

The Importance of Sports in the Life of a Student

By Ollie Cooperwood

The importance of sports in the life of a young student is invaluable and goes much further than the basic answer that "it keeps kids off the streets." It does in fact keep kids off the streets, but it also instills lessons that are essential in the life of a student athlete. Sports play a pivotal role in the makeup of a young athlete, especially in the middle school to high school years where student athletes are much more mature and mentally devel-

oped. Where else can a young, impressionable youth learn values like discipline, responsibility, self confidence, sacrifice, and accountability? Television, which may be the most influential tool in the lives of young adults, does not show enough of these qualities, nor is it on the Internet, or radio. Rather it is up to the parents, teachers, sports teams, clubs, and after school programs to help mold, develop, and instill these qualities into the lives of student athletes. I believe in order for

this to happen, school sports programs must have a few components in place. The first thing they need is a good core of coaches that understand the great responsibility that is placed upon their shoulders to help shape and prepare these student athletes not only in sports, but in their everyday lives. Yes, I did say coaches, because it is a responsibility that lies on the shoulders of more than one person and it is going to take more than one person to help lead these student athletes to