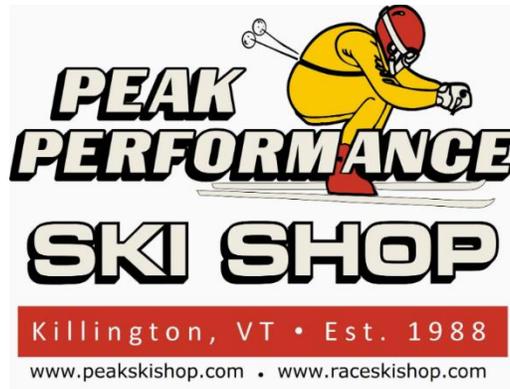




**MONTH OF SEPTEMBER
LIFE LESSONS IN SPORTS**

from

VARA Youth Coordinator, Alex Krebs



**Peak's Race Day is Sunday
September 23th. Link here for
more info!**

Happy September! This email, about life lessons learned through sports, is not only timely as we all gear up for fall activities and training camps but, it is an important reminder of how sports can help shape the youth we coach into young adults who can maintain composure in adversity, respect peers abilities without jealousy, lead by example, and consider

tough days on the hill a learning experience rather than a failure. There are so many amazing benefits to be experienced by being active and competitive. I hope these lessons for our VARA competitors are well learned with the help of Vermont's thoughtful and dedicated coaches.

Julie Woodworth - VARA Executive Director

LIFE LESSONS IN SPORTS



Life Lessons Youth Sports Teach Kids-Part 1

Youth sports are going to teach young athletes a lot more than how to navigate a flush or take a corner kick, there are a lot of life lessons to learn on their journey through participation in youth sports.

These life lessons are by far the most important part of participation in youth sports and can teach more than winning a few ski races or making a highly competitive team.

Not to sound negative but only 5% of all high school players play their sport in college and only 2% receive a college scholarship, however, having fun and learning life lessons are almost guaranteed. Make a difference in their lives long-term by helping young athletes learn important life lessons learned through youth sports.

1. It's Okay to Make Mistakes:

There will be many times when athletes make mistakes during races/games or practice. These mistakes are learning experiences. There is no "success" without "failure". Questions such as

'Why do you think that happened?' and

'What could you do next time to change the outcome?' will contribute to that learning experience.

2. How to be a Leader: Throughout a youth sports season all athletes should have the opportunity to be a leader on their team.

If given these opportunities to lead, athletes will become much more confident leading others and develop important skills that most kids rarely have the opportunity to learn.

3. How to be a Follower: Just as it's important to learn how to lead others, it's also incredibly important that athletes learn how to be led by others.

By experiencing how to follow, athletes will discover how to take instructions, how to respectfully question authority, and to maintain patience if they disagree.

4. Body Language Speaks Volumes: Body language says a lot about how a person is feeling and what they're thinking.

Racers will quickly learn that if they throw a ski pole or punch a gate, it's a poor display of sportsmanship and they'll quickly find themselves apologizing to the Race Organizer, Jury and others and could face a sanction.

It's well known that body language is one of the main criteria that recruiters look at when evaluating athletes or conducting a job interview so it's best to get it under control while the athletes are young.

5. How to Control Emotions: Youth sports can be frustrating. Situations may arise that are completely out of your control, for example, getting the yellow flag in SG and having to go back around for a re-run.

When this happens racers will learn that getting angry or frustrated about it doesn't help the situation and inevitably impacts performance.

Experiencing feelings of frustration and anger and learning how to control them will help athletes in all aspects of their lives.

6. Setting and Achieving Goals: Youth sports is a great place to learn how to set goals and determine how to achieve them.

Athletes will learn that setting goals gives you a target to reach for and adds motivation while on the journey to achieving them. They need to work out a plan and work hard to make those goals come true.

7. Success Requires Hard Work: Athletes will learn that the best athletes are usually those that have worked the hardest on improving their skills. While talent definitely plays its role early on, sooner or later it's the hardest workers that rise to the top.

There are no short cuts or magic wands, being great at something takes hard, consistent work.

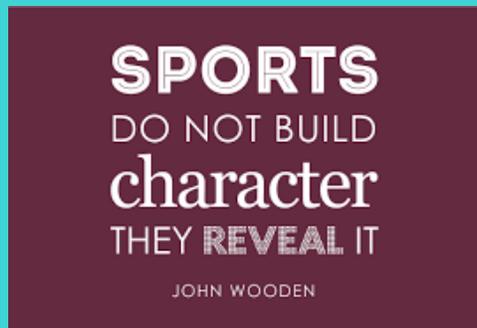
8. How to Win/Succeed with Class: In youth sports there is definitely a right and a wrong way to win. Athletes should be proud of their achievements without putting down their opponents. And how an athlete acts after an event should be the same regardless of a win or a loss.

9. How to Lose/Fail with Dignity: Youth sports is the ultimate environment for athletes to experience the emotions and feelings that come from failure and defeat since there are no long-term consequences of losing.

Athletes should learn to lose with dignity and respect, and that there is always a learning experience coming out of every loss or failure. What could have been done differently? Where are the areas of improvement?

10. Success Requires Sacrifice: There's only a certain amount of time in each day and young athletes will soon realize that they can't do everything. They'll have to sacrifice certain things to spend more time on what they consider more important. Determine priorities. Studies and practice will take precedent over some social events as they learn to use their time wisely.

These are the first 10 of 20 life lessons learned through youth sports! Stay tuned for part 2!



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Please visit the [VARA Youth Coordinator Page](#) on the [VARA](#) site.