

**It's hard enough to win on the field. Who needs this?**

**This actually happened last July.**



**How much should we as coaches tolerate?**

**...But he runs a 4.4 and he's big.**

*This Running Back was caught by police with a revolver, a semiautomatic weapon, and a loaded shotgun with the safety latch unlocked. Also on the table was five pounds of cocaine.*

Anthony (not his real name) was reared under poor circumstances. He did not know who his father was and had no support from his mother. Anthony was a Proposition 48 student and became one under curious circumstances. The last page was missing from his test. But Anthony was a blue chip athlete and was recruited by all the biggies, but they decided not to take a chance. Finally, one school did. The head coach told me, "Greg, I thought we could save him."

Anthony did make it through the first year and became eligible and had a great Sophomore year. "Anthony was a legitimate number-one draft pick," remarked his Running Back coach. However, Anthony got a girl pregnant and had no money. The coaches got him a job and, to his credit, one day his car broke down and he took a bus to get to work. But, the lure of fast money was too great. Anthony left spring football incognito and went back to his home area in a big city. He was offered \$5,000 to bring back a package. You don't have to be a prophet to figure out what was in the package.

The coaches made Anthony sign a three-page contract before taking him back. Anthony reported every day at 6:30 a.m. and was asked, "Got your assignments done? Are you going to class? Are you drug free? Are you dealing drugs?" Anthony answered like he was a Boy Scout. Anthony took a urinalysis on the first Monday of each month and the coaches warned him that he was being watched by more than just the local authorities. One coach reflected back, "Most kids would stop when a warning came about the Feds, but Anthony felt invincible."

The police stated, "It's a different game now. You've got sellers and users. Sellers these days are not necessarily users." Since Anthony passed his urinalysis, the head coach only suspected that Anthony was selling and said, "The ACLU would have me in court so fast if I tried to do something (revoke Anthony's scholarship) on suspicion."

An assistant coach said, "Anthony had some fraternity guys that kept calling. They literally wanted to kill Anthony. A

# DRUGS: WHAT TO DO!

drug dealer took \$1,000 and didn't give them their drugs. They thought Anthony knew how to get the drug dealer, or get them their drugs, or that he was actually in on it."

Anthony came in soon after the calls began and said, "Coach, I got me a gun."

Stunned, the coach stammered, "You what!"

Anthony, now in a different world, coolly remarked, "I'm not gonna let them get me."

**Wouldn't it be great to say to your team: "Men, I'm super glad you're committed to winning a championship and working your fannies off to reach your potential. But even more than that, men, I'm proud of you for being able to TRUST YOU—that we don't need drug tests for this team. Your HONEST WORD means more to me than you'll ever know. You make coaching a joy. I'll remember you like family, forever."**

The coach looked at the picture of his family on his desk and folded the playbook that he had been preparing and slowly stood up, "You gonna shoot 'em, Anthony?"

"You couldn't scare him. My next step was to take Anthony to the state pen and have him talk to the inmates, but I was too late with this plan. I asked him later about the gun and he lied. Anthony told me he had gotten rid of it back at the pawn shop. Anthony now faces a mandatory five-year sentence for heavy drug sales and another mandatory five-year sentence for possession of loaded, illegal war weapons.

"You can't get those in a pawn shop. Anthony won't have to worry about his pro football contract now. That's for sure," the coach said.

I'm not so sure. I've been around professional sports. If you can possibly help the team win, management will quickly forgive and play the humanitarian, second-chance role. The absolute second you can't help any more, you're history. Hey, it took the Dallas Cowboys only a matter of hours to try to contract Ben Johnson after Canada's Black Monday. Lawrence Taylor goes and plays golf for 30 days and comes back to the New York Giants. He didn't do drugs during those 30 days, but he did drink alcohol. Any addictionologist will tell you that it is pure stupidity to substitute one drug for another. The problems of Lawrence Taylor are far, far from over. Well, maybe you can't do anything about the pros because it's purely a business that lives only for today. But high schools don't need to be that way and I hope to God our colleges don't either.

The head football coach who got burned by Anthony vows: "I'm gonna lick this thing. I'll do whatever it takes. I'm not gonna have drugs at this university. I guess we coaches think we can change 'em all. Anthony shouldn't stop us from giving another kid a chance." With a glimmer of hope, he continued: "There's a new test out which measures changes in eye-flutter speed. It only detects a foreign chemical substance in the body, it does not tell you what it is—a urinalysis is needed for that. The advantage is that anyone can be tested at no cost every day without legal repercussions. You test for overall health problems to see if that individual is fit for practice. If the test is positive, you can give him a urinalysis because that's probable cause."

Did Anthony's teammates know about his drug dealings?

Of course they did! But they didn't know what to do about it.

It surely caused dissension and confusion. Minds could not have focused clearly on the objective of being the best through a team effort. The team had to be distracted.

We featured Lombardi Trophy-winner Chris Spielman, an Ohio State Linebacker, last year. He stood up at a team meeting and told his teammates that if he found out that anybody was on drugs that he'd personally take care of them. Chris was adamant that he didn't want to play next to some druggie.

I applaud that attitude. If you really want to win, the team should try to take care of things first. If that fails, the coaches must be informed. That should be a team rule. Don't accept any of the standard cop out pleas like: "What I'm doin' ain't that bad, I can handle it," or "Cut me some slack—it's just once in a while." Anthony used all of these plus many more.

Here is an AXIOM: The longer you wait to resolve a drug problem, the more people get hurt and the deeper the hole the individual will make for himself. The time to resolve a drug problem was yesterday.

I asked Anthony's strength coach about workouts. He fired back his answer: "Anthony didn't make his workouts. He didn't make special workouts. He even came late to football practice at times."

I've always felt that athletes who commit to intensive strength and conditioning workouts and who are always present are a *thousand times less likely* to get into drugs. That individual has paid a price for abilities. He's not going to go screw it up with drugs.

College coaches need to be much more aware of who works and who doesn't. Skipping workouts should flash a huge warning sign. I recommend that college coaches put a kid's work ethic and attendance record high on their recruiting criteria. I could tell you after five minutes with

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Barry Sanders (on the front cover) that he is not going to have a drug problem at Oklahoma State.

I was at one Southwest Conference school and the coaches were trying to decide on which of two Quarterbacks to offer a scholarship. They had been running their films back and forth for several hours with two projectors running at once.

"Dr. Shepard," they called, "Which one is the best?"

I viewed the two kids scrambling and throwing 40-yard touchdown passes. The coaches were trying to determine which had the faster release or better speed. I responded: "Which is the best leader? Which is the most dedicated? Which has the best grades? Which is the best citizen? And which has the best family relationship?"

College coaches need to evaluate a lot more than size and natural speed. I recommend giving a scholarship to the kid with a little less ability or potential over a better kid with a poor work ethic or attitude. Look at the ulcers and tons of wasted hours spent on Anthony.

It seems like drugs are everywhere and alcohol abuse with athletes is epidemic. Space does not permit me to discuss the many drug/alcohol problems that occurred just this summer. Seventeen players were suspended for substance abuse by the National Football League. Olympic diver Bruce Kimball killed two people while driving with a .20 percent blood-alcohol level, twice the legal limit. A woman was denied the opportunity to be on the gold medal basketball team because of cocaine. A Senior Linebacker at Rutgers faces criminal charges from a head-on collision that killed a teammate resulting from drunken driving. And the list goes on.

However, the vast majority of kids are great and handle today's fast-paced, pressurized life-style tremendously well. That's why we try to print so many positive stories in our BFS Journal.

*USA Today* reported a great story on how Larry Bishop handled a crisis with his football team at Santa Fe High School in Alachua, Florida. Coach Bishop deserves a lot of roses. His starting Quarterback was arrested on drug charges. Coach Bishop suspended his Quarterback.

Sixteen teammates walked out because they thought the coach was wrong. After thinking about it, they returned later that same day to apologize, but Coach Bishop suspended them all for one game.

Dale Scott, a Sophomore, took over at Quarterback and Santa Fe got ripped 56-0.

Coach Bishop stated: "With the things we preach, it would be two-faced to have someone charged with something like that and still put him on the football field. What are the kids going to learn from that?"

Coach Bishop is right. He made a courageous move. I'm glad his kids responded with courage.

Santa Fe Running Back Orian Lumpkin said: "The coach made a decision and we didn't understand it. We didn't think about it enough or give him a chance to finish. We jumped a little fast and it turned out to be a mistake."

Defensive Back and co-Captain Jeffery Robinson said, "Everybody has gotten closer together since the incident. We're all like brothers now."

The following week Santa Fe played Tallahassee Godby High School, which was ranked in the *USA Today* Super 25. Santa Fe won 21-14, and Dale Scott threw a 58-yard touchdown pass in that upset victory.

We need to have the courage of Larry Bishop. We need to reward a strong work ethic. (Anthony was much more highly recruited than Barry Sanders.) Willingness to work hard and commit to high ideals should be more highly regarded by recruiters. Player leadership needs to take a more prominent role in combating drugs. Winning teams take care of losing problems. Drug tests become sort of a game. Many will do it until they get caught and then, at the pro level, all that happens for the first offense is some counseling but by that time it may be too late. Stricter guidelines need to be worked out by players and coaches. It should never be coaches pitted against players but a feeling of love and concern emanating and abounding in trust between all concerned. True success and happiness can never come from drugs and we need to do whatever it takes to combat this insidious national tragedy.

### CRLOUDIP DIES AFTER OVERDOSE

As I finished writing this article, I picked up the paper and read that David Croudip had died from an apparent overdose of cocaine. Croudip, 29, was married with a daughter, and had a promising career with the Atlanta Falcons. Croudip may have ingested more than a gram of cocaine.

### WILL IT EVER END? IT'S UP TO YOU!

#### BFS READINESS PROGRAM

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the high number that will respond.

**Agility:** Again, my team does the BFS Dot Drill every day on their own. My son can do it in 47 seconds, and most of my 31 players can do it in under 60 seconds. If you haven't seen the BFS Dot Drill, I can tell you—to see a 13-year-old whip through the BFS Dot Drill in 50 seconds is really impressive.

**Speed and Plyometrics:** You can teach kids at any age how to run correctly. You want an edge? Teach seventh graders how to run: Less than 1 percent of our nation's seventh graders have had this seemingly basic opportunity.

Teach kids how to jump. My son helped me with a clinic in Georgia. He demonstrated Plyometrics and the high school Senior basketball players were amazed when Matt jumped from a 20-inch box to another 20-inch box, then to another, and then finally popped up on a 38-inch desk. I was even surprised.

Matt said, "Dad, that's nothing."

The Seniors were reluctant to try until a 13-year old showed them how.

Fifteen minutes twice per week can work wonders.