evidence of these faith based practices were the behaviors exemplified by the team and the coaches. While on pool deck the coaches exuded encouragement through the continuous usage of positive feedback for athletes' actions in the pool. This encouragement was also reflected in the leadership of the captains as they too chose to be more supportive to their teammates, cheering and promoting good work ethic and perseverance. There was affirmation of what the athletes were doing whether good or bad critiques, and compliments were paid to athletes by the coaches and captains. The coaches themselves exemplified the importance of taking care of others on and off of the pool deck through their actions as they too were leading in volunteer initiatives and community service. The team embraced many of the qualities and characteristics expressed in biblical scripture such as the verse "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23). They promoted these ideals and upheld that the athletes advocate such principles on the playing field and when in competition. Not only was the team focusing on the external result of the athletes' best performances but they sought for each athlete to achieve that benchmark with honorable character.

Results

Prior to the season a survey was sent out to get a sense of where the athlete's perspectives were at that time. Their responses illustrated the position the team was in and provided valuable feedback to the coaching staff to help guide them and prepare for the season. Essentially, it was the foundation for the year ahead.

The survey consisted of eleven questions. The findings below represent the comparative analysis of the data collected from the first (pre-test) and second (post-test) survey. For a full graphic presentation of the data, see Appendix E (on page 53) and Appendix F (on page 54). Please note that where it says that there was a decrease indicates that the responses became more negative (less desired outcome) over time (i.e., from time 1 to time 2). Likewise, an increase illustrated the responses matured positively from the beginning of the study to the end. Each question had a value from 1-7. As mentioned earlier, 1 was the highest value and 7 was the lowest. Ideally an increase in percentage and a decrease in the number value/quality selected on the survey would indicate a positive growth overtime.

In order to find a fair comparison between the initial and the post survey, due to the differing numbers of athletes surveyed, the researcher had to find a common ground. In most cases the researcher just compared the highest percentage (or the identifier with the most votes). However, there were some instances where that was not applicable. As stated in the methodology the results indicated how many participants voted in each category and which identifier (or value) they gave.

In such cases where the highest percentage could not be compared, the researcher compared the amount of athlete's who voted in identifiers (1-3) which were considered above the mid-average value. From there the researcher created a percentage based on the number of athlete's who voted in those top three indicators and compared them both pre and post test. The percentage was created from dividing the total number of responses that were selected within the identifiers (1-3) and divided it out by the total amount of people surveyed whether it be pre or post test. These percentages were then compared to develop the following analysis.

Measure of Effect: Analysis of the 11 Specific Items

The first area in which the study evaluated the athlete's perspective was the general quality of **practice**. The athletes' perceptions of practices decreased 6.9% from time 1 to time 2. The percentage of supporters went from 35.5% to 28.6% feeling that it was good but they would like to see more out of it still. The athlete's ranking for practice in the initial survey was 4 which remained the same in the post survey. However there was a higher spread of participant votes in higher quality rankings than before. More athletes voted in the higher indicator than during the pre-survey. This finding displayed that there were less participants satisfied with the practice regiment but the quality value remained the same.

The second area measured was the overall consensus on **team comradship**. Team comradship increased by 9.1% with support improving from 29% to 38.1% illustrating that by the end of the season the team was in good relations with one another. The ranking of quality increased from a 4 to a 3 overall. This statistic indicated that positive cohesion had formulated amongst the team.

Athlete's pride in representing their school, in this case as a Purple Eagle increased from 35.5% to 42.9%. There was a 7.4% increase giving evidence that participants took more pride in the team and school they represented compared to how they felt initially. The ranking of quality remained the same at 3.

Another area measured was the athlete's **perceptions on their school in general** in order to see if they felt connected to the place where they trained. The results expressed a 5.7% increase from 41.9% initially to 47.6% afterwards. This growth gives record that the athletes developed a better sense of pride for their school as a result of the experiences they had during their competitive season.

Team Leadership was also calculated. The results demonstrated a 5.8% increase from 32.3% to 38.1% illustrating that participant perceptions on leadership improved over the course of the season and the ranking for quality increased from a 4 to a 3. Athlete's valued their captain's and their coaches more over the course of the season. The results illustrate an improvement in the quality of those in leadership positions based on the athlete's responses.

The study measured what participants felt about **their current team**. The post survey indicated a vote of 28.6% while the initial survey fostered a 33.3%. Though the initial percentage was higher, the quality value moved from a 3 to a 2 indicating that the athlete's had a better view of their team though their votes were more spread out within the top three identifiers.

The athlete's were asked to give their perception on the current **weight training program**. During the season there were some new additions to the weight training. Due to prevailing circumstances the team did not have a weight coach. Though this was a time where the captain's role became most apparent and the DIF program was mostly implemented the question focused on the quality of the weight training and the exercises that were being done to indicate if the athlete's felt that they were benefitting from the current set up in regards to past years. There was a dramatic 8.3% decrease from 32.3% initially to the final total of 23.8%. The value ranking did increase from a 5 to a 4 on the quality of the weight session. These statistics illustrate the impact of the transitional year and the struggle to work everything out. This was one place that the program was fully utilized in the shortest period of time with a larger learning curve than experienced elsewhere.

Athlete's perceptions on the coaching staff of two, who must act as a staff of four to six, also improved by 2.8% going from 25.8% with a ranking of 6 to 28.6% that held a ranking of 3 illustrating that there was a better dynamic and rapport between the team and the coaching staff that was developed throughout this season.

Another area that was measured looked at the Athlete's view of themselves and their perspective on their **potential as a swimmer/diver**. The results indicated a severe 13.3% decrease from 41.9% to 28.6% but the ranking for the participant's remained the same at 4.

This is a new philosophy implemented to the athletes and though not all athletes' improved or saw the potential for individual improvement there were a higher percentage of athletes that selected better rankings than in the initial survey.

The study measured athlete's perceptions on their current **academic program** to get a sense of where they stood with the most important aspect of collegiate athletics which is their academic study. Results illustrated an increase from 32.3% to 33.3% and the quality ranking went from a 3 to 2 showing that the participant's athletics increased their desire for the current academic program they were in.

The final area that the study measured was **academic workload** in order to get a sense of how well athletes were managing school and sport. The results showed a significant jump in quality ranking as academic workload received an overall value of 1 with a percentage of 33.7%. There was an 11.5% decrease in percentage compared to the 45.2% in the initial survey that held a value ranking of (3). Though the percentage was the lower the quality value grew dramatically.

Overall there was an the results showed a positive trend. Six out of the eleven categories measured had positive results statistically (percentage wise). Out of the eleven categories five had improved quality rankings indicated by the identifier compared.

Further analysis was done to compare responses above and below the mid average (refer to Appendix F and Appendix G). The graphs show that there are a higher percentage of responses tallied in the categories marked as "above average" and a lower percentage of responses that were rated "below average" in the post survey results.

Participant flow

Analysis of the post-test survey found that the study suffered from several limitations. Most critically, the drop in sample size from time 1 to time 2 was discouraging. Approximately 1/3 of the sample "dropped out" at least in terms of their willingness to complete the post-test survey at a time when they were feeling pressure due to increasing academic commitments and a long season. As was suggested earlier, there is no real way to coerce the students to complete the survey. Evidently, there appears to be a disconnect between the impact of the program and the willingness of the students to complete the survey. A possible explanation was that the survey was distributed through a social media outlet rather than formerly in person.

Discussion

From the analysis of the pre and post survey given to the Niagara University Swimming and Diving team it is apparent that the DIF program did impact the culture and environment of the team to some degree. The results indicate that the team grew in a positive direction based on the participant's responses after the results from the two surveys were compared. The participant's responses conveys that the majority of the athlete's perceptions on the team dynamic (in those eleven specific areas from the distributed survey) were better than average. This is significant because initially the athlete's perceptions were considerably lower in the majority of the areas measured. Though there were four categories that had lower statistical percentages, each had growth in the quality value or the identifier selected remained the same. There was no decrease in quality value/identifier throughout the entirety of the study.

Despite the limitations of the research, the results of the pilot study are promising. At least among the 21 students who completed both the pre and post test survey, overall, perceptions and attitudes improved and the students maintained a more positive outlook on the team, themselves and their futures. For further research, a personal distribution of the survey rather than through any social media outlets such as email, facebook, or twitter could have also changed the dynamics of the participants who took the survey and would have gave a better idea of the programs impact.

In a true experimental design the author would have designed a study with an experimental and control group, in other words, one group would have received the DIF program and the other would have received nothing. Both groups would be distributed a survey that would be geared more specifically to the individuals perception of their current team. This would include more detailed biographical information to better understand the research participants. After both seasons had come to a completion a post analysis survey would be distributed to see if there were any significant differences between the responses of the team who had participated in the program and in the responses from the team who did not.

Afterwards a comparative analysis would also be done on how well the team performed on the athletic field and their contributions to their local communities. This may also be broken down further to compare individual participant's growth over the study period.

Given the small size of the program, that was not practical. For future research it would be recommended if the study were to be done at a larger athletic program or potentially across athletic conference's using multiple schools to see the impact and recognize the different cultural/environmental differences. However, as an initial pilot study, it holds great promise.

As mentioned earlier, one diver broke his femur prior to the conference championships during a dual meet competition. He was not able to get out of the pool by himself. The team and coaches rallied together to help the athlete be lifted out of the pool. Even members of the opposing team jumped in to help in the cause. Due to the heightened comradeship that the team displayed, throughout the season, other teams had taken notice. There were a number of teams that sent support and encouragement out of the respect they had for the team after the incident had happened. It is must be noted that it is not typical for teams to send such support when an athlete is injured.

Implementing the program within a Swimming and Diving team was a strategic decision seeing as there are two different athletic cultures combined into one. In most cases a team only consists of individuals who compete in one sport. The dynamics of a collegiate swimming and diving team make it more difficult to implement a program to a group that trains differently, and competes separately, but yet their individual results contribute to a shared team placing. Looking at this dynamic from a greater picture, further research could be done looking at teams as specific communities or cultures and how they interact within one another. This perspective coincides with the authenticity of the Olympics and its aspiration of universality.

The realities of the athletic season and the limited scope of this study prevented full application of the Diving in Faith program. For example, there simply was not time to pursue the aspects of the program that connected the athletes fully to the community. The few efforts that were made were met with logistical difficulties. Nonetheless, the demonstrated potential of the program holds great promise to do so in the future.

Clearly there is a need for additional research on this topic. Unfortunately, there exists no structure under which to conduct such a study on a regular basis. Possibly more importantly, there exists no entity to deliver programming similar to Diving in Faith. Thus, the combination between the potential for faith-based athletic programming and the need for additional research on these areas of sport leadership and community development prompt the author to propose the creation of a center that can focus on these aspects that have not been fully researched. As the literature review and the results from the research indicate there is more to all of this study than just observing a positive correlation between the implementation of a program and the growth that came forth within a team environment/culture.

The Hackney case provides a great example of this as we see local communities struggling to transition into government directed developments in lieu of hosting the Olympic Games. Though such developments seem longstanding it is yet to be proven if the economic foundation and implemented cultural legacy that has been established will lead to sustainable growth overtime raising the question: what needs to be present for proactive community growth using sport as the vehicle? In order to look at these theories of community engagement and development more in-depth, further analysis would ultimately need to be done.

This initial finding from the research done utilizing the Diving in Faith program could potentially lead to the developments of a sustainable program that produces not only leaders of sport but a solid and prospering community that is able to articulate what the Olympics Games originally intended to do.

Part II

Proposal for the creation of the Center for Faith in Sports at Niagara University

This section of the thesis outlines a proposal and justification for the creation of a Center for Faith in Sports, a center devoted to research, programming and support for young athletes. The multi-faceted center would have three primary components.

1. Conduct research on and study the impact that faith and religion have on sports today.
2. Develop and deliver faith-based programming for college athletes including leadership and community development

3. Provide support and resources to local athletes both at the collegiate, club and high school levels in regards to programming and outreach initiatives
4. Offer educational awareness and information outreach to local communities consistent with the goals of the Center for faith in Sports
5. Provide mentoring opportunities to younger athletes at the secondary and elementary school levels

Background

The Center is an extension and expansion of Christian-based programming ideas based upon the author's personal experiences in sports at all levels. I believe that my athletic successes have resulted from my belief in God and carrying out a life of Christian values. Throughout my experiences as an athlete, I have learned that there is more to life than just competition and winning. I have found more intrinsic gratification from utilizing my abilities to help others succeed in accomplishing their dreams, as I pursue my own, but I would never take back the experiences I have had for they have shaped the person I am today.

Christian ethics is being concerned about how we act as individuals and places our actions in the context of how they will affect the community and the people around us. Christian ethics challenges what we, the individuals, should do as well as puts into context the ideals by which the community, state, and church should conduct themselves in developing societal norms. It is a complex thought process, centered on the one and only Jesus Christ, which asks us to re-evaluate the ways in which the world works in comparison to when Jesus walked this earth.

The center will explore "The point of how theology is to open up an understanding of God, the world, history, and human existence in such a way that it provides a vision for human living" (Haight, S, J, 1979, p.86). Doing so will lead to athletes exploring their own understanding of how the world works, challenging the way in which they carry out sport and live everyday life.

Carrying out the Olympic Ideals

Considering the areas that the IOC is currently struggling to capitalize its efforts toward educational programs and community outreach initiatives, one of the major issues is the development of improved internal relations at the community level. Most of these programs have the potential to develop great things within the community and in the host country but lack the sustainability over time to actualize the initial investment. Tension forms between the country that is hosting the Olympics and between the communities within the areas that are being used to develop the Olympic venues. Both entities have different perspectives. Typically there is no unified front to work together towards achieving the goals of Olympism as each side does not fully agree with how the particular area is being developed. Most of the time it is one sided. Such a disconnect causes difficulties in fully implementing project ideals into communities who cannot relate. Thus Olympism cannot fully carry out its legacy.

Principles of the Center

The center itself aims to carry out a legacy for college athletes in these aspects of life, referred to here as its founding principles.

Human Dignity and Human Rights: A main principle of the center is to recognize and actualize that every person has the right and freedom to life. Therefore, the center will openly welcome anyone who wishes to learn and be a part of this larger community. The center and its programming will promote free will and choice and will develop a methodology to help man overcome human frailties in order to transcend himself/herself for the better not only in sport but in life.

Self-Empowerment and Transcendence: Another principle of the center is to help the athletes become more than just athletes. The programs will help the athletes overcome developmental obstacles in not only their life and sport but in their spirituality as well. The goal is to get all athletes to realize that the choices they make have big impacts, in the world and within their own communities, and that it is better to engage in what is going on around them than to just let things go by. At the same time, athletes will come to realize that sometimes we cannot control what happens in our lives regardless of how hard we try, and that we have to trust on God and his timing for it to all work out when it is meant to.

Dominant motivation for athletic success is caused by external pressure. How can we successfully cultivate an athlete who is intrinsically motivated to do good things? Ironically, many athletes only considered themselves to be athletes, defined by their athletic success, but this puts the athletes at risk of losing their self-identity and self-worth. The center aims to provide a solution to the question: how can we help athletes redefine their identity after sport?

Developing Olympic-Sized Aspirations: Finally, the Center will recognize that all athletes desire to attain great heights in their sport(s). Thus, the athletics piece itself will not be ignored, and the Center will work with the athletes to insure that they have the opportunity to strive toward elite performance. However, by focusing on the principles above, it is believed that the athletes will be much more able to persevere and overcome the many obstacles that are associated with elite athletic performance.

Goals of the Center

The ultimate goal for the center is to provide a structure in which athletes and athletic communities can, in fact, begin to realize the values and ideals of the Olympics as described in the main text of the paper. It will help athletes realize that they have the ability to positively influence people and their communities, not only on the athletic fields but off it as well, through their faith, character development, work ethic, and their abilities to go beyond themselves to help others. Athletes, even people in general, do not fully realize the presence they have when it comes to influencing others to do great things. This will help cultivate an environment and mentality for carrying out sports with greater purpose and intention.

The center will study the effects that Christian ethics and values have on student-athlete development through a number of qualitative initiatives. These initiatives will focus on developing a cultural legacy that will be implemented into communities led by the athletes themselves. The center hopes to make the push to create that cycle at a larger scale so that these athlete's personal initiatives will benefit the community and lead to better athletes/citizens in the future on a much larger, potentially global scale.

One initiative for the center of faith in sports is to allocate the way in which God works in the world we live in and how we can do more with sport. Every human being acts according to its nature, God acts on a supernatural level, one that is infinitely above in relation to the human person. Thus, when we consider God we recognize the omnipotent, omnipresent, and omni-benevolent capabilities we perceive God to have. Knowing that will open the doors for the potential of sport and will allow athletes to seek to do more with their capabilities. "At any given moment in life, we stand between a past already determined by choices we have made and an undetermined future of different possibilities" (Sachs, 1991, p.30). Our choice defines the type of person we are and want to be (Sachs, 1991, p.30). The choice is left for the individual to choose whether or not to walk on God's path or figure it out on his own. This is the opportunity that the center will explore for faith and sports will provide for all who take part.

The center will develop an athletic program designed to cultivate athletes to become leaders in their communities. The program will be based on Christian ideals and ethics. The over arching goal for the program focuses around helping one another to reach their goals and dreams not only in sport but in life by working together in order to do so. The program illustrates that athletes (or people in general) have more purpose than their careers in the athletic arena.

As mentioned in the study, in recent years many athletes who have come into the spotlight of sport have publicly pronounced their faith. These athletes have been known for the grace that they carry themselves with on the sporting field compared to their teammates and competitors who have found their way publicly harming their reputation and career by the actions and choices they have made. However, faith and athletics has never truly been correlated or looked at in full. With the onset of this year's 2012 Olympics, an opportunity arises to look at the potential for further research and study of faith in sports.

Research and Study

The center will research the impact faith has on individuals involved in sports to measure personal and communal growth both extrinsically and intrinsically. The Center will afford opportunities for faculty members and students to conduct research on all things related to faith in sports and society. This may include the direct and indirect impacts that faith and religion have on sports today.

It may include historical analysis, quantitative and qualitative studies, case studies and both theological and more secular-based research; such as forging research partnerships with departments of theology and religious studies.

Faith-Based programming

1. Offer faith-based programming for college athletes including leadership and community development
2. There will be a focus on developing programs that aim to cultivate and stimulate athletes to grow into leaders by helping their own communities prosper and giving back in whatever context applicable. The goal is for athletes to realize the impact they have globally utilizing sports as the vehicle.
3. Leaders of all capabilities who are able to be self-sufficient in whatever capacity that is necessary. Everyone can be a leader in one way or another. This program aspires to cultivate efficient leaders who are able to take on any challenges that they face due to their belief in God and his plan for them.
4. Empathetic and Faith based Teaching: the center will foster coaching and leadership that focuses around the individual athlete connecting individual goals to the overarching purpose of the program illustrating that athlete's actions, presence, and the effort they put forth into their sport goes far beyond what they themselves are able to perceive.

The center aims to test out the athlete's mental toughness and stability on the sporting field through these program initiatives. One of the biggest reasons athletes give up on themselves in sport is due to the lack of mental toughness and focus. Part of the reason is due to the lack of confidence cultivated in one's self. Ideally, the center understands the needs for cultivating an environment where athletes are able to be comfortable and secure with their own selves in order to see results beyond expectations. By carrying out the process of any craft with higher regard an athlete may see him/herself be more successful. Thus, the center hopes to test out the question "if an athlete has a faith background would they be more secure, mentally tough and better at handling pressure in their athletics than compared to an athlete who does not?"

Through this process of developing a self-secured athlete the goal is towards the cultivation of leadership. As stated earlier, the Olympics are arguably the maximal sporting venue. Using the Olympics as a standard articulates what the Center for Faith in Sports hopes to create as a foundation within athletes. Currently, Olympism aims to cultivate role models who are respectful and responsible individuals of society who have developed high moral and social values (Wassong, 2009, p.12). But why not utilize these athletes and show them that they have the potential to be community and international leaders, advocating sport? And how do we ensure that future leaders have the right skills/foundation to properly lead an organization into the 21st century? These are the questions the Center for faith and sport aims to look at through a critical lens researching the possibility and the reality of truly living out this ideal.

Giving back to the local community

The center intends to provide support and resources to local athletes at all levels of their career in sport. From the very beginning of their careers, the center hopes to educate, provide support, and aid in the transition as an athlete moves forward sport. Through this educational process the goal is for the participant to take on leadership roles and give back to the community that has supported them throughout their development. The center will strive to create an environment that embraces the perspectives of its participants by providing a foundational philosophy to carry out sport, and utilize sport as a vehicle to develop community through the purpose it gives to those who take part.

One of the most important contributions to athletic success is the support an athlete has to do what they do. Most athletes who have reached esteemed levels of sport have attributed their successes to the people who have supported them throughout all the trials and tribulations they persevered through to reach their "Olympic dreams"; those dreams, perspectives, and ambitions that have taken them to the maximal level of sport.

Family is the strongest and most influential aspect in our lives. It is typically, our biggest support system. The center will push the significance of developing strong family morals and ethics in order to illustrate how those same values can play an effective role in developing the community and environment around them. The idea is that educational awareness and informational outreach will be given to local communities that will foster this primitive idea of sport and its potential to further unite and prosper the community through its ongoing support.

Mentoring

Placing the Center on a university campus, is fully consistent with the spirit and ideals of the founder of the modern Olympics, Pierre de Coubertin who stated,

“Arguably, the scholar-athlete is the true Olympic role model for they have cultivated within themselves the self-discipline needed in order to overcome the challenges and obstacles in their path, and balance their time efficiently to excel in both their academic work and on the athletic field”

The student-athlete has become a role model in many collegiate institutions especially in western societies and one who is expected to carry out a lifestyle of principle and value. The Center for Faith in Sports will strive to provide this same extrinsic achievement with the goal of starting at a much younger age with the whole family embracing the program and extending the outreach beyond the individual outwardly to the community. Most college athletes retire from sport after their collegiate athletic career and do not go on to pursue further athletic aspirations. Through the provision of mentoring opportunities to younger athletes at the secondary and elementary school levels this objective outcome will ideally be reached. The center and its initiatives may act as bridge to help athletes pursue larger athletic achievements while taking on leadership roles in their own community.

The Olympics as we know are the premier sporting event for the world as athletes from all over the globe come together to showcase their athletic talents and compete against one another on the world stage. It is also a global leader in presenting ideal standards and a symbol for mutual understanding worldwide. Ideally, this program aspires to cultivate elite athletes, who will become leaders that will help build effective community on a global scale, overcoming the conflicts that have continued to be fought over and disagreed upon.

Acting Locally, Thinking Globally

The Center is being proposed at the local level in order to present a manageable and realistic approach to “community”. Since the beginning of the Modern Olympics there have been opportunities for further growth and expansion towards global initiatives and partnerships. This is needed because on an international level there is an absence of support for all athletes which makes it difficult to carry out the Olympic legacy. If the athletes are not fully sensing such support then the realities of Olympism being carried out as it should, on a global scale, seems unlikely. Once again, this is an area where the Olympics, while ideal in theory, falls short in practice.

Conclusion

The Olympics is a dynamic multi-faceted organization that aims to do more for the world than just sporting entertainment. The games have left behind a legacy for sporting excellence which the world has embraced. These Modern Olympics were created by Pierre de Coubertin as a final education for athletes transforming through sport with the goal of giving back to society. The Olympics provides an opportunity for the world to take part in a sporting event that teaches participants life skills and values that are universally accepted.

As this thesis has looked at the Olympic Games and its governing organization, due to the context of their nature, cannot fully implement their ideals or ensure long-term sustainability with their projects. The Hackney project in London gave light to the challenges that have been ongoing for host countries (of an Olympics Games) who seek to create sustainable communities within their own nation after the games have taken place. There is only five years allotted to plan and implement these Olympic ideals within a community, construct a whole new sporting venue and a brand new business sector that is supposed to prosper and serve as a major contributor to the community for years to come. Time just seems to fall short as the IOC and the assembled Olympic Committee for the host nation dissipate after the conclusion of the games. Without placing blame or criticism this is where efforts need to be re-focused for the continuity and long term sustainability of such projects of this magnitude. Efforts have brought forth many legitimate ideas but there is room to continue pursuing a more holistic solution. This impedes upon the overarching goals of Olympism as the Olympics have come to signify more than just a sporting event, they act as a platform advocating the ideal behaviors for the world to embrace.

This paper and study were aimed to give potential resolutions for the creation of such sustainable goals that the Olympic Games aims to generate and to reconsider that maybe the Olympics needs to go back to its roots of religious origin in order to do so. The Diving in Faith study opened up the possibility that faith based practices and the values that are instilled may play a role in creating such community, leadership, and governance that are needed for sustainable growth overtime.

The participant responses from the study showed that they were more committed to the program and the people a part of it after being introduced to elements of the Diving in Faith program throughout the course of their competitive season. If further research is done there may be even greater developments in solidifying the best community to implement such ideals which is why the proposal for the Center of Faith in Sports was presented. The study did give light to the fact that a college setting does provide a foundational community that encompasses the governing bodies and organizations that are apparent within states and nations. Though there were a number of limitations, the study did show that there is a great potential for further research in the area of faith-based athletic programming and that the ideals of Olympism may have the potential to be truly carried out.

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Appendix A

Table 1: Fundamental Principles of Olympism (Olympic Charter)

1. Olympism is a philosophy of life, exalting and combining in a balanced whole the qualities of body, will and mind. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example, social responsibility and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.
2. The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.
3. The Olympic Movement is the concerted, organised, universal and permanent action, carried out under the supreme authority of the IOC, of all individuals and entities who are inspired by the values of Olympism. It covers the five continents. It reaches its peak with the bringing together of the world's athletes at the great sports festival, the Olympic Games. Its symbol is five interlaced rings.
4. The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practising sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.
5. Recognising that sport occurs within the framework of society, sports organisations within the Olympic Movement shall have the rights and obligations of autonomy, which include freely establishing and controlling the rules of sport, determining the structure and governance of their organizations, enjoying the right of elections free from any outside influence and the responsibility for ensuring that principles of good governance be applied.
6. Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement.
7. Belonging to the Olympic Movement requires compliance with the Olympic Charter and recognition by the IOC.

source: http://www.olympic.org/Documents/olympic_charter_en.pdf

Appendix B**Table 1 - Educational Values of Olympism****A. JOY OF EFFORT**

Young people develop and practice physical, behavioural and intellectual skills by challenging themselves and each other in physical activities, movement, games and sport.

B. FAIR PLAY

Fair play is a sports concept, but it is applied worldwide today in many different ways. Learning fair play behaviour in sport can lead to the development and reinforcement of fair play behaviour in the community and in life.

C. RESPECT FOR OTHERS

When young people who live in a multicultural world learn to accept and respect diversity and practice personal peaceful behaviour, they promote peace and international understanding.

D. PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

A focus on excellence can help young people to make positive, healthy choices, and strive to become the best that they can be in whatever they do.

E. BALANCE BETWEEN BODY, WILL AND MIND

Learning takes place in the whole body, not just in the mind, and physical literacy and learning through movement contributes to the development of both moral and intellectual learning. This concept became the foundation of Pierre de Coubertin's interest in a revival of the Olympic Games.

source: http://www.olympic.org/Documents/olympic_charter_en.pdf

Appendix C**Ethnography of Swimming and diving**

Swimming and diving at the high school and collegiate levels has been an athletic program that connects to distinct sports together. Thanks to Mike Peppe, known as the father of collegiate diving in the United States, swimming and diving have been married together. Originally the head coach of the Ohio State University's Swimming and Diving Teams between 1931 and 1963, Peppe, developed a strong group of divers on his collegiate swim team. He treated swimming and diving equally and encouraged other collegiate teams to develop diving programs to compete with his. Over time, Peppe was able to influence collegiate institutions to fund diving programs and the development of diving facilities in conjunction with swimming pools. This helped bring respect to the sport of diving and created a new coaching position specific to coaching diving (O'Brien, 2002).

Though Peppe's charisma helped pave way for a new venture in the world of USA swimming, there continues to be a disconnect between the swimmers and divers on the team. This has been a result due to the separation of practices and physical characteristics of the two sports. Due to the pool set up and restraints of time, divers and swimmers have practices that are opposite/separate from one another. Also, practices for swimmers and divers vary greatly. Therefore, a lack of socialization has created assumptions and perceptions that have damaged the relationship between the two groups. Often times, swimmers have not seen the credible work that the divers do or vice versa. The divers and swimmers have different areas of focus for their training. At times complication and disassociation has occurred causing a lack of appreciation and tension between the swimmers and the divers.

Though swimming and diving teams have been associated with one another there are many differences between the two sports though they are linked together for competition. Often times there has been a lack of communication between swimming and diving programs on a team. Though the coaches communicate with one another neither one is responsible for coaching the other group. It is not typical for a swim coach to also be a diver coach or for a dive coach to carry out the duties for a swim coach. Though a general knowledge may be held truly cultivating athletes technique is typically not a duty that a swim or dive coach will carry out for the opposite sport.

Athletes on a swimming and diving team usually only compete in their rightful sport with divers competing in diving events and swimmers competing in swimming events. There are some cases where either side will dive into the other sport to help the team out. In the end, the athlete usually chooses one of the sports to focus his/her efforts in.

Leadership has played a large part in the development of this tension over time between the swimming and diving programs. Typically, diving is considered to be a smaller portion of the swim program for a high school or collegiate team, as there are fewer divers in comparison to swimmers. As a result, there are some programs that undermine the value that the diving program carries for their team.

So, setting logistical differences aside, there are attributes that continue to fortify this division. Swim coaches have to focus on their swimmers. As mentioned earlier, swim coaches are not typically a part of the development of their divers. Thus most swim coaches do not have a relationship with their divers as close as they do with their swimmers. On a subconscious level this establishment does create an environment with the potential for a team to not mesh well. Without a close knit relationship the team is not able to feed off of each other's strengths and weaknesses. The divers also do not have that same sort of rapport or trust with the swim coach, due to the *distance experienced* as a result of the swim coaches focus and priorities on the swim team.

The same dynamic is apparent on the diving side. The diving coach has typically little interaction with what is happening on the swimmers end. Therefore, the diving coach is not very involved with the swimmers because they don't spend their time training them. The difference is that the diving program does not associate the swimmers for the potential points they can get. With the coaches coaching separate groups on the team it makes it hard for the swimmers and divers to understand and appreciate one another's differences or training demands.

Therefore, it seems like to an outsider (a swimmer), the time divers spend during practice, to stretch, warm up the body, articulate repetitious body alignment and dry land exercises makes it seem that the majority of practice is spent rolling around on mats. But what the swimmers don't realize is how crucial it is for divers to strategically carry out these exercises as they are the foundational building blocks for what the divers are about to do off the board. All the hard work and training for diving is developed before the diver even gets up on the board. Furthermore, the majority of the practice when the diver is actually diving is spent perfecting the individual dive and overcoming the fear of pain and failure. This is different from the practices that the swimmer experiences.

The swimmers are constantly swimming throughout an entire practice. They are endurance machines who spend their practices, working on different time interval swims. These intervals are broken up into different drills that allocate and focus on the different aspects of their race, breathing, endurance, starting a race, finishing a race and their swimming stroke technique. Physical exertion is a part of a daily practice for a swimmer. For the outsider (diver) all they see is the continuously laps the swimmers tolerate and swim for the entire duration of a practice.

By describing the perceptions of the outsider's view (divers and swimmers perceptions on the other sport) we can begin to see the issues at hand. The divers, therefore, do not understand and comprehend the physical exertion that the swimmers go through in a daily practice. The swimmers see the divers lying around on mats. This basic description outlines the foundational difficulties for connections to be made in order to unite the swimming and diving team.

Source:

O'Brien, Ron (2002). *History of Olympic Diving*. Springboards and More. Retrieved from http://www.usadiver.com/diving_histroy.htm

Appendix D

Table 3 – Survey of athletes' views

	Changd my life	I just can't get enough	I'm lovin' it	Its good but I want to see more out of it	There could be some improvement	Weak Sauce	No Say
Practice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Team Comradeship	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Being a Purple Eagle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
the school in general	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Team Leadership	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Our Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Weights	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Coaches	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Your Potential as a swimmer/diver	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Your Academic Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Academic Workload	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Appendix E
Initial Survey Results

				Its good but I want to see more out of it	There could be some improvement	Weak Sauce	No Say	Rating Average	Response Count
Practice	0.0% (0)	3.2% (1)	9.7% (3)	35.5% (11)	16.1% (5)	16.1% (5)	19.4% (6)	4.9	31
Team Comradeship	6.5% (2)	3.2% (1)	12.9% (4)	29.0% (9)	19.4% (6)	12.9% (4)	16.1% (5)	4.55	31
Being a Purple Eagle	6.5% (2)	19.4% (6)	35.5% (11)	25.8% (8)	3.2% (1)	3.2% (1)	6.5% (2)	3.35	31
the school in general	6.5% (2)	25.8% (8)	41.9% (13)	16.1% (5)	0.0% (0)	3.2% (1)	6.5% (2)	3.13	31
Team Leadership	0.0% (0)	3.2% (1)	19.4% (6)	32.3% (10)	29.0% (9)	6.5% (2)	9.7% (3)	4.45	31
Our Team	6.7% (2)	6.7% (2)	33.3% (10)	23.3% (7)	20.0% (6)	3.3% (1)	6.7% (2)	3.8	30
Weights	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	9.7% (3)	25.8% (8)	32.3% (10)	16.1% (5)	16.1% (5)	5.03	31
Coaches	3.2% (1)	6.5% (2)	12.9% (4)	22.6% (7)	22.6% (7)	25.8% (8)	6.5% (2)	4.58	31
Your Potential as a swimmer/diver	12.9% (4)	9.7% (3)	25.8% (8)	41.9% (13)	3.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	6.5% (2)	3.39	31
Your Academic Program	19.4% (6)	22.6% (7)	32.3% (10)	19.4% (6)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	6.5% (2)	2.84	31
Academic Workload	6.5% (2)	12.9% (4)	45.2% (14)	16.1% (5)	6.5% (2)	0.0% (0)	12.9% (4)	3.55	31

Appendix F
Post Survey Results

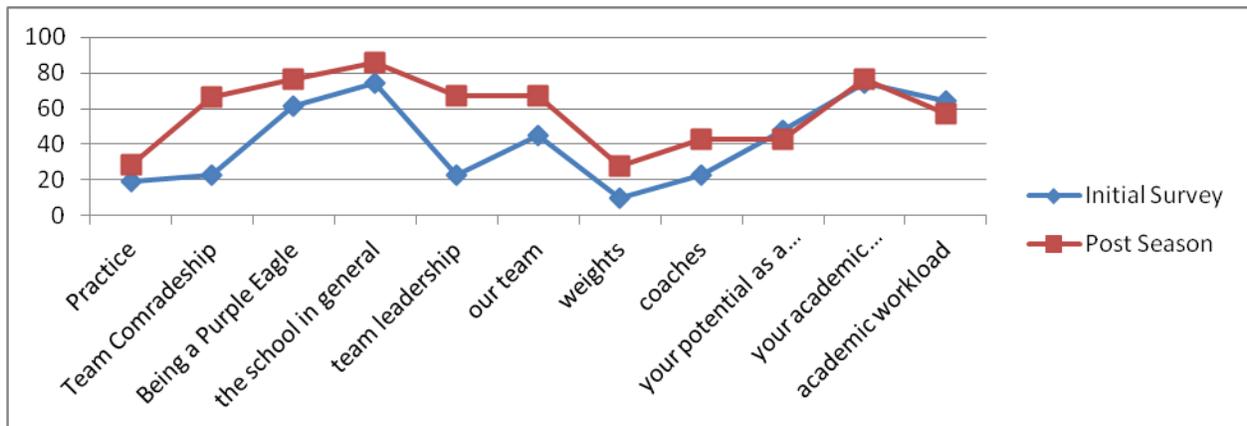
	Changed My Life	I just can't get enough	I'm Loving it	Its good but I want to see more out of it	There could be some improvement	Weak Sauce	No Say	Response Count
Practice	9.5% (2)	9.5% (2)	9.5% (2)	28.6% (6)	28.6% (6)	9.5% (2)	4.8% (1)	21
Team Comradeship	9.5% (2)	19.0% (4)	38.1% (8)	23.8% (5)	23.8% (5)	4.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	21
Being a Purple Eagle	14.3% (3)	23.8% (5)	42.9% (9)	28.6% (6)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	21
The school in General	19.0% (4)	19.0% (4)	47.6% (10)	19.0% (4)	9.5% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	21
Team Leadership	9.5% (2)	19.0% (4)	38.1% (8)	38.1% (8)	4.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	21
Our Team	23.8% (5)	28.6% (6)	19.0% (4)	23.8% (5)	23.8% (5)	4.8% (1)	0.0% (0)	21
Weights	0.0% (0)	9.5% (2)	19.0% (4)	23.8% (5)	23.8% (5)	23.8% (5)	4.8% (1)	21
Coaches	4.8% (1)	9.5% (2)	28.6% (6)	28.6% (6)	23.8% (5)	19.0% (4)	0.0% (0)	21
Your Potential as a Swimmer/Diver	9.5% (2)	9.5% (2)	23.8% (5)	28.6% (6)	28.6% (6)	0.0% (0)	4.8% (1)	21
Your Academic Program	14.3% (3)	33.3% (7)	28.6% (6)	9.5% (2)	9.5% (2)	4.8% (1)	4.8% (1)	21
Academic Workload	23.8% (5)	9.5% (2)	23.8% (5)	9.5% (2)	9.5% (2)	9.5% (2)	14.3% (3)	21

Appendix G

Comparison of responses above mid average based on %

	Initial	Post
Practice	19	28.5
Team Comradeship	22.6	66.2
Being a Purple Eagle	61.3	76.2
The School in General	74.2	86
Team Leadership	22.5	67
Our Team	45.2	67
Weights	9.6	28
Coaches	22.6	42.9
Your Potential as a Swimmer/Diver	48	43
Your Academic Program	74.2	76.2
Academic Workload	64.5	57

DIF Graph_1.1

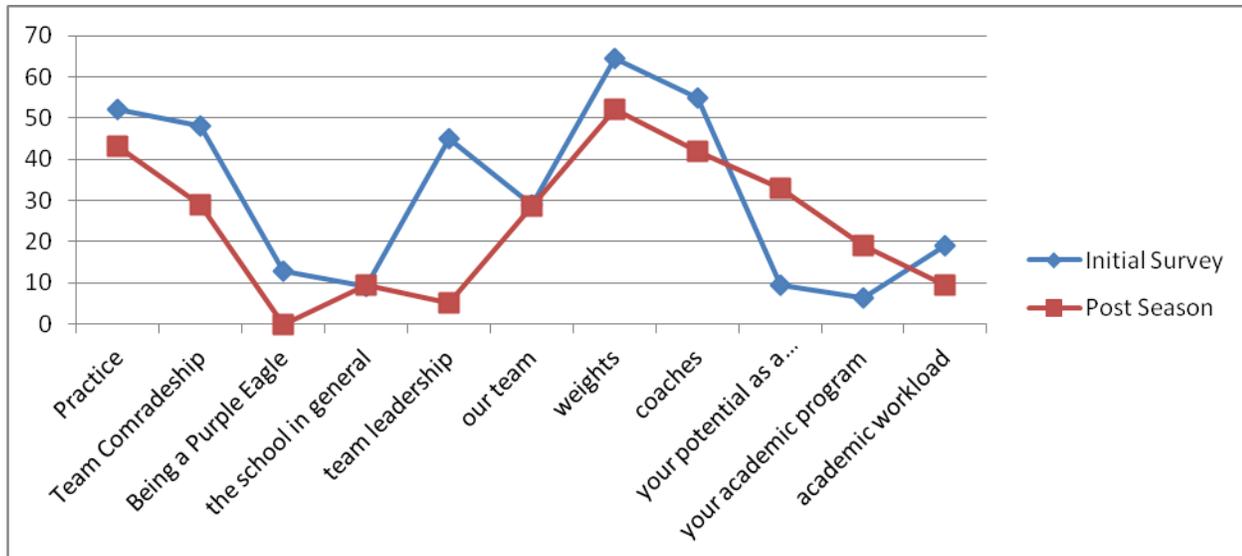


Appendix H

Comparison of responses below mid average based on %

	Initial	Post
Practice	52	43
Team Comradeship	48	29
Being a Purple Eagle	13	0
The School in General	9	9.5
Team Leadership	45	5
Our Team	29	28.5
Weights	64.5	52
Coaches	54.8	42
Your Potential as a Swimmer/Diver	9.6	33
Your Academic Program	6.4	19
Academic Workload	19	9.5

DIF_Graph 1.2



Appendix I

Diving in Faith: Purpose Driven Sports Curricula

Outline of Course

PHASE 1-8: Course Introduction

The **Diving in Faith** program is a foundational **experience** that will articulate and cultivate **character development** and **athleticism** within the **individual**. Once that is established, the program also aims to illustrate how **inner team unity** can then be developed. This inner team unity can then be further applied to a community setting as leadership initiatives will be implemented. The philosophy of the diving in faith program upholds that by developing individuals within society, through the life lessons of athletics and faith based practices of Christianity, we can develop prospering leaders and communities.

These activities can be tracked and results can be recorded to illustrate the progress made overtime. The athletes will leave with much more than just a journal tracking their experiences and developments made throughout this program. They will have been heavily involved in their own communities, gained volunteer experience, and developed a skill set and value set that they can now utilize in their own professional and athletic careers.

OVERALL OBJECTIVES

By the end of the 8 sessions, the students will be able to:

- **The First Year** would focus on personal development of the athlete. This would be the story sharing of personal experiences, the allocation of mentality for sport, education of values and ethics, and the foundational preparation for the next four years.
- **The Second Year** would focus more on the athletic development itself. Initially, we have to help the athlete mature to a point where they are able to comprehend and be open to new perspectives and opinions on sport. The focus for the second year would be on personal athletic performance and evaluation, skill development, and methods to improve the quality of practice and competition.
- **The Third Year** would gear its efforts on developing athletic leadership and team development. In this phase, the athletes would begin to learn leadership and management skills, conflict resolution, team building exercises, and participate in community-focused engagements.
- As a result of collaboration, understanding, and appreciation of one another with the team dynamics altered to helping each other, the team has become totally supportive of one another and trusting.

- **The Fourth Year** will have the athlete's transition from student to mentor and then begin to advocate and apply the skills they have collected and gained over the course of the previous three years, taking on leadership roles within their team and community.
- The athletes began to develop leadership skills and methods of resolving conflict. During the fourth year the athletes will take on lead rolls. It is the transition time to help guide them throughout the rest of their life.

CONCEPTS TO BE LEARNED 8 major elements interwoven through the four year program

- **Human Dignity:** The main objective of this program is to actualize that every person has the right and freedom to dream. The program promotes free will and choice and will develop a methodology to help man overcome human frailties in order to transcend himself/herself for the better.
- **Leadership:** One of the prime goals of the program is to develop leaders within the community. Leaders of all capabilities who are able to be self-sufficient in whatever capacity that is necessary. Everyone can be a leader in one way or another.
- **Community Development:** Family is the strongest and most influential aspect in our lives. The program will push the significance of developing strong family morals and ethics in order to illustrate how those same values can play an effective role in developing the community and environment around them.
- **Self-Empowerment and Transcendence:** Part of the program is to help the athlete become more than just an athlete. The program will help each athlete overcome developmental obstacles in not only their life and sport but in their spirituality as well. The goal is to get each athlete to realize that the choices they make have big impacts and that it is better to engage in what is going on around them than to just let things go by.
- **Mental Toughness:** One of the biggest reasons athletes give up on themselves is due to the lack of mental toughness and focus. Part of the reason is due to the lack of confidence cultivated in one's self. Ideally, we have to cultivate an environment where athletes are able to be comfortable and secure with their own selves in order to see results beyond expectations.
- **Ethical and Moral Teaching:** The program will foster coaching and leadership that focuses around the individual athlete and helping them establish a set of values to carry out their lives. However, such individual goals will be connected to the central goal of the program in order to illustrate that their actions, their presence and their work goes far beyond what they themselves conceive of.
- **Olympic Sized Aspirations:** The Olympics as we know are the premier sporting event for the world. Athletes from all over the globe come together to show case their athletic talents and compete against one another on the world stage. It is also a global leader in carrying out ideal standards and a symbol for mutual understanding worldwide. Ideally, this program aspires to cultivate elite athletes, who will become leaders that will help build effective community on a global scale, overcoming the conflicts that have continued to be fought over and disagreed upon.
- **Athleticism:** The final goal of this program is developing the athlete's athleticism. There many cases where sporting programs focus their attention on cultivating athleticism. I argue that by developing the other attributes effectively it is more likely the athletes will be able to persevere and overcome obstacles in order to strive towards elite performance.

RATIONALE

The program aims to cultivate an environment that will allow participants to build relationships among one another and to bond as a team. Doing so, will allow for experiential learning to place that will focus on leading and managing a team. This is done through a step-by-step process of understanding how an action works and the implications of the process carried out. Essentially, was the process carried out the best it could be and what are the repercussions if it was not?

EVALUATION

Athletes will be measured on transitional development throughout the course of the four years. Quantitative research will be collected to compare development of perception of self and athletic capability. Desired outcome hopes to illustrate that as you develop leadership skills your athletics will improve as well and you will grow in your own faith as an individual.

PHASE ONE

PHASE ONE LESSON PLAN

PHASE ONE LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Getting the students to share experiences
- Bring athletes together
- Develop a trusting environment
- Break down complexities and challenges each athlete faces in sport and in life
- Share aspirations, strengths, weaknesses
- Develop a mutual rapport and understanding among one another that they are similar in one way or another

PHASE ONE MATERIALS NEEDED

1. [Student reading #1](#): The Dip
2. Student worksheet and Journal Reflection
3. Purpose Driven Life Chapter -1-10
4. Peaks and Valleys

PHASE ONE TIME REQUIRED

5. There will be fifteen one hour-sessions where the class will meet with the facilitator to discuss assigned readings, review completed exercises and participate in experiential exercises. The situations described in the lesson plan should be used as an introduction to develop initial relationships among the class.

COURSE STUDY

PHASE ONE: Relationship Building Through Experience

Students are introduced to literature and information that will open up discussion between small collaborative groups or among the group as a whole. Students will be able to back up their conclusions, rationale and decisions with experiential reasons for the answers that were chosen. There will also be opportunities for group involvement which will require participation from all members. During this session, the facilitator focuses his/her efforts to understand the individuals they are working with and reason for athlete's behavior and belief.

PART 1: Knowing the Unknown:

- students get together with facilitator and questions are asked to the group
- these probed questions introduce the group to each other, and helps the group begin to understand who they will be working with for the course
- it will build awareness and involvement
- stimulate questions
- help bring out potential issues that the course will discuss more in depth later on
- What on Earth am I playing for?
- What is my purpose for Sport?

PART 2: Sharing the Experiences:

- open forum to stimulate more conversation
- the group will discuss fears focused around sport but this can be opened to other aspects that pertain to *how fears affect us in life*
- sport is a temporary assignment
- experiencing Sport together Part 1
- Athletes (created to become like Christ... how would he play on the field?)

PART 3: Moral/Ethical Values:

- thought provoking questions of ethics
- establishing open questions around values
- seeing sport through God's eyes... If your life was televised so all could see

Goal: move the group forward towards a higher standard of ethics in a fun and entertaining way

PHASE ONE CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

1. Have students write a reflection on an experience they shared with someone new.
2. Have students write a reflection on someone who has been a major influence in their life and why?
3. In groups, have students develop a chart of the sports they play and have them make connections of similarities that are congruent throughout each sport.
4. Have students write a reflection on the fears they experience in sport and in life. **Goal:**
Correlations will be made fears athletes experience in life and in sport
5. Have students write about their views on sport, its purpose in their life, and why they are playing.
6. Students will participate in a practice that is not their own sport.
7. Athletes will participate in a unified conditioning exercise that will articulate all muscle groups.

PHASE TWO LESSON PLAN**PHASE TWO LESSON OBJECTIVES**

- Athletes develop a mutual understanding and trusting environment among participants
- Students develop a shared ethical behavior for class
- Students develop the foundations for respect for themselves, their peers and for the facilitator
- Students will see that how they treat themselves is a reflection of how they treat others
- Students are confronted with ethical dilemmas and will develop a process to work through them
- Students become more culturally aware and open to other's perceptions and ideas
- Students will begin to understand that their actions/choices have repercussions both good and bad

PHASE TWO MATERIALS NEEDED

6. Purpose Driven Life
7. Student worksheet
8. Mind Gym

PHASE TWO TIME REQUIRED

1. There will be fifteen one hour sessions where the class will meet with the facilitator to discuss assigned readings, review completed exercises and participate in experiential exercises. The situations described in the lesson plan should be used as an introduction to develop a foundation for ethics and a belief system that is shared among the class.

COURSE STUDY**PHASE TWO: Relationships with Others**

Students will be introduced to literature and information that will open up discussion between small collaborative groups or among the group as a whole. These lessons will be geared towards student participation and interaction. Sessions will be focused on experiential developments based on participation. Students should formulate concise answers with evidence based on their experiences, rationale, and intuitive thought.

PART 1: Ethics & Belief

- focused on developing solid relationships and how they form
 - *What are good and bad relationships? What are positive things people do in a good relationship? What are negative things?*
- The reason for everything
- Playing for God's pleasure

PART 2: Trust

- interactive exercises that develop trust
 - **Goal:** is to not to just trust someone because they caught me during a trust fall but its building trust among each other through experiences shared.
- Developing your relationship with coach (developing a relationship with God)
- Play that pleases coach (worship that pleases God)
- When coach seems distant (when God seems distant)

PHASE TWO CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

1. Have students write a personal code of ethics, with at least three rules of conduct.
2. In groups, have students design a code of conduct for the group
3. Have students act out situations of ethical ambiguity and later reflect on developments
4. In groups, have students engage in team building exercises to develop trust amongst the group
5. Have athletes reflect on experiences in sport where they were more trusting of the environment around them/their team
6. Have athletes identify issues faced when they only trusted themselves rather than their, team, their coaches, or the bigger plan that has been written for them
7. Athletes will be paired up with another athlete from a separate sport and will support each other at least one game/meet. The athlete will then reflect on the experience of supporting someone else
8. The student will be challenged to work with a non-student on a project/assignment in another class and reflect on the interesting insights learned

PHASE THREE LESSON PLAN

PHASE THREE LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Athletes understand that their efforts to help the community will help maximize their potential for sport
- Athletes develop connections with their community
- Athletes learn how their actions make an impact on others and their supporting community
- Athletes observe and participate in hands on experiences of effective change in the community

PHASE THREE MATERIALS NEEDED

2. [Student reading #1](#): Tribes
3. Student worksheet
4. Tribal Leadership

PHASE THREE TIME REQUIRED

1. There will be fifteen one-hour sessions where the class will meet with the facilitator to discuss assigned readings, review completed exercises and participate in experiential exercises. During this phase, students will participate in service learning opportunities that may take place outside of class time. Further detailed information will be provided.

COURSE STUDY

PHASE THREE: Leadership and Citizenship

Students will be engaged in community outreach initiatives. These lessons will be geared towards student participation and interaction with the community. Sessions will focus on athlete's relationship with the community.

Leadership and Citizenship

- comfortable talk and flush out trust issues
- develop heightened levels of what trust is
- allocate positive attributes of trust
- Develop leadership types of exercises:
 - what is leadership?
 - how can I lead?
 - what is my responsibility to my community?

PHASE THREE CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

1. Have students write a personal code of ethics, with at least three rules of conduct.
2. In groups, have students design a code of conduct for the class or for the school.
3. Have students individually, or in groups, design a code of conduct for families. How might this be different from a code for the school of business? How might it be the same? Have students compare and contrast, by the use of Venn diagrams, the Code of Ethics of Engineers with the other ethical rules studied. How are they alike? How are they different?
4. Have athletes attend a club/organization meeting and reflect on their experience
5. Have athletes participate in a community event that is non-sport related
6. Have athletes participate in some sort of artistic event, festival or collaborative experience
7. Have athletes fundraise for a specific cause/organization

PHASE FOUR LESSON PLAN**PHASE FOUR LESSON OBJECTIVES**

- Athletes will discuss methods to satisfy needs and how to do so in a pro-active way. Self-worth, the sport environment itself, and physical comfort needs will be looked at more in depth
- Athletes will become aware of security needs: physical vs emotional environment: how to be free from worry, such as illness, injury, lost of sport position. Skill sets that were learned earlier in the course will be put into application in the context of sport
- Students are educated on issues and perspectives on physiological, security, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization.
- Students will allocate what are basic issues represented with survival. Things like food, sex, air and biological function.
- Athletes are educated on positive methods of socialization and fulfilling their needs of belonging (The need for love and affection. The need to be accepted by one peer.)
- Athletes will articulate a process to satisfy esteem needs: (the need for a positive self-image and self-respect) and the need for recognition and respect from others doing so in regards to the foundational question “What on Earth am I playing for?”
- Self-actualization needs: realizing one’s potential for continued growth and individual development. What is my purpose for Sport?

PHASE FOUR MATERIALS NEEDED

2. Purpose Drive Book
3. Student worksheet
4. The book of TaoSports
5. Seven Deadly Sins and Heavenly Virtues of Sport

PHASE FOUR TIME REQUIRED

1. There will be fifteen one-hour sessions where the class will meet with the facilitator to discuss assigned readings, review completed exercises and participate in experiential exercises. The situations described in the lesson plan should be used as an introduction to develop a foundation for athlete’s understanding of the potential of sport and begin to cultivate an enhanced mentality towards training and competition

COURSE STUDY**PHASE FOUR: Understanding your Sport**

The facilitator will work with the athletes on developing their perspectives for sport. Athletes will participate in exercises that will focus their training and give value to the process of physical development of sport. Athletes will be educated on the bigger picture that sport has not only in their lives but on a community and global level.

Understanding your Sport

- understanding the aspects of a sport in general
- The Heart of Athleticism
- Becoming the best athlete you can be for a “greater purpose” (God)
- Accepting your assignment through sport

PHASE FOUR CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

1. Have students write a personal code of ethics, for what is an athlete.
2. In groups, have students articulate in writing what sport means to them.
3. Have athletes identify how their sport can benefit others and how it has benefitted them.
4. Have athletes reflect on positive involvement in sports has had on them and the community of which they are a part.
5. In groups, have athletes discuss positive and negative actions that can affect the way they play
6. Have athletes reflect on how their motivations for sport are congruent with their motivations in life.

PHASE FIVE LESSON PLAN

PHASE FIVE LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Athletes will reflect on teammate disagreements and allocate positive methods to proactively overcome confrontations
- Athletes will learn methods of building team unity
- Athletes will participate in team activities
- Athletes will identify specific attributes and values they uphold that could help contribute to team cohesion

PHASE FIVE MATERIALS NEEDED

6. Purpose Driven
7. Mind Gym
8. Book of TaoSports

PHASE FIVE TIME REQUIRED

There will be fifteen one-hour sessions where the class will meet with the facilitator to discuss assigned readings, review completed exercises and participate in experiential exercises. Some exercises may involve extra-curricular activities that take place outside of a session.

COURSE STUDY

PHASE FIVE: Team Unity

The facilitator will work with the athletes on developing individual’s perspectives on team cohesion and personal contributions to a team. Athletes will understand the significance of maintaining a positive environment within the team and methods to overcome issues that arise.

Team Unity

- Team Leadership
- Team building and relationships
- Team citizenship (what is the teams responsibility to the community?)
- You are meant to be a part of this team
- What makes coach smile
- This team is your family
- Overcoming team disagreements (restoring broken fellowship)
- You were shaped for serving God, your team, and your community
- Using what resources coach gave you (using what God gave you)

PHASE FIVE CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

1. Have students individually, or in groups, design a code of conduct for families.
2. Have students individually, or in groups, design a code of conduct for a team.
3. Have students in a group design a T-Chart of positive and negative experiences they have had on a team.
4. Have students write a reflection on the experiences they have had on a team that functioned well and one that was dysfunctional.
5. Have students individually, or in groups, identify desirable traits for each aspect of a team coach, captain(s), teammates, individual athlete. Allocating what the roles and responsibilities are for each.

PHASE SIX LESSON PLAN**PHASE SIX LESSON OBJECTIVES**

- Participants will develop community and inter-relationships amongst other athletes of different sports
- Athletes will interact with alumni and prospective athletes
- Athletes will participate in activities that involve athletes of other sport disciplines
- Athletes will develop and commit to allocated priorities that as a collective group designed
- Athletes will see the benefit in working together with athletes of other sport disciplines

PHASE SIX MATERIALS NEEDED

9. Purpose Driven
10. Student worksheet
11. TBD

PHASE SIX TIME REQUIRED

There will be fifteen one-hour sessions where the class will meet with the facilitator to discuss assigned readings, review completed exercises and participate in experiential exercises.

COURSE STUDY**PHASE SIX: The Athletic Community**

Students will engage with athletes of other disciplines to work together and develop an integrative athletic community that supports and is accountable of one another. Athletes will be expected to participate in community events along with events that foster the development and growth of other athletic programs. Students will apply an open mind to working with athletes of another discipline and in the community.

The Athletic Community

- relationships between sports {how can athletes work together to help each other?}
- sharing experiences of other sports (how are athletes interconnected? How are they equal?)
- Experiencing sport together Part II
- Transformed athletics through truth
- Transformed athletics: overcoming trouble
- Growing through temptation experienced in athletics
- Defeating temptation experienced on the athletic field
- It takes time for athletic development

PHASE SIX CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

1. Have teams be linked to another team and support each other throughout the year (partnered teams should alternate).
2. Have students write letters to past alumni.
3. Invite alumni to come into class and speak on challenges/experiences they had as student athletes and where they are now.
4. Have students design an athletic lesson guide for future athletes.
5. Athletic mentorship: Older athletes will be partnered with younger athletes to help mentor them through difficulties in sport, life and challenges of balancing academics and sport (both in team and between teams).

PHASE SEVEN LESSON PLAN

PHASE SEVEN LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Athlete will breakdown his/her sport into a detailed orientated process
- Athletes will have a better understanding of the rationale and reasoning for the maneuvers they are performing
- Students will mature as athletes becoming more cognitive and aware of what they are doing
- Athletes will integrate the process in which they perform in sport to the process in which they carry out actions in a professional setting and in life
- Athletes will implement the lessons and skills learned throughout the curriculum and will assess the growth and development actualized in sport performance
- Athletes will have a transformative experience in their sport

PHASE SEVEN MATERIALS NEEDED

12. Purpose Drive Sport
13. Student worksheet
14. Mind Gym

PHASE SEVEN TIME REQUIRED

There will be fifteen one-hour sessions where the class will meet with the facilitator to discuss assigned readings, review completed exercises and participate in experiential exercises.

COURSE STUDY

PHASE SEVEN: Breaking down your sport

Students will put their acquired skills to the test. They will utilize the different resources learned and will gage their athletic performance throughout the phase. The focus will be to see the transition within sport as a result of utilizing a holistic approach to developing athletic skill.

Breaking down your sport [Looking at your individual sport/way you live your life under a magnifying glass]

- Built in belief system and now the athlete can trust it and be able to fully understand their sport
- now the belief system can be utilized to apply it to their own sport and athletic performance
- What drives your sport?
- Understanding your own unique shape and how that can benefit you in sport and in life
- What is your mission through sport?

[this process breaks down an aspect of athletics (such as a dive, every movement articulated to its highest degree) keeping it in the context of leadership, ethical principles and community focus]

PHASE SEVEN CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES

1. Have students write a personal narrative of their experiences through sport.
2. In groups, have students design training programs that incorporate all aspects of sport, community, and have them connect to a bigger/larger cause/purpose.
3. Have students develop a self-motivated coaching guide with tips and reminders for each athlete to utilize during competition.
4. Have student athletes study their own behavioral patterns pre meet, during meet and post meet and evaluate the sustainability and result positive/negative over time.
5. Have students research other athletes who have made it to the elite level and interview them.

PHASE EIGHT LESSON PLAN

PHASE EIGHT LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Manage and lead effectively in groups
- Develop self-sustaining opportunities for career in sport in the professional world
- Utilize sport as a foundation for life
- Be a leader in the community based on positive action
- Understand the importance of service and take pro-active measures to carry it out

PHASE EIGHT MATERIALS NEEDED

15. Purpose Drive Life
16. Student worksheet
17. Learning to Lead

PHASE EIGHT TIME REQUIRED

There will be fifteen one-hour sessions where the class will meet with the facilitator to discuss assigned readings, review completed exercises and participate in experiential exercises.

COURSE STUDY**PHASE EIGHT: Conclusion Summary: Leadership Redefined: Capstone Project**

Students will be engaged in a community initiative that they plan and coordinate. The athlete will essentially do a Capstone on a community service initiative through sport. Students will take the entire phase to research, participate, test, and conclude on the experiences and developments they created as a result of positively impacting the community through their use of sport.

Conclusion Summary: Leadership Redefined [Servant Leadership]

- leadership through serving others in whatever context prevalent
- seeing what is needed and helping others make it happen
(rather than holding information back)
- What are you really playing for? (dress rehearsal for life after sports and life)
- Thinking like a servant on the field
- God's power in your weakness during athletic performance: how to strengthen your heart and mind
- Sharing your career in sport with others
- Becoming a world class athlete

In Practice: mental and physical exercises to learn how this can be developed**PHASE EIGHT CONCLUDING ACTIVITIES**

1. Have students choose a method and participate within a community as a servant leader and will reflect on their journey.
2. Have students create a presentation and paper that allocates the results from the experiential research.
3. Have students will collaborate on project initiatives and the impact each project could potentially have in each athlete's chosen community.
4. Assign students to research an athlete or a person in history who has engaged in servant leadership and have them find similarities between the two processes.