

The Value of Integrity

In the previous articles, we have explored Coach John Wooden's Pyramid of Success and made application to coaching rifle or pistol sports. This is a follow on to those ideas.

The Pyramid of Success, as described by Coach John Wooden (retired UCLA Basketball Coach) is mortared together by two key ingredients: faith and patience.

'Values come from what you believe' is what Wooden says. What you believe may have come from your background of church and family. When your values are based on faith, and if that source is absolute Truth, you have values that will not waiver, are not relative or expedient to the situation and, therefore, you have integrity. Where a vacuum of values exists, there can be no integrity.

"Good values attract good people. Values create an atmosphere of integrity. " When you demonstrate as a coach that you have values beyond winning, that there is importance in the small things and that you care about people beyond the sport, it will be recognized for what it is: character. Character is what you do. Passing on these values is why many of us coach. The glory of winning is fleeting.

Character starts with the little things. Coach Wooden insisted that his "star" players pick up after themselves in the locker room even though there was a team assistant to do so. This spoke to the humility of the individual. Then he set standards about bigger things: he had a code he expected everyone on the team to follow. This is the code his father had taught him....and still holds to today:

"Work hard, don't complain- no excuses; never lie, never cheat, never steal and don't whine."

Success is not the source of happiness although we can have a moment of happiness in success. Success takes patients: it doesn't happen overnight. All the success you gain over years can be undone in a moment with one bad decision. But only you can truly define success because it is defined by the quality of your performance: did you do your very best? When you do, you have succeeded and are satisfied. Winning may be a by-product, but when you define your success by your performance, scores no longer define you, win-loss records no longer define you and championships no longer define you. And in this, you have control of your happiness.