

Courageous Leaders: The Secret to Success

By McKinley Chabot

Courageous leaders are the purest example of what sports are all about. They don't get their status by simple luck, or coincidence. They get to where they are by working hard, and never giving up. Courageous leaders put everything they have into everything they do, both in and out of their event. Most importantly, courageous leaders have stellar sportsmanship.

Courageous leaders prioritize kindness. As a runner, I recognize these people as the ones who wish you luck on the starting line. These people may be crippled with anxiousness, or trying to take home the win, but they still find it in their hearts to say these impactful words. A simple sentence can help ease nerves, and courageous leaders recognize that. This, to me at least, makes a true champion.

No matter how their race or game goes, courageous leaders will congratulate you at the end. Whether it's a fist bump, a high five, or even just a smile and thumbs up, they want to make you happy. It may take all of their strength and pride, but they do it regardless. Courageous leaders recognize their defeat, and use it to improve themselves. Rather than being upset or blaming the better person, they work harder and try again the next time.

Courageous leaders cheer for everyone. It doesn't matter what team a person is on, or what place they get, these people will scream until all breath is lost. They will help the underdog across the finish line through words of encouragement. They will jump up and down when someone runs a personal best. Courageous leaders are the ones who show up even when they're injured, just so they can cheer everyone on. It may break their heart to see others able to participate, but they push past this and come out to support.

Courageous leaders make everyone's voice heard. They step out of their comfort zone, and go out of their way to talk to everyone. If they recognize someone who feels like an outsider, they will do their best to make them feel included. They will try to find common ground

with a person, or suggest some team-bonding activities. Courageous leaders are strong enough to speak up for themselves and others. They have the power to spread positivity across a team.

Above all, courageous leaders inspire others. Their sportsman-like behavior prompts others to follow suit, and creates the next generation of leaders. They are the role models for everyone else on a team; the ones that everyone looks up to. They bring others up with them, through their spirit and unwavering strength. These people, these truly incredible people, are the reason why sports are so loved today.