



Making senior season meaningful

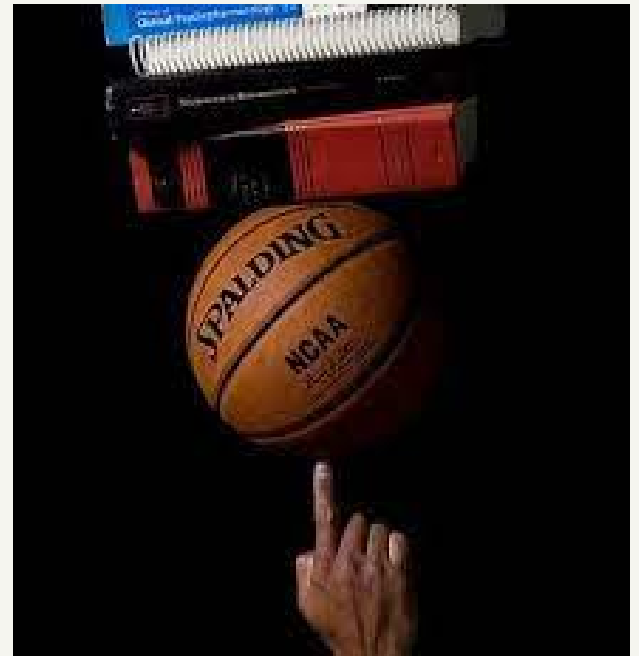
Senior Recognition

The final year of school brings forth numerous expectations, with student athletes and their parents having preconceived notions of how the athletic season should unfold. As a coach, it is crucial to provide seniors with playing time and recognition while also focusing on conditioning the younger athletes and fostering team growth. Managing these tasks may prove more challenging than anticipated.

Recruiting

For athletes intending to continue their athletic career after high school, the recruiting process can appear daunting. Coaches can serve as a trusted source for athletes to express their anxieties and seek helpful advice.

As coaches understand, their roles vary throughout the season. Athletes rely on their coaches for various aspects, including guidance during the recruiting process. This is an opportune time for coaches to step away from the X's and O's and assume a mentorship role. Coaches may find it beneficial to familiarize themselves with recruiting rules and explore the schools or teams to which their students are applying. Preparing resources for athletes who may have questions that coaches cannot answer can also be helpful.



Senior Season

There are multiple ways to give seniors their well-deserved moments during the season. This can involve involving them in decision making, celebrating their accomplishments during game time, or assigning them responsibilities such as creating a spirit week, leading conditioning, or preparing a pregame speech.

Coaches should remember the significance of the beginning and end of their senior season and recognize that the same anticipation, pressure and joy experienced by the athletes they currently coach. Seniors are eager to invest their time, emotions, leadership and acquired skills into their final season.



Making Senior Season Meaningful

Enhancing Senior Goodbyes

At the end of an athlete's career, whether they are continuing in their athletic endeavors or not, emotions will run high. If an athlete has had a positive experience with their team and sport, moving on from their athletic family will be difficult. Coaches can make this goodbye more meaningful by doing small gestures for their seniors.

More than a Sport

Ensuring that seniors feel seen in their final season may prove to be more challenging than it may seem. Senior classes can vary in size and talent each year, and it may not always be possible to give everyone the opportunity to start or have their moment in a match. However, there are numerous ways to recognize seniors in their final season beyond playtime.

Senior Nights hold great importance in the season as they provide seniors with recognition and allow the team to express gratitude for their contributions.

Throughout their careers, but particularly on the final day of the season, student athletes will look to their coaches for words of encouragement.



Legacy

As the end of a season draws to a close, emotions may run high for seniors and their teammates. Coaches, having witnessed an athlete's progress over the years may also experience their own emotions.

Both coaches and student athletes can benefit from coaches taking the time to speak with their athletes about their feelings.

Sharing knowledge about the sport and life is how coaches can leave a lasting impact on the athletes they develop. As coaches advance in their careers, these conversations will become easier and will serve them in years to come as they train and build relationships with new athletes.

