



Student-Athletes: Going From Good To Great!

by Joe Gandolfo

The landscape of youth and high school athletics has changed dramatically since I was young. When the season turned to cooler and crisper weather with the color of leaves changing - football was the only game in town. These days football is not the only sport our young participate in during this time of year.

Now, a variety of opportunities and choices: fall baseball, basketball starts this month, lacrosse, swimming, cheerleading and gymnastics, wrestling, soccer, golf, tennis and even club swimming. Athletic training, practice and competition are truly a year round endeavor for many.

This represents the many opportunities for sport participation and the sheer number of youth who participate in sports today. One drawback - a much more competitive situation for playing time and a more challenging road to achieving sports goals when youth move on to the high school level. Furthermore, many student-athletes hope to excel at the high school level and go on to the next level.

There are 7 truths that will make any good youth or high school student-athlete great.

1) ***Commitment:*** To make an unwavering choice to pursue your sports goal. Know that a great student-athlete commits to sports skill development, their physical training and academic success.

2) ***Practice, Practice, Practice:*** Giving focused effort to our sports skill development, the training of our body and academic success should be done in a planned organized system that ***also allows for*** time with friends, family, a hobby and non-sport playtime.

3) ***Mental Toughness:*** Developing one's relaxation skills, visualization skills, focus skills, thought and emotion management skills is invaluable. Confidence is a must!

4) Heart of a Champion: Developing the will and mid-set to persevere and never give up!

5) Time Management Skills: Using time management skills and strategies to maximize one's 168 hour week. One can get more accomplished that most realize is possible.

6) Looks for an Edge: Great student-athletes go the "extra mile" to seek out and apply information and strategies which result in greater levels of performance.

7) Willingness to take Risks: No one has ever accomplished greatness by "playing it safe". Accomplishing one's dreams requires smart calculated risks.

Listen to Joe's free daily podcast – **Teen Success Radio** – available on iTunes.

His new book **The Greatest Teenage Myth in the World** is now available @ www.JosephGandolfo.com or www.TheGreatestTeenageMythInTheWorld.com

Joe Gandolfo is on a mission to **champion the greatest commodity in today's world – our youth, teenagers, young adults and college students**, and to rally, strengthen and energize the adults – parents, educators, mental health professionals and organizations - who work with and care about our greatest commodity in the world.

Joe works as a **professional speaker, success coach, seminar leader motivational counselor and author**. He brings 20 years experience working with youth, teen-agers, student-athletes, professional athletes, adults, parents, educators, public and private schools, organizations and associations.

His clients have included: *Georgia Tech Athletic Association, Rockdale County Schools, Cobb County Schools, Cobb Teen Leadership, YMCA, Childcare Resource Network, University of Clemson, University of West Georgia, PGA of America, Milwaukee Brewers, Coca-Cola, SouthCoast Hospitals, Owens-Corning and MPI Georgia Chapter.*

He has been an adjunct professor at Georgia Tech (1996-2000) and Georgia State (2005-06). He was on staff at the Homer Rice Center for Sports Performance (2000-07). He has had a private consulting practice since 1991.

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