

Charley Washburn

Coaching Archery

My Coaching Philosophy

Our friend, Charley Washburn, is the coach of our JOAD program's competitive team, the Nevada County Gold Team. Over the last three years his team had the most success we have ever witnessed and we feel a great deal of that success is attributable to him, although he would probably argue with us about that. Charley is not only a championship caliber archer but has embraced coaching in a major way. We asked him to share his coaching philosophy with all of you. Steve and Claudia

It started out as an assignment for my NAA Level 3 Coach Training Course to formalize my coaching philosophy. It is an exercise I feel all coaches need to undertake. Here is the assignment I was given.

Write a one or two page paper outlining your personal philosophy on coaching. Include values, beliefs, objectives, style, dealing with diverse athletes.

Consider the following:

- 1. Three coaching styles: command (dictator), submissive (baby sitter), cooperative (the teacher)*
- 2. Qualities of a successful coach: knowledge of sport, motivation, empathy*
- 3. Coaching for character: can coaches really build character?*
- 4. A mediocre coach tells, a good coach explains, a superior coach demonstrates, a great coach inspires.*

The funny thing about this assignment was that, although it required a self evaluation before actually putting anything down on paper, I had

unknowingly already developed, adopted, and reiterated it to my JOAD archers and their parents many times. All I needed was to put it into writing.

Every member of the Gold Team and anyone else I now train (and their parents) is given a copy of it. Personally, my single most important goal in coaching is to inspire. If I can inspire, the rest takes care of itself and I think the proof of this philosophy is evident in the Gold Team.

Knowing when not to do something seems to be the hardest thing for most coaches. Watching many of the parent/coaches or private coaches while their athletes were competing has been a real education. When their athletes fell behind many of them were busy trying to fix things, that in my opinion, didn't need fixing. All their efforts to find quick fixes seemed to just confuse their athletes. They had already spent many hours training their athletes to shoot but seemed to fail in an understanding between coach/parent and

“Dreams can come true.”

athlete as to motivation. Many of the athletes became more fixed on seeking approval on each arrow or end from their parent/coaches than they should be. Whose dream was the athlete trying to satisfy? It must be the athlete's dream and the coach should only do and say things that reinforce that motivation. If their archers can develop and maintain a “fire in their belly” and truly

believe that this is something they want for themselves and no one else, they have their best chance for success.

I make a special effort to control the environment (distractions, parents, interactions with others) prior to and when the athletes are competing so they can best stay motivated and focused. I have made special efforts to have the archer's parents understand that all negativity and distractions are cumulative and need to be avoided, from all sources, including them.

Coaches have to evaluate each athlete to see how to best turn on that fire. The fire and inspiration was very evident in 2005 with Trelaina Borges, our most successful archer, and I continually reinforced it in every communication we had. I always had one thing that I would say to her just prior to her taking the field and she never failed to respond. She, her mom, and I are the only ones who know exactly what I would say to her.

I don't expect to find that the same thing will work to the same degree with all the members of the Gold Team until I can understand each archer's goals and how best to inspire them to achieve that goal. It takes a one-on-one relationship to establish a confidence level in themselves and in me.



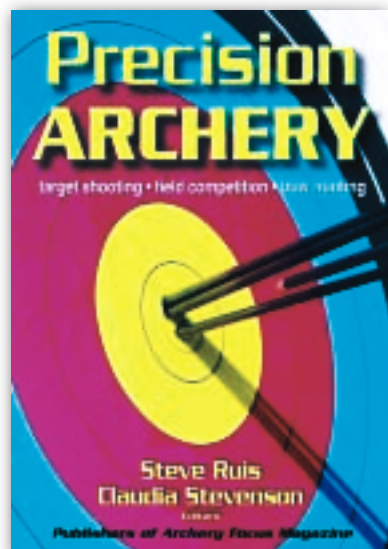
Trelaina Borges with Coach Charley Washburn at the 2006 NAA National Championships.

I find occasions where things are not going as well as expected and I am not sure when to intervene. It worked best, in most cases, to let the archer make the decision when they need help.

As an example, when Trelaina began faltering the

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second day in the 2005 NAA Nationals in Colorado Springs she had began checking the scoreboard each end with her spotting scope. She finally realized that she was beginning to focus more on the score than on just executing each and every shot and simply turned her scope skyward so that she could not look thru it anymore. She walked back to me at that end and said "If I can't see it,

I don't have to worry about it." I told her I was going to give her one more end and if she had looked at the scoreboard again, I was going to have her remove the scope. She went on to shoot her highest personal FITA score, 1272, and is credited with three national records.

Here is what I wrote in response to that exercise at the beginning of this article.



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My Coaching Philosophy and Style

Archery has been a part of my life since I was eight years old. Whether it be as a hunter, as a survivalist placed by my own imagination in some far region of the wilderness, as a competitor, and now as a teacher and coach, it has always offered a treasured life experience. Needless to say, I understand the passion.

I believe that young

men and women today are deluged with confusing and conflicting influences from our entertainment industry and from many of our sports figures. They are in great need of examples of leadership, integrity, and inspiration. The elements of archery—focus, concentration, building self confidence, and striving for individual accomplishment—are positive physical and psychological influences on them.

My coaching philosophy is based on understanding the goals and objectives of each student so that I can better provide training, guidance, and motivation to achieve their goals and objectives.

My coaching style is intended to inspire and motivate students to achieve goals by concentrating on the positive aspects of their training and approach corrective needs in a positive manner.

My own successful competitive archery experience, personal training, and coaching experience provides me with an extensive information resource for the technical and other training needs of my students.

Each student is a diverse individual and a coach must understand that he/she has a substantial influence on their lives. Many of the things they learn will be applied to their every day lives. I therefore believe each student should be recognized for their individuality and diversity and I have no intent to teach with a one mold fits all method.

The most valuable thing I have to give to my archery students is my knowledge and time. Therefore I insist that my teaching and coaching time be dedicated to students who set goals, demonstrate a willingness to learn, follow training schedules and recommendations, and commit themselves to the pursuit of goal achievement.

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Charley Washburn began shooting archery at the age of eight and began competing in the early 1960s. As a bowhunter he has taken several species of small and big game including deer and elk. He has been a member of five archery clubs and was instrumental in starting the archery program at the Nevada County Sportsmen's Club, in which, he has served as President, Secretary, Legislative Coordinator, Director at Large, and is a life member. He has won over 50 State, National Sectional and World championships and currently holds six CBH/SAA state records, two NFAA national records and one IFAA world record. Charley is a NAA Level 4 Coach, a NFAA certified archery instructor, a 4-H archery and rifle instructor and an IBEF Bowhunter Education instructor. He has authored several articles for national magazines including *Archery Focus* and *Archery*. Charley is the Head Coach of the Nevada County Gold JOAD Team and has coached the eleven member team in 2005 and 2006 to thirty-four state championships, twenty-six state records, seven national championships, and four national records.