

# WI WEST TIMES

Your Club, Your News. All the happenings at Rush WI West



## Coulee Cup!

by Kyle Lownds / November 1<sup>st</sup> 2019

What a great representation we had at the Coulee Cup! Congrats to all the teams we had competing at each age group. I personally had the opportunity to watch almost all of our teams play and was impressed by everyone regardless of the results!

## Fall seasons are ending...

by Kyle Lownds / November 1<sup>st</sup> 2019

Yes... as quickly as the fall season began, it has come to an end. That allows us time to reflect on all the progress players have made during this season. Soccer does not end though. There are plenty of opportunities in the winter to continue to develop! More on that to come but take some time now to reflect. What went well? Did I improve and in what ways? What do I need to continue to work on? The best players in the world are constantly reflecting. This is a perfect time to do so with one season ending and another beginning!



## IN THIS ISSUE

Being a Great  
Teammate

Parent  
Article

CAP Updates

# Being a Great Teammate

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by Kyle Lownds / November 1<sup>st</sup> 2019

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Soccer is a very unique sport. For one, there are not timeouts so all the coaching is done on the fly and forces players to adapt during the ups and downs of a game. Second, only 11 players (depending on the level) play per team during the game. At the higher levels, there are very specific substitution rules only allowing for a certain number of players to participate in each game. This is what I want to focus on. While these substitution rules do not apply for many of our teams, the concept of being a great teammate still applies.

1. **Everyone plays a role:** Even though some people do not seemingly contribute as much as others, their role is just as important. Even if you are not a starter, or do not play at all, you can bring great energy to practice, and bring positivity and support to the sideline during games. You can push the starting players to be better, and demonstrate grit and resilience for others. One can still be an incredible teammate and a massive contributor to a championship season without ever scoring a point, or saving a shot.
2. **Great teams have empathy:** If you are a starter, have the empathy and humility to understand that those who may not be playing much truly appreciate all you do, and would do anything simply to have the chance for one day to have you sit and let them push the chair. They want it just as badly as you, and would kill for the chance to play, so support them, teach them, mentor them, and show your gratitude every single day.
3. **Great teams have a higher purpose than winning:** When you play for each other, and celebrate everyone's success and contribution, you will never quit, you will never lose confidence, and you will never be defeated, only run out of time. Play for something bigger than the game itself, and play for each other, and not only will you give yourself the best chance of succeeding on the scoreboard, you will guarantee that your season will be a success no matter what.

Remember, not everyone starts, not everyone scores the goals, but at the end of the day you are a team. The great teams find ways to have the individuals use their own personal ambitions to help the team be successful. Be a great teammate knowing that maybe one day, you may be the one that isn't starting, or scoring all of the goals. That does not mean you don't have a purpose. As stated above, everyone has a role to play and those are continuously changing. Each player needs to be ready to step into that role if called upon!

## CAP Update

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All players 05 and up need to be continuously updating their college fit finder profile! This service is free to use as a player at Rush WI West and is one of the best services to help figure out where you want continue your education!

We will be having our first general meeting on October 8<sup>th</sup> from 8-9PM. This is an opportunity for us to get together and discuss anything you may have questions about or specific topics you'd like to receive more information on. Look for the google form in your inbox to sign up for the meeting!

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### National Signing Day

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by Kyle Lownds / Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> 2019

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Wednesday, November 13, 2019 marks National Signing Day when High School Seniors across the country can officially sign a letter of intent to play soccer at their college of choice. Instead of having just one National Signing Day, the NCAA now has a Signing period: players are able to sign for DI & DII Soccer until August 20, 2020.

SENIORS: If you plan on signing and playing collegiately...WE WANT TO KNOW! We want to help celebrate this great accomplishment and recognize all the hard work you put in to make this happen!

Contact me directly with any information and if you plan on being a part of National Signing Day! While this official day is only meant for DI and DII schools, many athletes not playing at those levels use it as a day to confirm where they will be playing.

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### Magoosh and Rush

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Rush Soccer has recently joined forces with a test prep company called Magoosh. This platform is used to aid students in preparing for the ACT, SAT, and other standardized tests. I personally have used it to study for my GRE to get into graduate school and was very impressed by the program and was pleased with how well prepared I felt going into the test. Contact me if you have any questions!

# Something for the Parents:

*Don't Turn Your Athlete Into a Mini Me*

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**By: Reed Maltbie / March 19<sup>th</sup> 2017 / Published in: Sports Parenting**

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"Dad, am I a disappointment to you?" My son asked, choking back tears.

I stopped dead in my tracks.

We were walking out of a local amusement park on our way to the car. We had spent the day at the park to bond. It seems the plan backfired.

I gathered myself. Inside I was screaming. Why does my son think he is a disappointment?

"Why would you ask that?"

He stopped walking too. "Because I did not follow in your footsteps. I don't play soccer and I am definitely no daredevil like you. I'm not following in your path."

I had spent the better part of the day trying to talk him into riding the roller coasters with me. Twice I got him part way through the line before he changed his mind. The rest of the time he flat out refused to ride them.

I love roller coasters. They were not his thing. No matter how much I pleaded with him, he would not try.

It isn't only roller coasters. He's grown up hearing the stories and seeing the pictures of my adventures. I've been known to enjoy a crazy adventure or two in my day. I swam with manatees in Florida. I was a ski bum (no joke!) and skied the back country bowls of Utah at 3 am during the brightest moon in 100 years. I traveled all over the Swiss Alps, I accidentally scuba dove with an alligator – long story. I've driven across the country, twice, and apparently there are still a few stories being told about me at my Alma Mater.

I didn't always seek it, but I always embraced every adventure that came my way. Trust me, I didn't make the safe decisions or the right ones. I have the scars and the aches to remind me, but I ran headlong into every adventure with reckless abandon.

My son is a bit more calculated, thoughtful, cautious. He dips his toe in the water, whereas I would dive in head first. I remember him crying wildly on the swings, while his younger brother would giggle uncontrollably next to him.

He tried soccer. I don't recall seeing him ever play without a smile, but he also did not have a competitive nature. He enjoyed playing. He had fun. He cheered everyone. He could care less if he won or lost.

When I say he cheered everyone, I mean everyone. He was once nicknamed the "escort" because he would run alongside all the other players during tryouts telling them what a good job they were doing. Can you imagine trying out with someone escorting you up and down the field? Imagine your own personal cheering section?

He loved the idea of playing. Of being like his dad, but in the end, it was not for him. He chose to quit soccer.

Here we are. Standing in the parking lot of an amusement park. Him looking at me with his deep brown eyes, searching for connection. Me staring back, with tears welling up in mine, searching for words.

"Soccer? Daredevil? Dude, that is all me. You don't have to be like me." I stated calmly, as I began to walk again.

He refused to move. "But you always say I'm mini you. If I'm mini you, then I should follow your legacy."

That one went right to the heart. Direct hit.

He was using my language. I speak a lot about legacy in my work on team culture. We should strive to create echoes we'll never hear, resonating generation after generation. That is a true and worthy legacy.

He was using my favorite word – legacy. Why would he think his lack of soccer ability or his cautious nature would be a failure, though? What had I said and done over the years to make him think that way? Why was he trying to live up to my dreams?

The answer is simple. It is also painful. Whether I meant to do it or not, I had cast a shadow upon my son. He was living in a shadow of my life's work, and worse, he felt compelled to live the same life. He either wanted to allow me to live vicariously through his new adventures or needed to fulfill the legacy he thought I expected to be carried into the next generation.

My son was trapped in the shadows. Thinking my expectations for him were unfulfilled. Believing he had failed me.

Over the years, I unwittingly created this situation. As I reflect on the way I've raised him I can see the moments when I trapped him in the shadows.

Here are the things we do to cast the shadow:

- **We talk about the "good old days" as if life was better the way we did it.** It was not better. We tend to forget the bad experiences and the struggles. Hindsight is 20/20 and when hindsight is looking back on our playing days, it's always filtered through quite a rosy lens. Trust me, it was not better, just different.
- **We tend to compare them to ourselves at their age.** "When I was your age" should not be a phrase we use unless we are trying to show them how we struggled too. Comparing their sports prowess to what we did is ludicrous. We played in a different time, against different opponents, and with different conditions. The Olympics are done head to head for a reason. They are not done comparing historical scores.
- **We use "I" way too much.** "I am proud of you" "I want you to...". Honestly, it simply isn't about us. They should be proud of what they do and not worried about what us adults think. They should do the things they do because they want to and not

- **We use “I” way too much.** “I am proud of you” “I want you to...”. Honestly, it simply isn’t about us. They should be proud of what they do and not worried about what us adults think. They should do the things they do because they want to and not because we want them to. Turn “I” into “you” and let them have a little ownership. This is *their* time to create *their* path.
- **We Facebook their lives as if they were only born to be vehicles for bragging rights.** My son was not born to this world so I could post all about his accomplishments on Facebook or Twitter. I love to brag about my kids just as much as the next person, but at some point in time I came the realization that he based his identity on what I said. He started asking what I would post after games, or asking me not to post certain things. Wow. Even he worried.
- **We ask them about results.** This sounds inane, but it has a very negative effect. I was a goal scorer, and everyone, myself included, shared the stories of my goal scoring prowess with my children. I always tended to ask my son if he won or if he scored. Every time I asked him if he scored, he thought the only way I would love him is if he scored like I did. My line of questioning set an unwanted expectation. He thought he needed to be like me to be loved by me.

We can correct course and help our children find their own paths. We can stop living through them or setting them up to think they have to fulfill our legacy. We can give the game back to them to let them carve their own path. A few simple adjustments in how we interact with them can go a long way for setting a change of course.

- **Celebrate everything** – I would get excited about the things that interested *me*. When he played soccer, and scored, I was over the moon. Soccer is *my* groove. When he got excited about promotion at Civil Air Patrol, I did not celebrate as wildly. Not because I did not care about him or the accomplishment, but because I knew nothing about Civil Air Patrol. It was not *my* groove. Our children know when we are not excited for them, and we send an unspoken, but crystal clear, message when we don’t celebrate their passions. We have to celebrate the things that excite *them* too in order to encourage a departure from our shadow.
- **Be patient** – They will not find their path easily or quickly. They will also change the path often. Be patient and understanding with your children as they find out who they are. Forcing them will only impose your will and not incite their passion.
- **Stop comparing them to your fairy tale past** – The more I compared my son to the skewed fairy tale me, the more he thought he needed to follow my path. The harder he tried and failed, the deeper he sank into that quagmire of self-doubt. This isn’t a comparison, it’s a new path. Besides, what we recall about our glory days is a lot like a the old fishing stories – the fish get bigger each time we tell it.
- **Let them write their story** – We tend to write the book of life for our children. Every. Step. Of. The. Way. Hand them the pen once in awhile and let them write a chapter. Ask them what they want to do and what they dream of.
- **Encourage them to seek their passion** – Even if they don’t follow our path, they want our permission to follow their own. Do not be afraid to encourage your children to find their love. When my son showed interest in video games, as much as it drove me nuts to think he would waste days in front of the TV, I had to encourage that as possibly his path. I encouraged him to study software development, design, animation, and more. The boy now creates web pages and wrote a software program for one of his school projects. I don’t do that. He is no longer in my shadow.
- **Tell them you love them for who they are not what they do** – If we shower them with love when they are only doing specific activities, we set them up to think they need to do that to get love. What they do is not who they are. I had to learn to stop introducing my children as the bowler, or soccer player, or straight A student because that told them I loved them for what they did. I love my kids because of who they are. I love them in my shadow or in their own sun. I simply love them, and I hope they now know that. I don’t love them for what they do.
- **It is your responsibility to find common ground** – Do not force them to find something for bonding. My wife said, “If you go to a dinner party and force everyone to talk about what interests you, you are a bore and won’t get invited back next time.” It is not our kids’ responsibility to talk about what we want or find common ground with us. We must be willing to find out what makes them tick and be with them in that common space. If you are willing to enter their world, they will feel empowered to pave that path.

If our children spend their lives following our footsteps, they will always be in our shadow. No person should ever live in the shadow of another.

If a person can’t see the sun, she is trapped in the shadows of someone else’s path.

We were meant to walk our own path. Our role as parents is to teach our children to step out of our shadows and walk where they can always see the sun on the horizon, like a beacon guiding the path.

Tell your child to blaze their own path, and never let anyone else cast a shadow on that path.

That day at the park I was not so eloquent. I looked at my son and said,

“Son, soccer and roller coasters and such were my path. I picked that path and walked it already. You were never meant to walk my path. You have to find your own and stop walking my path. Besides, if you follow me, the view never changes.”

**Director Notes:** What I gain from this article is a simple concept...let them be a kid and let them enjoy what they want to do because it is what **THEY** want and not what you as a parent want or think is best for them. In my years of coaching, I have seen parents racing their kids from event to event thinking it is what their child wants. Take the time and ask them if this is something they want to do. Have the conversation before you burn them out and they don’t have the opportunity to enjoy their life. They only have one opportunity to be a kid. I remember when I was younger, my Dad kept pushing me to play baseball. Not only because he played as a child but thought I would be good at it. We had a really constructive conversation regarding this. I knew what his intentions were, my enjoyment and ability to play, and he knew I wanted to focus on soccer and really didn’t like baseball. We came to an agreement, I would play one fall league season (roughly 5 weeks) and if I didn’t enjoy it, we he would never press the issue again. The result: I couldn’t wait for the season to be over! In the end though, we had a healthy conversation about what I wanted to do and what I enjoyed. He supported my decision knowing that I at least tried it and did not want to continue to pursue it. Have these conversations with your kids! They may not be what you want to hear but you will know what they want and at the end of the day, they want to know that you as a parent support them in everything they do because it is what they want, and not what you want.