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Practices for Sport-Coach Mentorship: A Historical Case Study for Coaches in Catholic Schools Today

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Abstract

Sport-coach mentorship is perhaps the raison d'être for the inclusion of sports programming within Catholic schools. Coach-educators can have significant and even lifelong impact on student-athlete growth and development. But, how, exactly, should coaches act as mentors in faith-based, educational contexts? Drawing upon an extensive archival and interview research project, this paper presents a historical case study of the sport-coach mentorship of Father David Bauer, csb (1924-88), an educator and exceptional Canadian ice hockey player, coach, manager, and Hockey Hall of Fame inductee. Bauer mentored and spoke out for young sportspeople over many decades. The first part of this paper provides background about Bauer, the priest-coach, highlighting his relationships with his religious community, family, and sporting colleagues and players, all of which guided his model for mentorship. The second part unpacks how Bauer's approach to sport-coach mentorship follows a leadership style that is humanistic, relational, developmentally appropriate, critical, and faith-based, among other qualities. Based on stories, speeches, and events, seven practices for mentorship emerge. These practices reveal how Bauer challenged assumptions and systems within the sporting world and they also establish an approach to youth sport-coach mentorship that can enlighten and guide Catholic school coaches today, in particular, as well as athletic directors and other sport leaders, in general.

Introduction

Catholic schools in Australia and internationally remain involved in sport for many reasons, such as the promotion of physical fitness, total development of human persons, endorsement of school spirit and prestige, encouragement of less academically oriented students, community-building possibilities, and mentorship opportunities between coaches and student-athletes (Camiré & Kelsey, 2016; Komyatte-Sheehan, 2015). This article focuses on arguably the most important reason for sport involvement in schools, namely, sport-coach mentorship. It will do so through the lens of a historical case study of Father David Bauer, csb (1924-88). This priest-coach was an educator and exceptional Canadian ice hockey player, coach, manager, and Hockey Hall of Fame inductee. Over many decades of ministering to adolescents and young adults, he became a mentor to and a voice for young people in sport. In doing so, he established a unique mentorship model or approach, from which seven practices emerge, that can be used by Catholic school sport-coaches today.

Research into sport-coach mentorship, and mentorship generally, has expanded in past decades. Around two decades ago, there was much ambiguity about mentorship because different fields like nursing and business described different roles and functions of the mentor (Jones et al.,

2009). Broadly speaking, mentorship was described as a process where a more experienced person shared knowledge and support for the total personal growth of an individual or mentee. One kind of mentorship is that offered by sport-coaches to student-athletes. In general, sports are becoming increasingly interested in promoting life-skills, such as leadership, teamwork, and goal setting (Martin & Camiré, 2020). This athlete-centred focus reflects a historical strand of positive youth development in sport over the past century (Weiss, 2016). Recent qualitative research shows how educator-coaches interacted regularly with student-athletes, nurturing relationships that positively influenced young people even through critical family and personal issues (Camiré, 2015). In school settings, coaches have deliberately promoted life-skills and used specific strategies like modelling behaviours, teaching leadership principles, and giving opportunities to practice skills outside of sport (Camiré & Kendellen, 2016). These actions led to positive outcomes for students, such as the adoption of prosocial attitudes and behaviours, increases in academic attainments and self-esteem, and fewer mental health issues.

But what about Catholic schools in particular? Does their faith mission enhance or alter a perspective on coach-mentorship? Some scholars have promoted a very explicit form of faith-based coaching, which is strongly evangelistic (McGrath, 2004), whereas others focus on discipleship and character development and interpret sport-coaching as a general form of service ministry (Power, 2015). In this latter model, we find examples of coaches engaging sport to enhance spirituality (Hastings, 2015), team spirit (Yerkovich, 2015), virtue (McNamee, 2015), and holistic development (Komyatte-Sheehan, 2015). Explicitly, faith-based models of coaching and the more general findings about mentorship noted above are both helpful for Catholic educators. The many benefits of sports programs in Catholic schools became especially evident in their absence after the shutdown of school sports during the global pandemic. Studies in Japan and Sweden, for example, reported worsened mental health among student-athletes because of the impact of Covid-19 (Hakansson et al., 2022; Yamada et al., 2022).

The benefit of a historical case study of Bauer as a sport-coach mentor is that it enables an in-depth, rich examination of how one coach successfully practiced and understood the role. This type of inductive research can inform policies and practices in sport (Leeder & Sawiuk, 2021), while serving as a concrete model to guide Catholic school coaches today. This case study relies on results from an extensive archival and interview research project about Bauer (Hoven, 2024), which included ethics approval for participant interviews from the author's home university research ethics board. It is true that other historical coaches also offer insight into coach mentorship through their practices and life philosophies. Protestant John Wooden and Catholic Vince Lombardi each experienced enormous success and fame as coaches in American elite team sports through their coach mentorship and philosophies. Australian track and field coach Percy Cerutti offered his mix of Stoic and Spartan philosophies and practices that produced winning athletes while changing their lives (Walton, 1992). Indeed, Bauer stands among these figures. He, too, took on national and international prominence as a sport-coach figure in the mid-twentieth century. However, he is particularly distinct and unique because he belonged to a religious community and worked both inside and outside Catholic educational institutions. Thus, his perspective, and the practices that emerge from it, are especially insightful for those working in Catholic faith-based educational settings, and even for those who wish to live out their faith through coaching mentorships in public settings.

Part I: Mentorship Toward Bauer

Father David Bauer had three primary sets of relationships that fostered his sense of mentorship: his religious community, his hockey relationships, and his family. Bauer entered the Basilian Fathers religious community in 1947 and was ordained a priest in 1953. The Basilian religious community was established in 1822 in France and expanded to Toronto, Canada, a few decades later to serve a growing Irish community there (Griffin & Hayden, 2016). Soon, the educationally minded Basilian priests expanded into schools and parishes throughout North

America. Their work in sport expanded in the early 1900s through one of their priest-coaches, Father Henry Carr, at St Michael's College (High) School in Toronto (Hoven, 2022). He led or supported several national and provincial championship teams in American football and ice hockey. Overall, he established a Basilian priest-coach tradition that advanced good character, education, and sportsmanship through its sport-coach mentorship.

David Bauer studied at St Michael's College in 1942, where he became a star football quarterback, hockey forward, and led by excellence on and off the field (Platt, 2005). Along with record numbers of other young men, Bauer entered the Basilian religious community and later taught at St Michael's College throughout the 1950s. He eventually coached a national championship team of young men in ice hockey in 1961. While at St Michael's, he coached sports and taught classes that leaned heavily upon his preferred philosopher, Jacques Maritain (Platt, 2005). Bauer mentored young men in the classroom, in sporting events, and in the residences. After having been mentored himself by Basilian priests and lay coaches in Toronto (including by Carr), Bauer next moved to Vancouver where he served as a chaplain and instructor at St Mark's Catholic College. Never one to stray too far from sport, Bauer was encouraged by the retired Carr (who was by then also living in Vancouver) to establish the men's ice hockey National Team program with players from across Canada. They would go on to represent the nation at the 1964 Winter Olympics in Innsbruck and at international hockey tournaments for several years.

Bauer's establishment of the National Team program catapulted him onto the national and international stage. In this program, and the relationships it fostered, Bauer had the opportunity to mentor young men, promoting sportsmanship, education, and character building within an ice hockey program. Many appreciated his vision and mentorship. As a result, he was invited to join national sporting bodies, like the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association and Hockey Canada. In these roles, the priest-coach tried to influence the direction of sport through a philosophy that focused on the development of young people through sport.

The Bauer family also played an important role in fostering the practice of mentorship. David Bauer grew up in a sporting family in Waterloo, Ontario, where older brother Bobby became an all-star in the National Hockey League (NHL) and many sisters were high-calibre figure skaters, swimmers, and hockey players (Bauer Family, 2003). Several brothers became involved in international hockey, too. Family belief in the power of sport to positively impact the world led to David's interest in international sport. Over time, he became a close uncle to many nieces and nephews and led annual family retreats discussing the state of the world and their lives therein. His family, religious community, and sports friendships provided a rich backdrop for Bauer to cultivate his views and practices of sport-coach mentorship.

Part II: Practices for Sport-Coach Mentorship

Drawing from these three sources within Bauer's life, as determined from Canada-wide archival, library, and interview research, seven practices and beliefs are presented below, which the priest-coach held to be most valued for working with young people in sport.

1) Because we are primarily human, people respond best to human treatment

Bauer believed that the work of sport-coach mentorship required a humanistic, or human-centred, perspective of sport. Dave King, one of the last coaches of the National Team, was familiar with Bauer and his coach mentees. King explained that, for them, sporting performance and motivation came from first prioritising the development of people (King, 2020). He succinctly explained Bauer's philosophy: "that the spiritual man was as important as the technical hockey man" (King). Well-rounded, character-strong people could lead a team through challenges and support difficult personalities on a team. Bauer summarised his perspective plainly as a board member of Hockey Canada: "[H]ockey should serve [youth's] complete personal development . . . the physical, mental and social development of Canadians" (Bauer, 1973). Prioritising the development of persons playing the games should be foundational for the creation of programs and establishment of

structures in sport. One former National Team player listed what ought to be the priorities of youth sport: first, personal development or life skills; second, sport skills; third, winning (Kozak, 2020).

From this humanistic standpoint, development should not be limited to growth in individual skills and strategies in sport. Bauer believed in an integral development of persons that cultivated their entire personhood, including their inner life. His concern included an athlete's health and total wellbeing, as captured in a nationally broadcasted interview from the late-1960s: "Because we are primarily human...we respond best to human treatment. And wherever we act and think consistently with what we are, I really believe that you will get the finest. [It] will flower in the person" (Lautens, 1967). The image of a plant producing a flower is apt; over time, a coach-mentor can model and foster human growth and flourishing. As a result, facing moral weaknesses, dealing with erratic emotional responses, and grappling with shortcomings enables athletes to find a more humane path forward (Lautens, 1967). His approach can be contrasted with coaches who motivate athletes through anger, fear, and psychological warfare. Bauer, the priest-coach, spoke out against those who promoted overt anger or violence, for instance, in the form of on-ice, hockey fights: "We elders bear a terrific responsibility for the effect of our actions on the young" (Obodiac, 1961, n.p.). Such tactics in coaching sport could only lead to jeopardising the mental and social health of a sporting participant. Human beings ultimately respond best to human treatment.

2) Sport-coach mentorship must harmonise human values and skill development, instead of becoming focused on perfecting machine-like athletes

Bauer criticised coaching that was focused too strictly on skill development and the creation of the perfect, machine-like athlete. He became increasingly sceptical of the growth of sport science throughout the 1970s because it was "technisizing a human art form" and was "an already dangerous drift towards a standardized system which automatizes and therefore is alien and in fact kills the human spirit" (Bauer, 1983, p. 1). Efficiencies in the production of athletes were changing the people playing the game, mused Bauer. Increased federal government funding of the National Team preparing for the 1980 Winter Olympics increased involvement of sport scientists and

threatened the human capacity within the program (MacIntosh & Whitson, 1990). Bauer complained in private notes that the standardising of sports according to scientific measurement and efficiencies was detrimental: “It is giving oneself over to a process almost exclusively as a technical approach to the development of a player” (Bauer, 1980a, p. 2). The space for willpower, character, passion, and spirit in the game was being replaced by know-how and techniques.

Even earlier, in an Italian magazine feature article leading up to the 1964 Winter Olympic Games, Bauer defined the human person as a “psycho-physical composite” which is more traditionally known as the soul-body unity (Montagna, 1964, p. 7). He described this reality as omnipresent in human living, including on fields of play. Bauer sought to train skills in sport in such a way that developed passions and values in sport. He elaborated on this thinking using a phrase pronounced by Pope Pius XII:

‘Use technique, but let the spirit prevail’: It is this principle that I have recourse to in coaching the youth of my ice hockey team, and I look to its technical training, but always in such a way as to develop spirit and technique in harmony (Montagna, 1964, p. 7).

Instead of simply producing skilled athletes with know-how, he believed that excellence required developing the human person.

Prior to the 1980 Lake Placid Winter Games, Bauer challenged a coaching audience to focus on creating an environment for the successful development of people rather than becoming driven to make professional hockey players (Bauer, 1979). He worried that coaches could go overboard in solely teaching technique and dangerously produce a blind ‘know how’ that is one-sided. He explained: “It is the means without an end.... [T]he task of education would be to stress the idea of human value, of spirit, and of how to find new meaning in our lives” (Bauer, 1979, p. 6). The papal motto made his point: ‘Use technique, but let the spirit prevail’. Technical skills required balancing with human passion and values.

3) *Coach mentorship should respectfully build friendships and community for the development of players and team spirit*

One former National Team member recalled Bauer explaining the player-coach relationship, and how building friendships with players was simply the human thing to do:

Many coaches think you can't be friends with players, but I don't believe that. You need to respect the difference in roles, yet coaches need to know their players as people not just athletes. And the players need to get to know their coaches personally (Mott, 2020).

Other players on his early National Teams noted the difference in Bauer's mentorship style. One former player explained that he previously had many traditional "cigar-chomping, gum-chewing, swearing, cussing, old-time hockey"-players-turned-coaches prior to Bauer (McDowell, 2018). These men often responded to player mistakes with negativity and threats. By contrast, Bauer tried to know something about his players outside of hockey and ran highly-organised practices that fostered skill development and personal growth. One Russian coach observed Bauer's coaching firsthand:

[Bauer] never raised his voice. But there were many quiet, peaceful and, at times, heartfelt talks. Judging by the faces and gestures of the players one could see that the players were satisfied with that sort of contact with the coach (Tarasov, 1969, p. 28).

Bauer believed that knowing his players benefited his team. For example, he sometimes chose a team captain for a particular game in order to get the best out of the player and, thereby, the team that day (Watson, 2012). Building friendships enabled knowledge of the players as persons. This practice made sport more human and teams tactically stronger.

Respecting players and treating them as people cultivated mutual respect. Even with the least talented players, Bauer gave them a specific, defensive role where they felt part of the team and subsequently helped buoy the team's spirit (McDowell, 2018). His first National Team ran on a shoestring budget in 1963-64. Players shared cramped living quarters and other discomforts, but Bauer believed adversity made for a more resilient team. He remained dedicated and loyal to the players on his team, even in cases when, prior to major tournaments, a young, star player from elsewhere might be available. He did not want to replace one of his players with a new recruit: "I

believed our strength was the players' powerful loyalty to each other. I felt there was an intangible that had to be preserved" (Proudfoot, 1987, n.p.) He was determined to keep alive the team's spirit.

4) *Coach mentorship requires discussing things other than sports, giving perspective to those involved*

Bauer believed that coach mentors needed to talk about things that mattered most in life and not only about sport. For instance, the priest-coach was known to ask players about their thoughts on major world events. These discussions were not meant to politicise his hockey teams. After a major loss in a playoff series in 1961, reporters gathered around to ask Bauer if he was worried. He responded:

Yes, I'm very worried, but, what I'm really worried about is the situation in Russia, Cuba, Vietnam, Cambodia and all the other troubled spots. Now I think that hockey ... [is] a very important part of life but if I'm going to be worried about something in a very serious way, I'm going to concern myself with the really important issues, because all these lesser things will eventually fall into place (Bauer, 1979, p. 5).

Because the team had previously discussed different global issues, Bauer's response gave players perspective toward the lost game and helped them to see it differently. Psychological pressure was released; the team went on to win the national championship.

In his speech to coaches prior to the 1980 Lake Placid Games, Bauer described how a larger vision for sport was needed: it should be "motivated by the habitual vision of greatness" (Bauer, 1979, p. 5), that is, a virtues-driven perspective to inspire youth to live up to higher values. This larger view of life started with coaches. Bauer explained: "Our role as coaches is not to make a professional athlete but to help each person we meet have a positive self-image, inner discipline, a sense of loyalty, and responsibility to themselves and society." Bauer added: "We must give our players a vision of the whole world, so that they can locate themselves right here and now, 'Why am I playing this sport?'" Reflecting upon their place in the world, players deepened their identities and gained resolve.

Whether talking about education, the state of the world, or weighing issues in contemporary sport, Bauer sought the right moment for discussions with players. It might be at a meal, during a car

trip, or at a team meeting discussing what it meant to play for Canada on the international stage (Watt, 2020). Effort was made to create space for discussing players' purpose. One player explained that he joined the National Team program as a stepping stone to the profession ranks, but then:

Father just didn't want guys to get caught up with the dollar signs [of pro hockey]. I still want to play pro, but now I've seen the alternatives and I'm a better person for it. Hockey's just not all there is. (Ryan, 1980, p. D1)

Even with his own nieces and nephews, Bauer led an annual retreat at the Bauer family cottage in Ontario. There, young family members discussed important issues and learned different perspectives for understanding the world (Bauer-McGahey, 2019). One niece, who went on to compete at the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, described how her uncle believed that life was to be discussed and not recalled (Bauer-Leahy, 2019). Through conversations, deeper life values and purposes could be determined.

If sport-coaches were to focus on "know how" alone, they would be using a "tunnel approach" to human living, according to Bauer (Bauer, 1973, p. 11). In the National Team, Bauer idealised a space where youth could speak about what mattered most in their lives. He strove to support player conversations about society and empowered them for international outreach.

5) *Coach mentorship must discern challenges faced by youth in sport and seek to create a less-violent, more hopeful world*

Bauer believed coaches needed to be difference makers. He criticised hockey throughout the 1960s and 1970s as "too much board-thumping," where fighting and hitting diminished skilled play (O'Brien, 1962, p. 35). Furthermore, the professionalization of sporting systems, he thought, produced new structures of control throughout the 1970s and 1980s that prioritised efficiencies and outcomes. Little room remained for higher ideals, especially when big league hockey prioritized economics (Proudfoot, 1987). How could coaches help youth discern these issues within sport and thus empower the leaders of tomorrow?

Instead of wilting before structural problems in sport, Bauer thought that coaches in their own small way could improve the world. To do so, coaches needed to judge sport realistically and

truthfully. Near the end of his life, Bauer offered these thoughts in a speech: “If sport in any form is to serve human needs and hopes not to become just another arena of human corruption, it must be taken as a whole and related to the whole of human life” (Bauer, n.d., p. 1). He believed that coaches should neither view sport as an escape from real life nor isolate it from human living. Rather, sport should be seen “as a part, as a reflection in a self-revealing mirror of [people’s] growing awareness and understanding of all that is human.” He asked coaches to consider their impact on the world and not just on those on the playing fields.

In a speech prior to the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games, Bauer discerned the principle of human development for sporting participants. To bring balance to player development, he argued:

[W]e must meditate profoundly on what a human person really is. ... We must see him or her also in relation to others in society, in the familiar, the local, the national and the world community. We must see the role of athletics in relation to all the other aspects of human activity, social, economic, political, intellectual, artistic and religious (Bauer, 1987, p. 3).

Set within an interconnected vision of the human community, Bauer believed it was vital to uncover transcendent human longings such as peace, justice, love, and joy.

He drew further inspiration from his often-said exhortation to coaches “to capture the fleeting idealism of our youth” (Bauer, 1971, pp. 9-10). Accordingly, coaches were to re-engage with their own youthful idealism. Instead of facing the realities of the day with adult cynicism, coaches were to recapture the passion they had for sport as youths and remember the reasons for their coaching involvement. In a sense, Bauer was asking for the spirit of young people to set the agenda for sport through coaches recalling and reliving the reasons for their own youth participation in sport. As youth movements arose and impacted the twentieth century, Bauer wanted a similar spirit to guide sport and thus create a new world for the next generation.

6) *Coach mentors can advocate for athletes and act as buffers against professionalised systems*

Because Bauer invested in relationships with players and other coaches, he became increasingly more critical of the structures of sport that dehumanised its players. His criticisms of

professionalised sport were not based on a naïve construction of amateur ideals or a throwback to a golden age of amateur hockey. Instead, he believed that professionalization impacted the sport at all levels and changed those coaching and managing the game. He asked hockey leaders to closely examine the structures of the game so that improvements could be made (Bauer & Hanrahan, 1966). In theory, professional aims of entertainment and commercial wealth should be able to be separated from the good of amateur and youth sport, but, in practice, this overlooks the reality that the game is organised by human beings with mixed motives. Without purposeful, practical buffers between the professional and the amateur/youth game, the complete development of the individual player as a human being is unattainable because of the “intense pressures in the direction of professionalism” (Bauer & Hanrahan, 1966, p. 13).

Bauer’s pragmatism challenged the silent assumption that every child could make the professional ranks, or at least benefit from this kind of hockey experience (Proudfoot, 1988). Many found Bauer’s solution of creating a firewall between youth hockey and professional hockey too radical (Bauer, 1980a), but realised that the unintended consequences of the system often hurt those playing the game. In the end, his unconventional thinking led to others taking control of the National Team program in 1980 and it became a feeder for the NHL into the 1990s (Bauer, 1980b).

Nevertheless, the program maintained many of priest-coach’s ideals in support of a less violent, faster, and more patriotic sport in a spirit of internationalism. Bauer remained firm that coaches should act as buffers against the overwhelming influence of market-driven sports that often overlook the needs of each individual player. He still believed many of his values also aligned with professional hockey. He explained that even professional teams should seek to know the value and capacity of each player, while all players should seek harmony among their abilities, the challenges before them, and their mental health (Lautens, 1967).

7) *Coach mentorship should open up opportunities and experiences for players because sports run the risk of restricting or limiting their lives*

In the establishment of the National Team, Bauer tried to show players and coaches an alternative route in sport. He wanted to celebrate young people's enthusiasm to curb the prevalence of a marketplace mentality. Without a doubt, he fiercely sought victory. Yet coaches were to encourage players' drive and passion through developing their gifts and uniting people rather than becoming consumed by a mindset of domination and victory. With this mentality, the National Team program offered a model for broadening players' experiences, which enabled them to make personal decisions about their future instead of handing their freedom over to a sporting system (The Canadian Press, 1980). School and education were paramount for Bauer, but so, too, were cultural exchanges, travel abroad, and encounters with others. For example, Bauer believed in the larger benefits of international participation: "We must keep competing internationally" because "peace in the world depends on getting together" (Beddoes, 1964, n.p.). In the National Team, young fans could see hockey players playing for more than the next big contract.

In his work with Hockey Canada, Bauer and others pushed for expanding the horizons of young athletes. Ideally, Bauer thought a hockey experience:

... opens possibilities for the person rather than closing them. The conditions under which hockey is played should not be such as to narrow a [person], but should contribute to a broader range of experience and to the ability to reflect on these experiences (Bauer, 1973, p. 4).

Encouraging coaches to move their players (and themselves) outside of sporting bubbles enriched their lives and challenged destructive values within the sport. This open stance within sport empowered Bauer's lifetime purpose in hockey: to bear witness to human values in sport.

Conclusion

Although Bauer's National Teams medalled often in international tournaments and developed many professional hockey players, he judged the program's success by the lives of those

mentored. He often pointed out that National Team members made valuable contributions to their communities; he was pleased that “virtually all the players (over 80 of them) who played for Canada under his system and philosophy became successful professionals – doctors, lawyers and teachers” (Hume, n.d., p. 1). He was most proud of this impact.

Contemporary research further validates Bauer’s sport-coach mentorship practices. Though much current literature focuses on formal frameworks and multi-sourced functioning of coach mentorships, more careful pedagogical approaches are also called for (Sawiuk et al., 2022). Athletes themselves speak about wanting relationships with coach-mentors that emphasise closeness (trust, respect, appreciation), commitment (positive outlook, shared experience, and athlete-centred mindset), complementarity (a supportive, flexible environment), and co-orientation (cooperation, communication, and personality) (Foulds et al., 2019). Many youth coaches recognise that their role includes a non-sport dimension of life mentoring (Acharki & Spaaij, 2023). Technical training is said to be enhanced by a caring, fun atmosphere that promotes character development. Unfortunately, mentorship is often perceived as a secondary role for sports coaches (Leeder & Sawiuk, 2021). Coaches who act as life mentors can create structures that support young athletes’ development (Pennington, 2017) and make a real difference in the lives of youth.

Bauer’s practices for sport-coach mentorship should be seriously weighed by Catholic schools. These practices are human-centred, as they advocate for a sporting experience that is developmentally appropriate and educationally grounded. They promote team spirit among players and ask coaches to create friendships with proper boundaries. The practices are also socially aware and critically minded; they veer away from solipsism and ask sportspeople to consider a larger role in the world. Inspired by the Christian faith, Bauer’s approach is values-driven and seeks to work for the good of every individual in sport.

Inspired by the beatitudes (Matthew 5: 3-12), this paper concludes by summarising Bauer’s practices in coaching mentorship as a means for sport coaches to live out generativity and goodness:

1. Be human: Treat players like people.

2. Be spirited and passionate: Harmonise skill development and personal growth.
3. Be heartfelt: Build friendships and community with your team.
4. Be reflective and visionary: Gain perspective by discussing serious matters other than sport.
5. Be discerning and creative: Discern challenges that face youth today and find a small way to help.
6. Be vigilant and speak up: Advocate for the full development of athletes.
7. Be open to bear witness to human values and possibilities: Offer life-changing opportunities and experiences.

In a sporting world increasingly driven by technical skills and corporatism, Catholic school sports can lead with a humanistic, educationally concerned perspective. Positioning sports programs according to the faith mission of the schools can create a different atmosphere for youth sport. Giving witness to human values in sport, Catholic educational leaders and mentor coaches can guide young people and offer a counter-cultural environment that promotes the “complete perfection of the human person” (*Gravissimum educationis*, 1965, para. 3).

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