

## Vol 2, Issue 15: Looking Back on Your Season

### Looking Back on Your Season

Happy New Year! We are pleased to provide you with the first issue of the Performance Excellence Weekly E-Newsletter for 2007. As playoff time winds down in the NFL and as state champions receive their trophies and rings, it is time to examine how losses affect teams and what they can do to handle those defeats. Whether the loss came on a dropped snap of a last second field goal or a 30-point blowout, learning to handle such situations is an important skill to learn for sport and life. Many coaches believe that they can teach athletes much more after a loss than after any win. But how do athletes get past the feeling of dejection and heartbreak to reach a place where learning can take place? Here are some ideas for coaches and athletes:

Reflect on what went right during the game and work on strategies to increase the frequency of those positive events through physical practice, video review and positive feedback.

Determine what went wrong during the game and then find ways to reduce the frequency of those errors. Often these errors are mental, such as too many penalties, lack of focus, or lack of mental toughness.

Set goals for the next competition. These goals should be specific and coaches and athletes should work together on determining what strategies will help them achieve these goals in the next competition.

Focus on keeping the team together (cohesive) and the athletes sure of themselves (confidence). Use team leaders to communicate the message of team unity and respect, and confidence in a player or players who may have made key errors. Talking individually with athletes can help them put the loss into perspective and not dwell on the error/mistake.

At the Center for Sport Psychology and Performance Excellence at the University of North Texas, we have a dedicated staff of sport consultants who can help athletes, teams, and coaches learn from and handle losses in a way that can ultimately benefit the team in future competitions. For more information please call us at 940-369-7767 or visit our website at [www.sportpsych.unt.edu](http://www.sportpsych.unt.edu) or email us at [sportpsych@unt.edu](mailto:sportpsych@unt.edu). As always, we leave you with our sport quote of the week:

“If you can’t accept losing, you can’t win.” – Vince Lombardi