

SETTING YOUR GOALS

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Part I in a Series

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We believe setting goals to be a very important part of an athlete's overall program. We know most coaches and athletes think it's important. Therefore, a series of articles will be presented to help analyze the goal setting process.

First, we must visualize something we want to attain. Dreaming about success is an important initial phase of goal setting. Unfortunately, most people stop there and thus, chances for attaining this success are very low.

The next step is relatively simple but provides us with a quantum leap in our chances for success. A proper goal must be formed from this dream. *A proper goal is simply a goal that can be measured.* "If you can't *measure* your goal, you can't *manage* your goal and if you can't manage your goal, you can't *accomplish* your goal."

"I want to be a great football player and be big, fast and strong" are all examples of how *NOT* to state a goal. They cannot be measured. "My goal is to be All-State, weigh 225, run a 4.8 forty and squat 600 pounds" are examples of *HOW TO SET PROPER GOALS*.

Moses Malone in the eighth grade had a goal of going into pro ball right out of high school. This was a very unusual goal. Not only did he declare *what* he wanted to attain but *when* he wanted to attain his goal. It apparently didn't bother him that no other player in history had played in the pro's right out of high school. His goal kept him from becoming complacent. Obviously, he was a much better player than his teammates or opponents in high school. However, his goal kept him hungry and a Moses Malone trademark is his "never quit attitude." He will go up ten times if he has to for a shot or rebound.

Should you be realistic when setting goals or "Go for all the marbles"? Ray Perkins, the new coach at Alabama, states "We set our goal of being National Champions every year. It's been that way for at least twenty years." At this writing, Alabama has lost two games and has no chance for a National Championship this year. However, was it bad to set such a high goal. What happens to your self esteem when you don't make it?

Dale Murphy when asked about winning baseball's triple crown (most homeruns, highest batting average and most RBI's) said "It's unrealistic to make that a goal. It's been done only a few times." Yet, Murphy, the Atlanta star has been named the MVP of his league and came close to the triple crown.

We feel you should go for all the marbles. However, a master plan should include many smaller steps toward the road to great success. Detailed

preparation should be followed daily to make the dream become a reality. To say in January, "We're going to win the State Championship next football season" and do nothing in the way of preparation until September is ludicrous and foolish. It simply takes hard work, dedication and total commitment to make something worthwhile happen.

Next issue's article will discuss how to mentally deal with failure of one's goal and outlining the smaller steps to accomplish the larger goal.

Inspirational Story

Two years ago Arthur McMillan came all the way to Salt Lake City from Mississippi to attend a Bigger Faster Stronger summer camp. Arthur was 6-0, 175 pounds and ran about 5.2 in the forty. He could bench about 225, squat 350, dead lift 550 and clean 225. Arthur was a leader and dedicated. He was committed to being a great middle linebacker.

Arthur wanted his senior year to be special. I looked at his goal card and thought to myself "How in the world is he going to do that." He had always worked hard. Arthur would do his farm chores before school and still not miss any workouts. Summer passed quickly and soon Arthur was well into the football season and the big game arrived.

The stands were packed to overflowing, the largest crowd in history at Newton High School. Reporters and college scouts from many a mile were there to see Marcus Dupree. Marcus was exciting. He had just passed Herschel Walker's high school scoring record and was our nation's all-time scoring leader. His home school of Philadelphia, Mississippi was obviously very proud of this magnificent 6-3, 225 lb. running back who could run a 4.4 forty or faster. Marcus, from the 9th grade on had never been held out of the end zone. Philadelphia high school was undefeated and the fans came to see Dupree run wild.

It was to be Arthur McMillan's job to stop Dupree. Arthur seemed to anticipate every play, he seemed to know Dupree's moves before he made them. Arthur made 26 bone-jarring tackles from his middle linebacker position. When the dust had settled and time ran out the subdued Philadelphia fans thought it had to be a fluke. Dupree had been shut-out, Philadelphia high school had been shut-out and Newton won 7-0.

Arthur believed in himself. He took pride in his preparation and did many little things to help him achieve his goals. I never realistically thought he and his team could stop Dupree. Fortunately, Arthur thought he could, and that is a good lesson for all to ponder.