



Ohio Wesleyan University– Athletic Training Athletic Training Newsletter

➤➤➤ Fall 2012. Volume 3, Number 2

Intro— Todd Miller

As we put together this issue of the AT Newsletter, we wanted to touch on a couple topics that we receive questions about on a regular basis.

We are privileged to have a guest columnist, Leif Smith, cover the subject of Toughness. Leif is one of my really good friends and I have been lucky to cross paths with him during my professional career. As a clinical psychologist who has worked with some of the

best coaches and athletes around, he brings a great perspective on Toughness and what we can do to help aid in our pursuit of this quality. I would strongly encourage you to go to his website at personalbestconsulting.com, and sign up for his monthly newsletter. If you enjoy that, pick up his book "Sports Psychology for Dummies".

The other article discusses energy drinks. We have seen empty bottles of

5 hour energy around the different athletic facilities and being consumed prior to practice, training, or competition. The verdict on their effect on sports performance is not yet known, but we examine some dangers that may be associated with using these products.

As always, we hope you enjoy and if you have any suggestions for topics in future issues let us know.

What's New at the Wellness Center?

- The Wellness Center is still offering flu shots. The flu season is expected to be early this year so make your appointment NOW, do not wait until after break. Please call x3160 to make an appointment. The cost is \$20, payable by cash, check, or it can be placed on your student account.
- Congratulations to Randi Peterson, staff nurse, on the birth of her son, Jakob Joseph. We look forward to her return on December 21st.

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Everyday Tough: Redefining What Tough Really Is — Leif Smith, Psy.D

Toughness is overrated. And misunderstood. I've worked with thousands upon thousands of some of the toughest and best athletes, coaches, and executives in the world, and in well over a decade of time in the trenches, I've come to some slightly off-center conclusions about what toughness is and what toughness isn't. And here's a partial discussion on what I've come up with:

1. Toughness Ain't Machismo

Most people discuss toughness in terms related to macho stereotypes. The image that readily comes to mind is the stoic athlete who fears little, lives on the edge, and always comes through in the clutch. Wrong.

Toughness should be seen more as resilience, or the ability to bounce back from adversity and/or unforeseen obstacles. Toughness also requires that we acknowledge that fear is a very big part of our everyday experience, and thus requires bravery, the ability to push forward in the face of these fears, knowing that repeated failure is a very real and scary reality.

2. Women Are Wired to be Tougher Than Men

Childbirth discussions aside, women are naturally wired to be tougher than men neurologically. The prefrontal cortex, the area of the brain directly behind our eyes that is responsible for attention, insight and decision-making, isn't fully developed until well into our mid-twenties. Experience (good and bad) and social interaction help the prefrontal cortex to develop, and women do better from a very young age at socialization and language development, allowing them to gain valuable social experience while developing empathy skills. These skills are important aspects of toughness. We need to be able to focus our attention on relevant stimuli in our very busy environments, and then gather important data from those environments, process the data, and make appropriate decisions—all in the blink of an eye.

With this model for toughness as a starting point, studies on mindfulness (the art of intention) become building blocks for teaching skills that can

improve our resilience and ability to withstand the emotional ebb and flow of life.

3. It Should be Required Coursework

Some of my undergrad student-athletes take classes that make me cringe. Online weight-lifting? Underwater Jujitsu? Gimme a break! We should be teaching our undergraduates the nuts and bolts of real-world toughness, since college is much more than academics, and much of the learning that we do during this period of our lives is outside of the classroom. The syllabus could include relationship skills, empathy, communication, and patience. It could address self-care with topics like maintaining our physical and emotional well-being. These are the skills we need once we trade the bookbags and hoodies for briefcases and tailored pants. The class, much like life, would be offered as an audit only, pass/fail course-no credit, no pats on the back from the teacher, no GPA.



Risks of high caffeine intake include: headaches, insomnia, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, dehydration, sleep disturbances, and increased anxiety.

5 Hour Energy Drink— DWU Medical Staff

The popularity of energy drinks (Monster, 5-Hour Energy, etc...) has greatly increased over the past couple of years. However, there are still a lot of questions concerning the safety and long term effects about these types of products. An energy drink is made up of non-nutritive stimulants that contain varied amounts of caffeine, sweeteners, vitamins and other ingredients. In addition, because energy drinks are considered supplements there are few regulations to ensure the quality or safety of these products. Energy drinks differ from Sports Drinks (Gatorade or Powerade), due to the fact that Sports Drinks are regulated by the FDA and therefore they will list the ingredients that the drink contains. This is not the case with Energy Drinks. The amount of caffeine, or other additives, can vary

greatly from product to product. An analysis by ConsumerLab.com found that a single 5-Hour Energy shot contains 207mg of caffeine, which is the equivalent of drinking a full six-pack of Coca-cola in one gulp.

What effect do high levels of caffeine have on the body? Dr. Ramin Manshadi, a California Based Cardiologist who works with student-athletes, believes energy drinks can have a negative effect of the cardiovascular system. He states, "Problems like palpitations, headaches, and insomnia are significant, but high levels of caffeine can interfere with the function of the heart". Other risks of high caffeine intake also include: increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, dehydration, sleep disturbances, and in-

creased anxiety. Dr. Manshadi also states that consumers often use these energy drinks without considering what else they have ingested that day, including coffee, soda, or multi-vitamins.

Energy Drinks and other supplements have recently been used at a very high level in the military, which has sparked and ongoing 2 year study of the effects of these products. At this point, Patricia Deuster, Scientific Director of the Uniformed Services University Consortium for Health and Military Performance advises to those who need a "pick me up", first get some sleep and second, "You want a boost of energy? Stick with Chocolate Milk and real food."

Thoughts from Henry St.— Todd Miller

A student-athlete anxiously awaits to find out the results of an x-ray on his injured hand. The team physician and his guest walk into the room and look at the x-ray on the viewing box. The physician looks at his guest, Bo Jackson, and asks, "What do you think?" Bo looks at the x-ray and turns to Dr. James Andrews and says, "Looks broke". Dr. Andrews turns to the student athlete and simply says, "Bo knows".

This past weekend, ESPN aired a 3D for 3D special titled "You Don't Know Bo: The Legend of Bo Jackson". As many of you know, I was a Graduate Assistant Athletic Trainer with the Auburn football team. It is safe to say, during my 2 years at Auburn, I heard my fair share of Bo Jackson stories, and my favorite is stated above. From him hitting 500 foot home runs, the famous "Bo Over the Top" play at the end of the Alabama game in 1982, taking naps in the locker room prior to a football game, or running in track meets in the afternoon

and playing baseball games at night, there truly is no end to the stories that make up his legend. What Bo Jackson means to Auburn University is truly immeasurable. Due to his long list of accomplishments, he is looked upon by generations of Auburn fans as a hero. David Housel, former Athletics Director at Auburn University summed this up best on the ESPN special by stating:

"Why do we need heroes? Why do we look up to people like Bo Jackson? Because we're less than perfect and we are always looking for perfection. Somebody who can do it better than we can, somebody who can be an example to us, of what we can do, what we can be. That's why Bo was important, because he offers us the hope and the example of being something more than we alone think we might be."

We are human. Part of being human is as David Housel says, "less than perfect". We make mistakes and from those mistakes we learn, mature, and

become better people. Earlier in the newsletter Leif discusses toughness being seen more as resiliency and the ability to bounce back from adversity. These also seem to be the pre-requisites of being a hero.

Think about those we label "heroes", either fictional or real. Most have made mistakes to put themselves in a bad situation and/or faced adversity. When these situations occur, our heroes make different decisions. They fight back instead of blame. They refuse to give up. They take risks. They actively continue the pursuit of their goals. They become a story that we enjoy hearing about or watching.

Why not you? If a movie was made about your current season would anybody want to watch? Will anybody tell stories for years to come about your accomplishments? If your answer is "no", how will you change your story? If you don't, the only person to blame is the author.

Recommended Reading:

The 17 Essential Qualities of a Team Player: Becoming the Kind of Person Every Team Wants.

By John C. Maxwell

This is one of my favorite John C. Maxwell books. A short book that packs a great punch. As the title states, it lists 17 qualities of a team player in alphabetical order, no one more important than the others. The premise by Dr. Maxwell is to read one chapter a day and spend more time reflecting on how you can become better at that quality, than move on to the next. Spend a couple weeks, it will only be about 5-10 minutes of reading per day, and figure out what you need to do to become a better team player. These are important, basic skills that you will need to use the rest of your life.
