



## Canada Games

As a basketball coach you have three major tasks:

- Improve the individual skills of each of the players on the team. This is not only the basketball skills such as dribbling, passing and shooting, but also their physical fitness, mental skills and life skills such as leadership.
- Get the 12 individuals to work together as a team. This involves the various systems you use on offence and defence. The great coaches make sure that these systems play to the strengths of the players and hide their weaknesses.
- Build dream and get them to believe in something bigger than themselves. This is about getting players to believe in themselves and each other. It involves self-confidence and the power of the team.

As the basketball competition wound down at the Canada Games, in Summerside, PEI, it was very apparent that these three tasks were on display. It speaks highly of the quality of the coaches working with our athletes at the highest level of the Train to Compete stage of development. .

### Individual Improvement

Many of these players have been involved with the various provincial programs for four years. Many started at the U15's in Sherbrooke, QC or Vancouver, BC (depending on if they are male or female). The improvement in core strength and overall fitness has vastly improved. This has allowed the player to play a more physical brand of basketball. It is great to see the shot form and dribbling ability improve. Especially against pressure! The Alberta girls who won the gold are an excellent example of a group of players who have improved their skills. Their interior passing, great defence and ability to make the three point shot put them ahead of the of competition. Congratulation to the team and to coaches Scott Edwards, Karla Karch and Christie Darius. A job well done! This staff has put four long summers into the program. It takes time to develop your players.

### Work as a Team

Getting the 12 players to work together is an art. The coach has to find the system that highlights the strengths of each player. The coach must then convince the players that this style will work. In Provincial programs this can often be a problem since all of the players are stars in their own communities. Some must sacrifice individual glory for the good of the team. Coaches Pascal Jobin, Martin Dusseault and Guy Pariseau of the gold medal winning Quebec men's team did an outstanding job in finding a style of play that fit the skills of the players on the team. They maximized the time in training to build a style of play that led to success. They kept the game simple for the players by playing to their strengths; therefore the players were able to play with instinctively with confidence. Congratulation to the team and staff.

### Build Dreams

There was no better coach at building dreams than Tim Kendrick's of the Nova Scotia boys. This started last summer when he took a group of boys to the U17 Nationals in Charlottetown, PEI. Tim is a master motivator who can get players to get work hard for a common dream. Ever since last summer he started to go to work on the player's minds, getting them to believe. Each day in practice the players had to back up the belief with the work required to make it happen. In their semi-final game

against Ontario, Tim made sure that each and every player believed they could win. Most of the experts did not think this could happen. Tim and the team proved the experts wrong. In the final vs. Quebec, Nova Scotia went down by 17 points early in the first quarter. They fought back and with a fantastic third quarter, eventually led by as many as 10 points. They lost the game on a shot with 0.1 seconds on the clock. These types of losses are always the most devastating. One of the greatest displays of coaching in the entire Canada Games was display as soon as Nova Scotia lost. Tim immediately grabbed the boys into a tight personal huddle. He wanted to make sure he debriefed the boys first. He wasn't worried about himself, he was concerned for them. He spent time individually with each player's after the game. This is why players love to play for Tim Kendrick's. They know he cares for them and he shows it. The silver medal is quite an achievement, well done Nova Scotia boys and the staff of Tim Kendrick's Shawn Mantley and Marvin Rhyno.

Paul Langford should also be congratulated for continuing to motivate and coach his BC girls. All week long the team played a great brand of team basketball. In last game of pool play vs. Alberta they met their first test. Alberta won the game convincingly although BC's pressure made it a 10 point game at the end. The rematch in the final could have been over quickly as Alberta went up by more than 20 points in the first half. The BC girl's never stop believing and through some great adjustments and hard work they crawled their way back to make it an exciting final. Congrats to BC on winning the silver medal. Well done coaches Paul Langford, Sandy Chambers and Anthony Beyrouti.

To all of the other teams and coaches I hope you will have some stories to tell about your time in PEI. Some will be happy others may be sad, but hopefully there will be a lesson you have learned for the future. The most important thing is to take some time to recover. We don't want you losing the joy of the game because you do not take the time to recharge the batteries. Physically, mentally and social/emotionally you need a break.

To the host committee, volunteers, officials and minor official a job well done. Thanks for making it a special time for the players and coaches.