

## NET EDGE NEWS

THE GOALKEEPERS NEWS LETTER



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## THE WINNING ATTITUDE

What is attitude? Today it has so many interpretations; good attitude, bad attitude and some times a "bad" attitude is good? Positive attitudes and negative attitudes. The phrase "They have attitude" might mean a combination of arrogance and confidence. Attitude comes in all shapes and sizes. Literally attitude means "ones disposition, the manner of acting feeling or thinking that shows ones disposition, opinion etc", In a nut shell your attitude is a reflection of what's going on inside and has a direct impact on your behavior and how others behave towards you.

Where do you begin to develop a winning attitude?

## CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE

There is always a choice about the way you [practice or play] even if there is not a choice about the [practice or play ] itself (Lundin, paul Christensen,2000). Although athletes may be born with physical talent, attitude is something they attain through training.

"Attitude is NOT something you're born with," says Peter Haberl, a sports psychologist with the United States Olympic Committee. "Attitude is a deci-

sion."(ASP, 2007)

## MASTERY VS. OUTCOME

Components to a winning attitude are the desire to win, externally driven and the desire to perform your best internally driven (Asp, 2005). The key to the above statement is to focus on performing your best not on the outcome of the event....the

Olympic motto is:

**Citius**

**Altius**

**Fortius**

or Faster, Higher, Stronger. Why isn't it Fastest, Highest, Strongest?" (PCA, 2006). Because it is about mastery of your discipline and continuous improvement. Top athletes in the world focus on their own performance and personal bests not on comparing themselves to the competitor or being obsessed with the score. Joan Duda, sports Psychologist did a study of the teams in the 2000 Sydney Olympics, those teams that were focused on a mastery environment (their personal bests) won more medals than those who were focused on the scoreboard and trying to beat the competition. (PCA, 2007).

## BE PRESENT

Be there and be focused. If you let your energy and attention drift you are now just wasting your own time. Sometimes you can draw your energy from the practices/events . There are times when these can be not the most exciting or they are repetitive and low key, or maybe you've had a bad day. Know yourself and find ways to



Kasey Keller giving 100% on routine drills

reenergize and refocus yourself. You can't always chose where you have to be or what is happening, but you can chose how you react. You get out exactly what you put in.

## HAVE FUN !

I can't stress this enough, fun is critical part of our lives. Play for the sheer joy of playing. Have fun, we play sports because we have a passion for the game,

(Continued on page 2)

## WHAT'S COMING?

- **Striker/Keeper Training Series summer of 2007**
- **2007 Striker/Keeper Series coming to a Division 1 University near you!**

See back page for all details

## WINNING ATTITUDE (CONTINUED)



(Continued from page 1)

### “ACT AS IF”

bring that joy and enthusiasm with you. Don't forget that the joy can be infectious and bring a lift to yourself and everyone around you. Tiffany Milbert is great example of a player who plays for fun and the love of the sport . She brings that same energy to her practices and works hard on the parts of her game that need work. It shows in what a great player she is. (DiCicco, Hacker,2002). On days when your tank is empty find someone else who has the winning attitude to help you reenergize. But be the catalyst whenever you can and fill others tanks as well. As goalkeepers we have a tremendous influence on our teams energy. We can generate the wave of winning attitude in our team from our goal all the way to our opponents goal just by your own behavior . When you enjoy what you do it shows.

Confidence is incredibly important to the concept of acting as *if*. The coach and the players must act as *if* they can handle every situation and NOT by being cocky or arrogant. You DO have to act as *if* you know what it takes to get the job done. (DiCicco, Hacker,2002). Acting as *if* is a powerful mental tool, it ultimately becomes a self fulfilling prophecy, you do it long enough it becomes who you are. You can recognize those with the right attitude: they are not making excuses or hanging their heads after a mistake, they are moving on and focusing on the next play because they know they are going to fix it and get it next

#### Bibliography:

- “Catch them being Good”, Tony DiCicco, Colleen Hacker, PhD., (Viking Penguin, 2002) pp 167-169
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- “Get an Olympic Attitude: How to Be a Winner, Even When You Lose” by Karen Asp ([www.http://www.aurorahealthcare.org/yourhealth/healthgate/getcontent.asp?URLhealthgate=%2213811.html](http://www.aurorahealthcare.org/yourhealth/healthgate/getcontent.asp?URLhealthgate=%2213811.html))
- Positive Coaching alliance ([www.positivecoach.org](http://www.positivecoach.org))

time. Be able to make a mistake and shake it off and move on. Act as *if*....

### DUMP YOUR EGO

If not, you won't allow yourself to do things that make you look bad and in the end, that will keep you from getting better. Tennis players, for example, who have a weak backhand might try to avoid hitting a backhand shot and run around the ball to hit a forehand because they don't want to look bad or lose. Do this and that backhand will never improve. (ASP, 2005).

### HAVE A PLAN

What are your goals? you need to understand your own objectives. Break it down into manageable pieces. “I want to be the best goalkeeper there is” ...that on a number of levels becomes an unwieldy challenge; it is ambiguous... what does the best mean?? even the best want to get better, and it is too big to wrap your hands around to formulate a good plan.

Get together with your coach or trainer to help you develop a plan.

Focus on the techniques, tactics and mental aspects of your game that when mastered move your performance forward. Focus on what it takes to get to the next level not 8 levels up. You then create a stable and solid foundation for continuous improvement. “By the end of summer I will have a consistent GoalKick that reaches the circle” , that is an example of a manageable goal that will move you as an athlete (and Goalkeeper) forward by leaps and bounds!

### LET IT BE YOU.....

that has the winning attitude. it makes for a lot more fun, more opportunity for success, an ability to cope and deal, in a healthy manner, with failure and mistakes. It gives you the ability to move your performance forward in an effective and constructive way and tune out external negative influences. Winning attitudes help you and your team!



**Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them become what they are capable of becoming.**

**Goethe**

**UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMIC SET (GOALKEEPERS SET POSITION)**

**Get Set,....**

We always talk about “set” position, being ready when the shot is taken, body balanced, weight on balls of your feet, hands in a position to go either up or down quickly.



When we say “dynamic set” we are talking about when and how to get set. If you are in a set position for too long a

period of time you lose the benefits of being set; it can actually become counter productive to your reaction time, not set soon enough, well, the obvious, you are not ready to handle the shot.

You want to step into your set position “just” before the shot is taken, thus “loading” your muscles for an optimal reaction to a shot. Getting into the set position can be done one of two ways: a short quick step and load, or small quick pop forward with both feet, be sure you are not taking big hops I see a lot of young players take big hops and end up late for the shot or going too heavy into the set position.

Lets talk about the science behind what we just said to help clarify it.

What we are talking about are some basic principles of plyometrics; that “getting set” moment is essentially utilizing the effects of a plyometric movement to increase power and force.

**THE SCIENCE**

Plyometrics utilize the stretch reflex mechanism in the muscle to improve the reaction time of the nervous system in that muscle (Grace, 2007).

Getting set in a quick movement and just prior to the shot works by quickly stretching the muscle (eccentric) followed by a very quick muscle contraction (concentric). The quick eccentric phase activates and fires the Muscle Spindle, located in the muscle fiber, and a tremendous amount of force is generated through elastic energy that is stored in the tendons and muscle. (Grace, 2007). This allows for a quick and explosive save!

**AMORTIZATION**

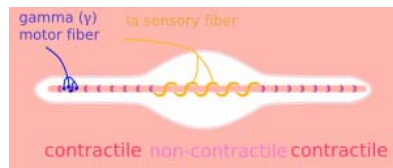
No this is not your mortgage payment schedule. Amortization here applies to how long you are in a certain position, in this case, your set position.

Even though you have optimally stretched or loaded your muscles the longer you are in the position the more you will lose the benefit of being set.

The key is to keep the amortization phase (the landing and pre-stretch phase) as short as possible. This phase is significant. If the loading phase is too long the Golgi Tendon Organ will take over and cancel out the function of the Muscle Spindle. ( you lose the benefit of a quick set) The shorter the amortization phase, the greater the Muscle Spindle action and elastic response from the muscle and the nervous system (explosiveness). The athlete must always react as if the ground is hot like a frying pan. (Grace, 2007).

For those of you who like details:

Both Spindles and Golgi tendons are Proprioceptors. Muscle spindles are found within the fleshy portions of Muscles.



The Golgi tendon organ unlike muscle spindles

**"The only reason for time is so that everything doesn't happen at once."  
Albert Einstein**

(which are located in **parallel** with muscle fibers), the Golgi tendon organs are in **series** with muscle fibers, located in the tendons that attach muscle to bone. (Bess, 2007) [Activation of the Golgi tendon organ inhibits muscular contraction](#). (Shield)



**Bibliography (both articles)**

Tony Shield, (<http://www.exrx.net/Questions/GTO.html>)

Teresa Bess (<http://courses.washington.edu/conj/bess/spindle/proprioceptors.html>)

Janet A young, Michelle Pain **The Zone: Evidence of a Universal Phenomenon for Athletes Across Sports** , (Athletic insight inc. 1999)

**IN THE ZONE**

The “Zone” also know as “flow” is described by athletes as the pinnacle of achievement the zone characterizes a state in which an athlete performs to the best of his or her ability. It is a magical and... special place where performance is exceptional and consistent, automatic and flowing. An athlete

is able to ignore all the pressures and let his or her body deliver the performance that has been learned so well. Competition is fun and exciting (Young, Pain, 1999) The reality of being in the zone is temporary and of relatively short duration; non-voluntary and not induced at will; and, unique and not necessarily

associated with a successful performance outcome. It is also found that [the athletes' mastering of the basic skills of the sport was a pre-condition for the occurrence of peak experiences](#). Ravizza (1977, 1984). Studies show that a top athlete only spends about 15% of their time ‘in the Zone’ This led

me to ask the question how do approach training since you can't rely on being in the Zone when you need to be.

To come full circle. The elements of a Winning Attitude are the elements of top performance and increasing the

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## IN THE ZONE (CONTINUED)

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chances of being in the Zone.

When you look at the great athletes who by all appearances look like they are functioning in the Zone probably are not. But they have trained in such a fashion as to deliver high performance as a normal part of their play. I believe that the mastery approach to training is one of the more significant elements. Building a solid foundation and adding to those skills incrementally. Persistent and consistent training is another factor of turning out a consistently high performance.

Mental breaks, allow yourself down time when you are not training/playing allow yourself a chance to step away. Give your mind and body a rest. You will find that you will perform better when you are not burned out, exhausted and stressed.

Do remember the hours top athletes put into their game in order to excel, it is an enormous amount of time, focus and energy. It is their passion that fuels their desire to train to be a champions. They love the sport, often the training itself provides them the energy and enjoyment to succeed.

The next time you are out there on the pitch you'll find yourself performing at a high level that has become your norm ... and you might even find yourself

IN THE ZONE!



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**Get The Edge!™**



Catherine Gordon is the Founder and Director of Net Edge Training, LLC. Since 1999 Net Edge Training has specialized in goalkeeping training for youth players of all ages.

As a former USL W-League goalkeeper for the New Jersey Wildcats, Gordon has over 25 years experience between the pipes. A graduate of Purdue University, she was a four-year letter winner in four varsity sports during high school. She played basketball in college for Ft. Lewis College and concluded her collegiate career playing soccer for the Boilermakers Club during her senior year.

Gordon is a Division I Goalkeeping Coach for the Fairleigh Dickinson University Women's Soccer team, with primary responsibilities for goalkeeper training and development. Gordon holds a USSF "C" License and a NSCAA Advanced National Goalkeeping Diploma. She also serves as a goalkeeper evaluator for Olympic Development Program (ODP) tryouts and is a Certified Trainer for Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA).

"I've had the opportunity to play with some outstanding players, and learn from excellent coaches, including Tony DiCicco, Tony Waiters and Peter Mellor. My goal is to bring the best practices, strategies, and enthusiasm from these varied sources to today's Goalkeepers, giving them the opportunity to develop and excel in their position."

## STRIKER/KEEPER SERIES

**ELITE FEMALE Striker/Keeper Series™**(Ages 14-18) July 30th-Aug 3rd Monday-Friday  
9am-12:30pm Fairleigh Dickinson University (Division I), Teaneck, NJ

**MVP Striker/Keeper Series** (Ages 10-13 B/G) July 9th-July 13th Monday-Friday, 1-4:30pm Old Troy Park. Parsippany, NJ

**MVP Striker/Keeper Series** (Ages 10-12 B/G) July 23th-July 27th Monday-Friday  
5:30pm-9:00pm, Mt Laurel, NJ

**CHAMPION Striker/Keeper Series** (Ages 13-16 B/G) July 2nd-July6th Monday-Friday,  
9am-12:30pm, Mt Laurel, NJ

Go to [www.netedgetraining.com](http://www.netedgetraining.com) to register.

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