

The Other Side of the Coin

Balance In Life

We once had a psychologist speak to a room full of referees and his first question to our group was; "Do you have balance in your life?" As a result of our passion for refereeing and basic love of the sport of volleyball, referees often struggle with this question.

Is there magic to having our lives balanced? It is important that we all realize that our first priority must be family, second your work (as volleyball doesn't pay our mortgage) and for those of us with the volleyball addiction, that should come third.

As with all of us there are times where our balance is more focused in one area. Christmas day your focus is probably 100% family. During a busy season at work or school, your focus would be 75% work, probably only 25% family. May long weekend for many of us our focus is 90% volleyball, only 10% family. If you have a newborn at home, your focus should be 99% family, 1% volleyball.

A few helpful thoughts are:

- Know what your priorities are. Balance does not entail cramming in every activity possible. Examine your life and decide what's important to you; then set your boundaries. Depending on what stage you're at in life, your focus and energies will be different.
- Be honest with yourself and notice the areas of your life that you're neglecting. Take some time to really look at your life.
- Burnout is a real possibility. You cannot accomplish anything if you're unhealthy. Get plenty of rest, exercise and eat properly.
- Be prepared to accept the unexpected. (a family sickness, car breakdown, career crisis, etc.) If you accept that anything can happen at any time, it's less likely that it will throw you off stride. Be able to adjust your game plan.

Balance differs between each referee and further differs between genders. This gender difference is getting smaller, but it's still there - a fact of life. Each referee must evaluate their own circumstances.

Balance means not taking volleyball to the extreme. When that occurs and other areas of your life suffer, something that is intended to be positive, can actually be detrimental.

Be really honest with yourself and take a balance assessment occasionally - you can't do a good job as a referee if you do not balance in the rest of your life.

Until the next toss of the coin.