

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Why a Volleyball Coach Does What He Does:  
A Case Study

By:

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts.

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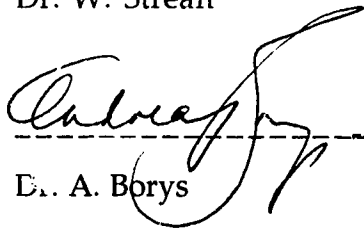
The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Why a Volleyball Coach Does What He Does: A Case Study submitted by Daryl Glenn Young in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.



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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to determine if a volleyball coach had some foundational values and beliefs (fundamental principles upon which all his coaching behaviours were based) and, if so, were they applied consistently during his coaching. As well, a secondary consideration was to determine if there were any situational considerations that influenced his coaching behaviours and/or his foundational beliefs.

The key question asked was "Why does this volleyball coach do what he does?" Interviews and observations were used to collect data on what, how and why the coach did what he did, and ethnomethodology was drawn upon to help with the case study approach to answer the question.

Some of the major findings of the study were that the coach did have some foundational beliefs, and that he applied them consistently through his coaching behaviours. Situational considerations, while not a major focus of the study, were found to determine which foundational belief the coach applied, but they did not affect his coaching behaviour directly. The study also determined that some foundational beliefs did not complement but rather worked in opposition to one another.

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Introduction and Conceptual Framework</b>	<b>1</b>
Introduction	1
Purpose of the Study	1
Rationale for the Study	3
Literature Review	4
Explanation of the Model Used	6
The Cascading Multi-Level Event Model	6
Elements of the Model	8
<b>Chapter 2: Research Design</b>	<b>9</b>
Overview of Method and How the Study Developed	9
Methodological Framework	9
Methodology	10
A Case Study	12
Selection of a Coach for the Study	13
The Study	15
Time of Involvement and Setting	17
Data Collection	18
Interviews and Observations	18
Data Analysis	18
Unit of Analysis	18
Dimensions of the Model that were Assessed	19
Analysis	19
Limitations	21
Delimitations	22
Ethical Considerations	22
<b>Chapter 3: Results and Discussion</b>	<b>23</b>
Overview of the Study Process	23
In the Beginning.....	23
Beliefs Articulated During the Background Interview	25
Make Practices Game Oriented	25
Base Everything on Mutual Respect	27
Provide Learning Opportunities, Not Punishments	28
Help Athletes Increase Self-Motivation and Self-Determination	28
The Rest of the Summer	30
Additional Beliefs Articulated from the Summer Interviews	31
Use Summer Program to Increase Competitiveness, Intensity and Aggressiveness of Athletes	31
Team Conduct - Focus on Our Time, Not Our Opponents	33
Playing Time Based on Improvements	34
Coach Conduct - Provide Different Options and Perspectives and be an Egoless Leader	36
How Articulated Beliefs Manifested Themselves	37

## **Table of Contents**

Use Summer Program to Increase Competitiveness, Intensity and Aggressiveness of Athletes	38
Make Practices Game Oriented	39
Self-Motivation/Determination, Respect, Punishment and Coach Conduct	43
Team Conduct - Focus on Our Time, Not Our Opponents	48
Playing Time Based on Improvements	51
Deviations	52
<b>Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations</b>	56
Summary	56
Findings and Conclusions	57
Recommendations for Sport Administrators	58
Recommendations for Coaches	59
Recommendations for Methodological Improvements	60
Recommendations for Future Research	61
<b>References</b>	62
<b>Appendices</b>	
A - Daily Activities Chart	65
B - Informed Consent Form	66
C - Match Play Time Analysis	67
D - Sherbrooke Match Play Time Analysis	68
E - Model Coach Definition	69

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1: A taxonomy of leadership theories in sport situations	5
Figure 2: The Cascading Multi-Level Event Model	7



## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Conceptual Framework**

### **Introduction**

Any great religion, any established philosophy or enduring system of thought – characterized by a few key principles, short but powerful statements, that embody the essential truths of that religious or philosophical system. These are the foundational beliefs upon which everything else within the system is built. Without such foundational beliefs, a consistent, strong, and enduring structure cannot be built. The same holds true for sport and for coaches (Vernacchia, McGuire & Cook, 1992, p. 15).

If, as I believe, this statement is true, then it should be possible to determine these principles; the 'foundational beliefs' that hold a coach's overall plan together. It should also be possible to observe a coach putting his or her foundational beliefs into action and, if these truly are 'foundational beliefs', then the application of these beliefs should be consistently applied.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine, first of all, if the coach being studied had some foundational values and beliefs and, if so, did the coach put these values and beliefs into application. It was not my intent to pass judgement on any foundational beliefs that might be found, but rather, to determine if this coach had any foundational beliefs. As well, secondary consideration was given to determining if there were any major situational considerations influencing his behaviours. This was done to see if the

coach's actions were truly based on his founding values, principles and beliefs. To do this, I sought to answer the question "Why does a coach do what s/he does?" I asked this question because it fulfilled what I believe to be two major requirements. First, it asked "Why?" To determine what the coach believed in I felt it necessary to ask him what it was that he thought he believed in. Second, the question addresses what the coach actually does. I wanted to see if the coach's actions matched his words; did his 'say' match up with his 'do'. By getting the answer to this question, by way of the coach's words and his deeds, I believed I would have the necessary information to determine the coach's founding beliefs. But why are the founding beliefs of a coach important? Sabock would argue that "A head coach's personal philosophy will dictate everything that he or she does as a coach" (1973, p. 39). But this brings up the question of "What is philosophy?" The Collins English Dictionary defines philosophy as "a personal outlook or viewpoint" (p. 855). Taken from a coaching perspective, "Philosophy is a set of values and beliefs, a way of looking at one's world, one's job, and one's players" (Jones, Wells, Peters & Johnson, 1993, p. 299). Martens defined philosophy as:

the pursuit of wisdom; it helps me answer fundamental questions about what, why, and how. My philosophy is the way I view objects and experiences in my life; it's the way I view people and my relationships with them. And it is the values that I hold about all these (1987, p. 3).

For the purposes of this study, then, the term 'philosophy' equates to 'founding beliefs', and encompasses values, principles and beliefs; all the things that influence a coach's internal choice making processes. As stated

before, the purpose of this study was to determine why a coach does what he does, and what influence his foundational beliefs have on his word and deed. A coach may have a philosophy or can state that he follows a policy or handbook but in actual practice, choice making can go against these ideals. This study describes how one coach coached and tries to get to the deeper reasoning as to why coaches do what they do.

### **Rationale for the Study**

I have been fascinated by this question, both as a player and also as an observer of coaches, for the past several years. The thought processes employed by these leaders were something that I wanted to explore, and by conducting a case study with a coach who has experience coaching, I hoped to gain some understanding of his reasons for his coaching strategies and actions, and as a result to improve my own coaching.

It has been said that "athletics, properly coached, provides a special arena of learning about oneself and about life" (Walton, 1992, p. 167). If this is true, then it would appear justifiable to study the coach as an entity unto himself/herself, and determine what s/he brings to this educational experience.

Vernacchia et al. (1992) have emphasized the profound effect that a coach's philosophy has on the educational experience:

The coach is the definer, creator, provider, and delivers the sport experience to the athlete. The sport experience is necessarily a direct reflection of the coach, and of the coach's philosophy, beliefs, values, principles, and priorities. The quality of an athlete's experience can never exceed the quality of the

leadership providing it (p. 15).

Unfortunately, according to DeVenzio (1992) and Walton (1992), many coaches are unaware of their own philosophy or foundational beliefs.

Considering all these factors, it would make sense that more study should be done in the area of the values and beliefs of coaches.

### **Literature Review**

Research literature regarding the personal philosophy of coaches was virtually nonexistent. To characterize the behaviours of coaches, most literature has described coaching styles, and were based on largely heuristic models (Jones, Wells, Peters & Johnson, 1988; Martens, Christina, Harvey & Sharkey, 1981) or based on individual profiles of successful professional coaches and their styles (Curry & Jiobu, 1981). There has been very little research conducted to determine the philosophy that a coach brings to his or her coaching. Recently, Walton wrote Beyond Winning: The Timeless Wisdom of Great Philosopher Coaches (1992). In his book, Walton has looked at, from a coaching philosophy point of view, six of the arguably most successful coaches in the past fifty years. Also, Streat (1993), in his doctoral dissertation, explored factors that might influence individuals to engage in various coaching behaviours, and 'coaching ideology' was a main factor.

Another approach for describing coaching behaviour has been to make use of established leadership theory. A variety of theories of leadership have been made available, however, it soon became evident that "there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (Bass, 1990, p. 11). Also, as "researchers usually define leadership according to their individual perspective and the

aspect of the phenomenon of most interest to them" (Yukl, 1989, p. 2), most research has had nothing to do with philosophy or foundational beliefs as researchers were not approaching the topic of leadership from this point of view. Carron has also categorized the ways that leadership in sport has been studied. Figure 1 (Carron, 1988, p. 134) depicts his findings.

Figure 1: A typology of leadership theories in sport situations.

	<b>Traits</b>	<b>Behaviours</b>
<b>Universal</b>	<u>Universal Traits</u> The Description of the Personality Traits of Coaches	<u>Universal behaviours</u> The Coaching behaviour Assessment System
<b>Situational</b>	<u>Situational Traits</u> The Contingency Model of Leadership	<u>Situational behaviours</u> The Multidimensional Model of Leadership

In the main, the literature has been characterized by its tendency to address 'what' the coaches have done (actions/behaviours), or 'how' the coaches did what they did (style), but there has been very little literature written that addresses 'why' the coaches did what they did. This led to my focussing on the association between the coach's 'whys', and its association with the 'whats' and the 'hows' of the coach's actions. Although I did not totally ignore the environment or the situation, it was not a central focus of

my investigation.

### **Explanation of the Model Used**

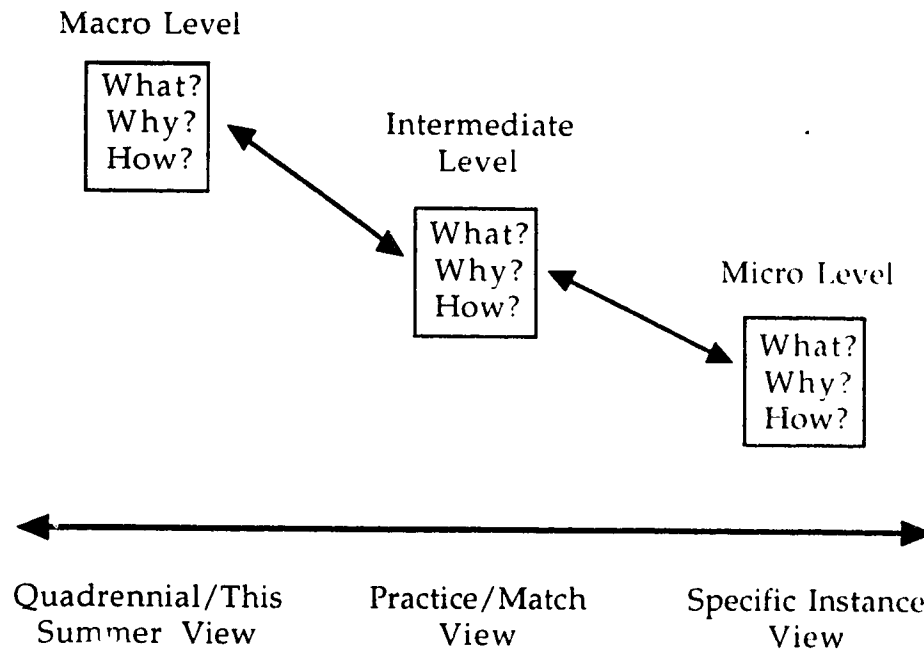
#### **The Cascading Multi-Level Event Model**

If the answer to the question of 'Why does a coach do what s/he does' involved determining foundational beliefs, then I needed to devise a method of determining a coach's foundational beliefs. It might seem obvious to just ask the coach to describe them. However, as previously stated, some coaches are unaware of their own values, principles and beliefs and, according to research conducted by Gilbert with Bear Bryant as the subject:

In order to learn something useful from Bear Bryant you'd have to *watch* him do his job. It would be virtually useless--even counterproductive--simply to *ask* him about his winning formula, to invite him to make a speech about it, to read some book he might have written in which he explained the secrets of his success (Gilbert, 1988, p. 33).

So for these reasons I decided that I needed to develop a tool to help me determine a coach's founding beliefs or philosophy. I used Martens' view that philosophy helps to answer fundamental questions about what, why and how, and created a conceptual framework built on these three areas, and then used this conceptual framework to guide me during my research. I then designed the following model.

Figure 2: The Cascading Multi-Level Event Model



For the purpose of this study, I used an approach that designated a certain period (e.g., from the entire summer training session to an individual practice) as an 'event'. The model in Figure 2 brought the elements of 'what', 'why' and 'how' together within the context of a time continuum, and allowed me to collect data over time, with the aim of establishing the foundational beliefs of a coach. The collection of data was done before, during, and after each designated 'event', keeping in mind the model and the following questions:

- 1) **what** was the coach trying to accomplish?
- 2) **why** was the coach trying to accomplish this? and
- 3) **how** did the coach try to accomplish it?

### **Elements of the Model**

At this point, I feel it necessary to expand on the meanings of the above questions and give more concrete definitions regarding the terms of what, why, and how.

What? - refers to what the coach is trying to accomplish. It is his vision for the team and it represents his desired future outcome.

Why? - refers to the coach's motives. The answers given to this question come from the coach's reasoning and justification for the 'what' that the coach is trying to accomplish. The coach's motives may be based on currently held principles, values and beliefs, or they may be based on previous or present environmental/situational considerations or a combination of the two. The possibility of a change in values, principles and beliefs must also be considered. Thus, the answers to this question may be related to the future goals, past experiences, or both.

How? - refers to the step-by-step approach that the coach implements in order to accomplish his vision or goal. This operationalization consists of a progression of acts with the intent of realizing the hoped-for future vision.

In summary, I had found evidence that a coach's foundational beliefs were considered to be the most important determinant of his/her actions and behaviours. Also, I found that very little research had been conducted regarding the foundational beliefs of coaches. This caused me to question if a coach's philosophy could be determined and led to the development of my research question and the cascading event model to assist me in my research. The next step was to take the conceptual framework and formulate a research design, which is the topic of the next chapter.



## **Chapter 2: Research Design**

### **Overview of Method and How the Study Developed**

The review of literature provided evidence that the athletic experience is an important one in the life of an athlete and that the coach, utilizing his/her philosophy, can have a significant impact on this experience. It was also noted that a coach is often unaware of his/her philosophy or foundational beliefs. The review also showed that there is a dearth of information regarding the philosophical foundations that a coach brings to his/her coaching experience. This study was an attempt to understand coaching better by investigating the coaching philosophy of one coach. I attempted to learn more about coaching and coaching philosophy by interviewing and observing one coach during practices and competitions, and how his philosophy influenced his decision making processes and caused him to choose the developmental path that he used with his athletes. The following is an overview of each aspect of the study.

### **Methodological Framework**

The central purpose of this research was to explore the question of "Why does a coach do what s/he does?" A number of academic disciplines have suggested that human behaviour is a function of a person-situation-behaviour interaction (Strean, 1993). Although I recognized that all three factors might interact, the major focus of this study was on the interaction between the coach as a person, which included personal values and beliefs, and the actions and behaviours that the coach carried out. I was interested in discovering how these two areas related, and what amount of congruency was present. Therefore, I concentrated most of my efforts on this interaction , but

also monitored the situational component to determine if it caused changes in the foundational beliefs.

### **Methodology**

I drew on ethnomethodology to conduct this research because it "is simply the study of the methods people use to generate and maintain their experience of the social world as a factual object" (Leiter, 1980, p. 25). Further, it "attempts to answer [*how* people accomplish prediction] by describing the commonsense methods people use to produce the meaningful [and hence predictable] character of their social world" (Leiter, p. 25, my first set of brackets). Ethnomethodologists "focus on *how* people make 'social reality as something out there' observable to themselves and others through their talk and actions" (Leiter, p. 21). People living out their daily lives do not take notice of how they construct a sense of social structure. They just do it. The interpretive work remains "hidden for the man in the street because his attention is not directed at the performance; rather, it is directed at the product" (Leiter, p. 48). It is this process of *how* a person/coach makes sense of his world that I wished to explore. I was not concerned with the outcomes or the actual actions that the person/coach produced. My interest was in how the coach planned and accounted for actions; why did he do what he did?; what was his process?; how did he construct his/her sense of social structure?

An example of ethnomethodology that 'fit' with my plans was conducted by Mehan (1974). The study, as described by Leiter, follows:

In another recent study of classroom situations and the sense of social structure, Mehan (1974) examines the interpretive work done by teachers and students to produce a lesson on English

grammar. Mehan begins his analysis by presenting the teacher's expectations for the lesson. Mehan's analysis shows that throughout the lesson, the teacher's expectation underwent continual revision in terms of what she counted as a correct answer. The teacher, on the other hand, experienced herself as being consistent in her judgments of correctness and as maintaining the continuity of the expectation throughout the lesson. (p. 77).

This study approximated what I wished to do in that it called for the teacher to state expectations prior to an event, the event was then observed by the researcher, and then the teacher was asked to recount how expectations compared with reality. It also dealt with the sense of social structure as this was what the teacher was trying to achieve through her perception of consistent treatment and of maintaining the expectation about the lesson.

"The construction of social reality takes place at the level of face-to-face interaction" (p. 23). Therefore, as I was interested in determining how a coach makes sense of his social reality, it made sense to carry out research at the face-to-face level. It also made sense to use ethnomethodology because, according to Schutz, its basic topic is "the sense-making practices whereby people understand and create the social world" (p. 51).

If face-to-face interaction is the predominant method used to construct social reality, then what is it that the researcher actually observes? The answer is language.

Ethnomethodologists use language or linguistics as a resource (p. 58). Ethnomethodologists study language to try to understand how people create a

sense of social structure. They "view meanings as based on a context that includes but goes beyond the formal elements of language" (p. 64). Language alone does not convey meaning. For meaning to be communicated, there must be a common context between the speaker and the listener. Take, for example, the phrase "The book is in the pen" (p. 108). This is a classic example used to show how different contexts can be used to generate different meanings. Thinking from the point of view of a spy gives a very different meaning than if the chosen context is that of a writer, or a farmer. According to Garfinkel (as cited in Heritage, 1984):

Understanding language is not, in the first instance, a matter of understanding sentences but of understanding *actions* - utterances - which are constructively interpreted in relation to their contexts. This involves viewing an utterance against a background of *who* said it, *where* and *when*, *what* was being accomplished by saying it and in the light of what possible *considerations* and in virtue of what *motives* it was said. (pp. 139 - 140).

Therefore, drawing on ethnomethodology was appropriate for this study because it is concerned with sense-making and how people make sense of their world. It is context based and is concerned with *who* said *what*, *where*, *when* and *why*. Finally, similar studies have been conducted using ethnomethodology, and this appealed to me especially because this area is virtually unexplored.

### **A Case Study**

Jacob (as cited in Hamel, 1989) wrote that although the:

deductive approach is traditionally used to corroborate any scientific theory, whether the latter falls within the field of experimental science or a social science like sociology, a theory must be constructed before it can be validated. This may initially appear quite evident. Put in other words, a theory or theoretical framework first emerges from the study of an empirical case or object, the approach to which is not and cannot be deductively defined. History, and scientific epistemology, now clearly recognize that "there is no scientific 'method,' recipe or algorithm known that will permit scientific discovery. We know of no mechanical means that will generate a hypothesis or theory based on certain facts observed in a finite series of steps (p. 29).

Therefore, because there has been very little research done in this area, I selected the case study as the appropriate method of research. However, it is not my purpose to develop new theories, but rather to investigate an area that is virtually unexplored and perhaps provide a jumping-off point for further research. For these reasons the use of the case study methodology as a starting point in studying the philosophy of coaches is justified.

### **Selection of a Coach for the Study**

The selection of the coach for this case study was based on the following criteria:

- 1) accessibility - the coach needed to be presently involved in coaching volleyball and also be available prior to, during, and after practices and matches.

2) Level III National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) candidate or higher - I wanted a coach who had devoted considerable time to coaching in the past, and who would also be likely to continue coaching in the future. This was done in an attempt to ensure that the coach had had the necessary time to develop some foundational beliefs about coaching.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, I also wanted someone who was interested in further developing as a coach, as this study had the potential to help the coach through 'enforced reflection.'

3) a season of short duration - due to my own coaching commitments, I needed to conduct research during the summer months. Therefore, to be selected for this study, the coach had to be actively coaching during the summer, and the team needed to complete its 'season' during this period. In addition, I wanted to be able to study a coach who was operating under a time constraint. Obviously, all coaches operate under some type of time constraint, but the time constraint I was interested in was six weeks or less. This short time frame would require the coach to take what was perceived as the most efficient path possible toward the desired goal/vision.

4) ability to attend championships - I wanted to be able to see the coach function under actual game, and hopefully stressful conditions, and felt that there would be no better time to achieve this than at the championships that the coach was preparing the team.

In addition, I wanted to select a coach that I was not well acquainted with. I did not want to study someone that I might have had prior influence on, but rather someone who had developed without any intervention on my part. Nor did I want someone that I was already familiar with as I might then have had some 'preconceived notions' to deal with.

The selected coach fit the criteria and also had an extensive background in volleyball. He had played fifteen years at an elite level, which included three years with the National 'A' Team, two years with the National 'B' Team, five years at the university level, three years with the Junior National Team and two years with a Provincial Team. His previous coaching experience included one year of club ball, two years with a university team, and one year with a provincial team. By his own admission, he did not think of himself as a very experienced coach, but felt that he made up for some of it because he had "thought like a coach, not like a player" during his playing career.

### **The Study**

For the purposes of the study, I used an approach that designated a certain period (e.g., a match or a practice) as 'an event', and then collected data prior to, during, and after each event. This approach is consistent with the writing of Alfred Schutz, whose major focus "was the study of how members of society construct social reality, along with its factual properties" (Leiter, p. 4). Schutz wrote about 'motives' and why people acted in the manner that they did. Schutz stated that "All projects of my forthcoming acts are based upon my knowledge at hand at the time of projecting" (1964, p. 20). A person's projecting (fantasizing) about future events is based on what a person knows about similar acts to the projected one. This has been called by Husserl (as cited in Schutz, 1964), "the idealization of 'I can do it again'" (p. 20). This fits with Schutz's idea that a person has "to visualize the state of affairs to be brought about by my future action before I can draft the single steps of such future acting from which this state of affairs will result" (p. 20).

Or, as he more succinctly states, "I must have some idea of the structure to be erected before I can draft the blueprints" (p. 20). Schutz also writes of 'motives' and the relationship between project and motive. He distinguishes between two types of motives. The first is the "'in-order-to motive'" (p. 22). The in-order-to motive refers to the future; specifically what type of future is desired, where fantasizing is used to work out the required step-by-step acts, and the person involved is intentionally acting to make the event occur. Schutz uses an example whereby a murderer commits murder 'in-order-to' gain money (p. 20). The second class of motives that Schutz describes is the "'because-motives'" (p. 22). This type of motive refers to the past. The person or actor involved reflects on his or her past experiences, and takes the point of view that these past experiences determined the actor to act as s/he did. The actor is an observer of his or her own self. For example, the murderer committed the deed because of a poor childhood environment (p. 20). Schutz refers to the because motive as the 'genuine' (p. 20) motive because:

Only by turning back to his accomplished act or to the past initial phases of his still ongoing action or to the once established project which anticipates the act *modo futuri exacti* can the actor grasp retrospectively the because-motive that determined him to do what he did or what he projected to do. (p. 20).

This research was conducted with Schutz's motives in mind. I determined the coach's motives (i.e., his 'in-order-to motive[s]' and his 'because-motive[s]') prior to the event by interviewing him and asking him what he would be trying to accomplish, why he wanted to accomplish it, and how he was going to try to accomplish it. Then I observed the event and



compared what was projected with what actually took place. This sometimes lead to 'an event within an event'; something that deviated from the coach's hoped for outcome. Deviations became a source of rich data, as Heritage stated that it is "through such deviations that, for example, 'motives' and 'personalities' may become visible in behaviour" (1984, p. 253). Then, after the 'event' I again interviewed the coach to gain his perspective on how well the projected and actual outcomes matched, and what were his motives regarding any 'deviation'.

### **Time of Involvement and Setting**

I wanted to be involved with the selected coach for a short period at a high level of intensity. The study involved observation of the coach from July 3 to July 31, 1995 in a variety of settings. The first twelve days included up to three practices per day at a location that involved living with the coach and athletes in a school. Access was virtually limitless during this period. The next phase of the study involved time in both Edmonton and Calgary, with most contact limited to the time spent at the gym during training sessions. During this phase, there were initially two practices/matches per day, but eventually the practices tapered to one a day. The final phase was the championship that was held in Sherbrooke, Quebec. The team departed for Sherbrooke on July 25, competed at the championships from July 28 to July 30, and then returned home on July 31. My attendance at the championships completed the cycle, and the extra effort made to be in attendance enabled me to acquire more complete data.

## **Data Collection**

### **Interviews and Observations**

During this study, the main method of data collection was through interviews with the coach. I interviewed the coach prior to each 'event', and then again at the conclusion of the 'event', asking essentially the same questions for each prior interview, and getting the coach to recount his interpretation of what occurred during each post interview. (See Appendix A for a chart that explains how this fits with my research method.) The data collection during the event consisted of my observations. Handwritten field notes were kept. I also video taped the coach/team during actual matches, focusing on the coach and his actions rather than the actual match. This was done to determine the level of consistency the coach maintained regarding what he said and what he actually did.

## **Data Analysis**

### **Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis for this research was 'the account' because "Descriptive accounts contribute to the sense of social order in everyday life" (Leiter, p. 160). An account is "any intentional communication between two or more people that covertly or through practical analysis reveal features of a setting and serve the pragmatic interests of the participants" (Tobias and Leiter, as cited in Leiter, 1980, p. 162). Essentially, when people use a descriptive account or tell a story, they are seeking "to communicate their understanding of events to each other" (p. 161). Therefore, I asked the coach to 'tell me a story', and used this information to determine why he carried

out his actions as he did, and to determine his motives.

### **Dimensions of the Model that were Assessed**

As previously stated, my overall question pertained to why a coach does what he or she does. I asked that question for the purpose of determining if the coach had any foundational beliefs, and if so, were these beliefs applied consistently, were they subject to change, and/or were there situational considerations that came into play. To make the data manageable, I needed to establish a starting point.

To help do this, seven dimensions of the model were assessed. These dimensions were kept in mind throughout the analysis to facilitate the movement from the coach's actions to any foundational beliefs. The dimensions used were:

- 1) the relationship (between the short term and the long term 'what') as well as the accomplishment of the multi-level 'what'.
- 2) the relationship and accomplishment of the multi-level 'why', keeping in mind that 'whys' could be based on values, principle and beliefs and they can be influenced by the present environment.
- 3) the relationship and accomplishment of the multi-level 'how'.
- 4) the interrelationship of the 'why' and the 'what'.
- 5) the interrelationship of the 'why' and the 'how'.
- 6) the interrelationship among the 'what', 'why' and 'how' and
- 7) any possible changes in the 'what', 'why' and 'how' and the relationship among/between them.

### **Analysis**

Prior to analyzing the data, I broke them down into four categories;

coach's background, prior to interview, observation of practice session, and post practice interview. The coach's background consisted of data gathered during an interview with the coach prior to his having any actual coaching contact with the athletes at the summer training session. The purpose behind this interview was to try to get to know the coach a little better and to give him a chance to talk about himself and his beliefs, and also to try to put the coach at ease with the whole process. The 'prior to interview' data consisted of all the data that were gathered during the interviews that were conducted prior to each training/playing event. The 'observation of practice session' portion consisted of data that came from either the training sessions over the summer, or from any of the competitions that the team participated. These data were collected either by way of field notes or by video tape and field notes. The final category was the 'post practice interview' data. This consisted of all the data collected during the interviews conducted after the playing/competition sessions.

To analyze the data, I first broke down the 'prior to' interviews into categories of 'what', 'why', and 'how'. What was it that the coach wanted to accomplish, and how and why was he trying to do this. The observation phase was broken down into the same categories or 'what', 'why', and 'how' based on the coach's actions. This was done to determine what the coach actually said and did. And finally, the 'prior to' interviews and the 'post' interviews were analyzed to determine the 'in order to' as well as the 'because-motives'. This was done to discern the coach's motives for his actions, and provide a stepping off point to determine his foundational beliefs. Also, throughout the analysis of the three separate data units, I

looked for any deviations from the coach's proposed plans as these changes could point more clearly toward what the coach actually thought was important at the time. Next, I looked at the coach's background. I picked out statements that he used to describe his beliefs because I wanted to determine his beliefs at the start of the summer. Then, I examined the remaining data in their entirety and collected other statements that the coach used during the rest of the summer to try to round out his foundational beliefs. I then looked at the 'because-motives' and the statements that the coach had made while justifying his actions or words. This was to further help me determine his beliefs as a 'because statement' provided reasons for why the coach acted as he did. After arranging these data into similar groups, I felt that I had determined the foundational beliefs for this coach. Then I looked at the data for the actions of the coach, which were my observational data from the practices and matches over the summer, to show how, or if, these beliefs manifested themselves. Finally, I looked at 'deviations' from the coach's intended plan of action. I wanted to determine if changes in practices and matches were the result of situational considerations, or was the coach changing because different foundational beliefs were taking precedence or because he was changing his basic beliefs.

### **Limitations**

- i) Data collections were limited by the cooperation of the coach in the study.
- ii) The most problematic limitation that occurred during this study was the fact that by my being in such close association with the coach, I may have influenced his behaviour.

iii) Another limitation that may have been a factor concerned external forces that sometimes created time constraints for this coach, and caused occasional irregularities in the data collection.

### **Delimitations**

The primary delimitation is that this study focussed on one head coach who was working with young high performance athletes.

### **Ethical Considerations**

An informed consent form was provided to the coach prior to participation in the study. (See Appendix B). However, I gave more consideration to ethics than implied by the informed consent. Throughout the entire study, I tried to respect the dignity and integrity of the coach. I tried to remain sensitive to how close I got to the coach, especially because I lived with the team for ten of the first twelve days of training. While this arrangement allowed me to obtain 'informal' information that I would not have otherwise had access to, it also meant that I was in the coach's 'space' a great deal of the time. I thought the coach might feel that he was 'always on stage' and therefore, I tried to allow the coach time for himself. I tried not to influence his thought process by trying not to pass judgment on his plans or actions.

## Chapter 3: Results and Discussion

### Overview of the Study Process

The previous chapter outlined the process that I went through while conducting my research. I will now discuss the specific outcomes of the study. I will do this in the same manner as the purpose of this study was presented. First, I will present this coach's foundational beliefs as he articulated them to me. (Why did he do what he did?) Next, the application of these beliefs will be covered (What/How did he do what he did?) and, last, I will discuss any deviations between stated plans and actual actions to see if there were any situational considerations that arose, or did the coach actually apply his articulated beliefs consistently.

#### **In the Beginning.....**

Even though I knew that the athletes, coaching staff, and myself would be arriving at the training site on July 3, 1996, I had anticipated that the actual data collection portion of the study would start on July 4. However, because of my early arrival, I was invited to attend the first meeting that the coach conducted with the team. This was his first opportunity to see the athletes 'as a team', and he used this time to lay out some rules regarding conduct 'off the court' and 'set the stage' for the summer ahead. He set out rules regarding the use of the facility, (e.g., great facility, lucky to have, we have to respect it and take care of it) and did so, not by reading the athletes the 'riot' act, but by stating his expectations very calmly. After the rules were completed, his discussion focussed on the summer itself. He pointed out that there was no time to waste, and that his philosophy for the summer would be to **work on team work, rather than individual skills**. I found myself wondering how, or

if, this approach would work. I wondered if it was possible to attain a higher level of team work than your individual skills could provide for. I also found this especially interesting considering how volleyball coaches are trained in Canada. The standards are the National Coaches Certification Program (NCCP) and the Canadian Volleyball Association Manuals. These systems encourage volleyball coaches to prepare athletes in four areas: physical, psychological, technical and tactical. Physical refers to the physical preparation of the athlete. Psychological refers to such skills as relaxation, visualization and thought stopping. Technical refers to the development of individual skills, whereas tactical is concerned with decision making--when to perform a certain skill. Because this coach's philosophy appeared to differ from the training that coaches are exposed to in this country, I made a commitment to determine if he maintained this area of emphasis during the data collection process.

The next day, July 4, I interviewed the coach regarding his playing and coaching background. I did this for a number of reasons. I wanted to get a sense of where this coach came from; what might have been some of the 'critical' points in his development. I also wanted to get his view on his philosophy so as to have a starting point for my study. In addition, I wanted the coach to feel comfortable talking to me, and I have often found that the best way to do this is to allow people to talk about themselves.

Going into this interview, I did not expect to obtain a complete picture regarding the coach's entire foundational belief system, so I did not ask him directly about his philosophy. Rather, I just started by asking him about his playing and coaching background, and did not bring up the area of philosophy



until he mentioned it. Once he had, I felt comfortable in pursuing this line of questioning, and ended up with forty minutes of tape.

### **Beliefs Articulated During the Background Interview**

Upon analysis, this interview yielded a great deal more than I had expected. The coach talked at length about his 'philosophy' (his word) and foundational beliefs, yet at times even questioned if he truly had a philosophy. This is consistent with what others have written on the subject, including DeVenzio who wrote that his father, a high school basketball coach and the subject of his book, would send people who questioned him about his philosophy to his son, saying that his son knew his philosophy better than he did (1992, p. 14). Although the coach that I studied easily articulated his philosophy, he still struggled with it in some areas. An example of this struggle appeared in his first articulated foundational belief.

#### **Make Practices Game Oriented**

This coach believed that the way that we teach the game is "far too structured and too drill oriented" and he felt that "everything should be much more game oriented and game play centred." However, given that, he also sees "the need for repetition when learning volleyball skills." He struggled with this concept, and summed it up with the following:

Like I don't think we need to ditch the one and go completely to the other, but there is somewhere in the middle where we can use them both. I'm, Theresa, with her work has been doing all her games approach thing where everything is a game, and you learn strictly through the games. You manipulate the game to provide whatever outcome you want. Uh, and I think that

works to an extent, but there's still all those times where you've got to go back and stand on...you know, have a player stand on the box, and pound the ball as hard as he can at his partner, or at his teammate fifty times and let him do fifty in a row because in the game situation you're going to get two in a row, and then you get none for five minutes and then you get two in a row.

So, there's a balance there, but I haven't figured it out yet.

I felt for the coach at this point because I have been in the same situation more than once. You think you finally have it all figured out, and then someone else achieves 'success' by doing something different, and you start to question what you have been doing, and wonder if you need to change your method of teaching.

As for how players best learn, this coach believed they learn best in game like drills where competitiveness is stressed. He still saw a need for repetition, but not as much as has been traditionally done with volleyball players in Canada. He felt that Canadian volleyball players have become very good at performing skills, but when the skills are taken out of the drill context and transferred to the game, the players do not perform very well because they have learned how to perform skills, rather than how to compete. He summed it up by saying:

I don't know, you can perform a drill and be very successful at it, and you can, if you isolate a skill, and repeat it a thousand times, you're going to be really good at that skill, done over a thousand times. But when you take that skill out of that isolated context and put it into a bigger context, then that's where our players are

weak.

Putting this in the context of how Canadian volleyball coaches have been trained, this coach sees too much stress being put on the technical aspects of the game with no thought for the context of the game, and I would have to agree with him.

### Base Everything on Mutual Respect

The coach also talked about his values and principles regarding his expectations. He believed that the entire activity should be managed from a position of mutual respect. He summed it up as follows:

I think, I don't know, my philosophy has always been to be very demanding without being abusive. I don't know if abusive is quite the right word, but I find that, maybe as a by-product of the level that I've played at, um, it's easier to command respect from the kids so if I had a philosophy, it would be based on respect, and that would be the underlying theme of the whole operation, um. I try and show the kids a lot of respect and give them a lot of responsibility and a lot of credit, and then, in return, I see that they have a lot of respect for me.

This is again different from many coaches that I have encountered. Respect is something that coaches seem to expect from athletes, but I am not sure that the reverse is often considered. This might be again due to how Canadian coaches are trained. Although some attention has been given to the coach/athlete relationship in the coaching manuals, it is largely ignored during the delivery of the coaching development courses. I believe that the respect issue played a large part in how this coach dealt with his players, and

the way he dealt with his athletes came in large part from the respect he held for them. This was especially evident regarding the coach's attitude toward 'punishment'.

#### Provide Learning Opportunities, Not Punishments

This coach did not believe in 'punishing' his players. He believed that players must learn to like to train; to do the 'extra' things. And that they need to learn to be self-motivated. He developed this attitude as a result of his own playing days, and had this to say about it:

Last summer, for example, like it was the same as this, a one month program but I put my kids on the end line once when I was ticked off at them, and, as a player, I had that happen to me five times a day, getting put on the end line, and it loses its effect, where you're not running because you did something wrong, or you weren't playing well, it's because your coach, you know, that's what he's going to do no matter what, and you get that defeated attitude. And that was one thing that just drove me crazy as a player. Where, you know, some days a coach would walk in and you knew you were going to spend the majority of that practice on the end line no matter what you did, maybe based on the way you played the night before, what kind of mood he was in, or whatever. What point he was trying to prove and I don't think kids respond to that any more.

#### Help Athletes Increase Self-Motivation and Self-Determination

He believed that 'punishing' athletes in this manner was counter-productive to having the athletes learn to be self-motivated. They may be

working hard, but they do not understand why they are working hard:

The biggest problem is you have to learn to be self-motivated, and that just doesn't exist under that system especially so, uh, like kids don't understand why they're working hard. I don't see enough players being produced that are...want to run to be in shape, they run because they're being punished or they're being told to run, you know. It seems crazy to me to use physical training as a punishment, you should want to train and play defence. You should want, as a very rare occasion, the one time, they know you're mad if you put them on the end line and you haven't done it all summer. But if you do it every day, it's not going to matter, and they view things that get them in shape as negative. You know, training should be training, and they should want to do it to get in better shape to be a better player.

For me, this shows that this coach is aware of two things. First, that long term learning is more important than short term results. This coach said, "I think in the long run that this'll be more effective, and at this point, on a day to day basis, maybe not, but I think they'll learn more down the road."

He felt that he could probably get better short term results from his players by using punishments, but he believed that in the long run, the players would become better if they learned to be self-motivated. Second, this coach was concerned with the message that the athletes received. If hard physical work becomes associated with punishment, then the athletes may come to view hard physical work as a negative, and may learn to do no more than they are told to do. Often, neither of these beliefs are considered by many of the

coaches that I have encountered.

I did not know it at the time, but this 'background philosophy' material would prove useful for comparison to the references regarding philosophy in the remaining interviews, as well as providing direction for me during the major data collection phase of the study. It would also prove of limited utility during comparisons on a multi-level basis (e.g., comparison of a 'weekly what' with a 'seasonal what'). This limited utility was not because the information obtained was not appropriate for this comparison, but for two other reasons. First, at the time of the study this coach did not know if he would be selected to continue with the team for the next two years, therefore, his planning for the following years was very limited and speculative. The second reason was the very short season. With only four weeks in which to work, long range planning was not much of a consideration. This coach preferred to work more by 'feel' rather than by written plans and I think that this was probably for the best given the circumstances.

### **The Rest of the Summer**

Following the background interview, I interviewed the coach with respect to the first practice. This initial interview was used to try to get a feel for what the coach was trying to do, as well as establish the pre-event, event, post event routine that would be used for the remainder of the summer. Then it was off to the gym to observe the first practice, a post practice interview, some transcribing, a prior to game interview, observation of the game, post game interview, and then some more transcribing. This process (for an outline of the process and how it fits with the methodology, see Appendix A) occurred for a total of twenty-seven 'prior to' interviews (two

were not conducted due to constraints on the coach's time), twenty-nine 'post' interviews, and twenty-nine observations of practices or competitions, and resulted in twelve hours of tape.

### **Additional Beliefs Articulated from the Summer Interviews**

After analyzing these data, I found some additional beliefs that this coach held. The coach also referred to the beliefs found in the background interview, but for now I wish to concentrate on the additional beliefs that became evident.

#### **Use Summer Program to Increase Competitiveness, Intensity and Aggressiveness of Athletes**

The first belief that I wish to comment on concerns the coach's belief as to why these summer programs exist. He stated the following:

I think that [competitiveness from the individuals] is the focus of these summers, because they're so short that, the difference between what these guys have to do this summer and what they've been doing all year, is stepping their game up a level, in terms of intensity and aggression and, and competitiveness, like they, they learn skills all year round, and they learn about the game all year round, but it's only in the summer that, that... well not only in the summer, but I perceive that they make the biggest jumps in the summer due to the quality of the people that they're playing with and the quality of the people that they're playing against and they really develop that ability to be extremely competitive and have to fight for everything.

Whereas during the year it might be easy for them if they're on a

weaker team and they're the star, or in a weaker league, and they stand out. But here they've got to fight and be competitive just to get on the floor, or just to keep even with everybody else. I think that's what the provincial team summers are all about.

This 'competitiveness, intensity and aggressiveness' was something that this coach often came back to. It formed the cornerstone of the way that he approached the game. Whereas some coaches might state that skills are the most important aspect of the game and the way Canadian coaches are taught would support this idea, this coach would not agree. To him, this 'mental disposition' was what the game is all about. His work focussed very much on the psychological part of the game, but again, in a different manner than Canadian coaches are taught to do. For example, he referred to competitiveness, intensity and aggressiveness from an individual player point of view:

That would be the thing that I would want them to change the most. The way they approach playing and competing and being aggressive and being intense. I think if they can learn that, and learn to push each other, that's gonna take them up a level from where they are.

He also made reference from the point of view of the game itself:

Well, no, see, that's the difference. Maybe it, like, there's a difference between ah, a passing drill and something else. Like, passing to me is not, like one of the times when you would be ah... that, at that level of intensity or aggression; passing is more of a controlled thing. I think there's two paces between passing



and siding out, and point scoring.

Intensity was also seen as a prerequisite by this coach for an athlete to be able to move on to the next level:

and, um, his [an athlete's] question was, "What do they do on the National Team with guys like that?" and I said "Well there aren't many guys like that on the National Team [laughs]" and that's sort of an indication that if, if the guys can't find a way to become more intense players all the time then they're going to have a hard time making it to the next level. And, that's something we've talked about and we'll talk about again so that everyone ah, understands that, that it's something that is part of their development and it's not an 'extra' thing, it's not just a personality thing. It's something that you need to play at a high level; to be more vocal, more intense player.

To this coach, intensity is essential for an athlete to further a career, and he believed that it must be developed, much as some coaches believe that skills must be developed. I tend to agree with him because there is a need for more of this type of psychological development of athletes, and I wonder if there is a need to connect this concept with the NCCP ideal of technical development.

#### Team Conduct - Process, Not Outcome Combined with Respect

This coach also had some expectations about the conduct of the team, both on and off the court. He believed in having his players concentrate on their own side of the court, rather than the opponents. Also, they were not to concern themselves with the outcome of a match. "Umm, we asked the guys to be only worried with what went on on our side of the court, and to not be

concerned with outcomes of the match" and "Umm, those are really the only things we talked about, just staying upbeat and positive and not worrying about what was going on in the match. Umm, and to play your own side of the court" are examples of statements frequently made by the coach. The NCCP tends to agree with this idea of 'paying attention to your own side of the court'. Nothing is overtly stated saying this, but when scouting opponents is discussed, and it is discussed in detail, it is noted that all scouting must be done with your own team's level of skill in mind.

#### Base Playing Time on Asked For Improvements

This coach also had a belief regarding playing time for the players. However, this belief differed from the others in the sense that it was very much related to a time component. Although the other beliefs tended to remain constant over time, this one changed as the summer progressed. For example, at the start of the summer, the coach stated at different times that "it's an opportunity to give everybody a chance to play. And we won't be too concerned about what the results of the match will be" and "we'll try and let everybody play and give them an opportunity to show us what they can do." Later on, playing time started to become more of an 'earned reward' rather than a 'learning opportunity'. Some dialogue to illustrate this point is:

Coach: I'm debating for tonight whether to ah... sit him on the pine with the attitude of, you know, you don't practice, you're not gonna see the floor, I think that's the message I want him to get, 'cause he wants to play, but I really want him to practice in the next few days.....

Interviewer: It will be interesting to see your decision.

Coach: I've got to see him more than token hitting, but I really want him to play; to take advantage of a playing opportunity. I'm sure I'll sit him, at least to start,.... but we'll decide tonight, how long [chuckle].

Eventually, playing time became inextricably tied to performance, with comments such as:

Interviewer: Did you do as much subbing as you thought you would at the start of the match?

Coach: No, I thought I'd end up changing more to.... I thought we'd start the guys that we usual'ly start and then I expected them to be a little flatter and to struggle more, so it would have given other guys a chance to play a little bit but, they were playing really well so, I left them out there.

Interviewer: And that was your reasoning behind it; that they were doing a good job?

Coach: Yeah, yeah. And we've said all along that we're not going to put guys in just to give them floor time, it's gonna be because we feel they're gonna do a better job than whoever's out there. And the guys out there were doing a really good job so, they deserved to stay on the floor,.. I thought.

Although some inconsistency appears in the above statement, I think the coach says 'And we've said all along . . .' because in his mind that is where he wanted to finish at, but he did go through a process to get to this point. This coach's priority went from one of providing individual improvement opportunities to one where overall team performance took

precedence. The NCCP states that playing time is needed for individual development, but does not emphasize team performance goals as being a major focus.

#### Coach Conduct - Provide Different Perspectives and Remove Your Ego

The coach not only had beliefs concerning the players and the game, but he also had beliefs concerning the manner in which he should conduct himself. He believed that it was important for him to be positive and to turn potential negative instances into positive ones. For example, he related an instance to the athletes about how having 'no air conditioning' could actually be a positive thing:

Well, I knew they were gonna say something. I knew that it would eventually come up that, "Hey, are all the teams staying here?" And if ah, "Yeah, we couldn't afford it. They're over there with the air conditioning" and that would have been a negative but, you know, I said, "Yeah, it's cheaper to stay here and ah, with no air conditioning you'll get used to the conditions and blah blah blah" and made it more positive and, they bought it.

He also believed that, as a coach, he had to remove his ego from the equation:

Most of that [staying upbeat and positive] is their job. Like, if they're not doing it then, I'll just take a time out and give them a little reminder that that's our focus for the match. They might get frustrated if they fall behind quick at the beginning or something like that, umm, but they'll be on, the assistant coach

and I'll both just try to be really positive ourselves and it's the old coaching battle of not letting your ego get in there when things aren't going really well and you know they might very well not go very well.

Neither the NCCP nor the Canadian Volleyball Association manuals pay any particular attention to the emotional control of coaches. There is some attention paid to stress management and leadership in the program, but this does not take place until Level III and higher. Yet for this coach, emotional control was one of his foundational beliefs. Because I have already come to believe that, like Vernacchia et al., "The quality of an athlete's experience can never exceed the quality of the leadership providing it" (1992, p. 15), I wonder if this aspect of coach training is being overlooked, and should be part of the NCCP at all levels.

### **How Articulated Beliefs Manifested Themselves**

For this portion of the study, I concerned myself with the coach's actions during practices and matches. From the interviews conducted prior to these events, I knew the coach's stated 'whats' and 'hows'. However, I did not take these stated 'whats' and 'hows' at face value because saying is not necessarily doing. Just because the 'whats' and 'hows' were stated did not mean that they would actually be implemented. I wanted to see how the stated matched with the actions, and also determine why changes came about, and if they were situational in origin. The following foundational beliefs exhibited by this coach.

### Use Summer Program to Increase Competitiveness, Intensity and Aggressiveness of Athletes

From my point of view, the overriding foundational belief for this coach is the one concerning why the summer program exists. This is especially so because there are no guidelines stipulated by the regulating body. There are no minimum or maximum hours of training time, no height requirements for the athletes, or any other written guidelines. There are not even any 'motherhood statements' handed down from the association that created and sponsored the team. This suggests that this belief was the coach's, and not something imposed upon him. It also takes on added importance because it defines what this coach believes to be the reason for the existence of the program. Additionally, it is the cornerstone of what this coach believes the game is all about--intensity, aggression and competitiveness. Some examples of actions that illustrate this point are:

During the first practice match of the summer, which incidentally was the second practice of the summer, the coach made the following comments during certain situations. When one of the players eased up on a spike serve, the coach urged him to "Swing hard." When another player tipped a ball, the coach encouraged him by saying, "Hit the ball, . . . that's hittable." This was something that became very evident over the duration of the summer, and the coach often referred to these 'errors of aggression' to the team and myself. He believed that his players needed to know that it was okay to make errors of aggression, that these errors were necessary to facilitate learning, and he backed this up by acting in the manner that he did. Not once during the entire summer did I see him chastise a player for an 'aggressive' error. He

even went so far as to not call blatant net touches and other game faults early in the summer when he perceived that they were committed in an aggressive manner, so his requirement for aggressive play overrode his need to conduct practice in a game-like manner. He felt he could loosen the rule requirements for the time being, then tighten them up later. Also, there were times when the coach would change a drill to make it more competitive. He would stop the drill and turn it into a competition by changing the scoring system or by some other means.

#### Make Practices Game Oriented

The next belief I would like to compare to the coach's actions concerns his desire that "everything should be much more game oriented and game play centred" compared to the fact that he also sees "the need for repetition when learning volleyball skills." The best way I can do this is to relate this coach's rationale regarding the warm up phase of practice. This coach tended to favor a 'game-like' warm up where a ball is involved right from the start and then some stretching occurred as opposed to the more traditional jog-stretch approach. When asked about this, his response was as follows:

Coach: I think it tends to get worse usually because they lose their concentration. They're good for the first minute to a minute and a half, two minutes and then they sorta lose their concentration, but I think that's something that they're not used to doing when they walk in the gym, and it's gonna take some time to get used to it. You know, like to the end of the summer kinda thing before they're really good at that kinda thing. They'll walk into the gym and perform an easy task but having

to think about, they're used to walking in and going through the motions for the first part of practice, umm, I wouldn't say it was significantly better than they've done it in the past.

Interviewer: Do you feel it's a function of it being a warm up?

Coach: Umm, somewhat, but I think it's not a physically difficult warm up, it's a mentally difficult warm up like, it's not a function of them being cold and being unable to get to the ball, I don't think. I think it's more of a function of them not being prepared to think when they come in, 'cause you know, given the first two minutes of just batting the ball back and forth they're fairly warm, and then, from that point, you're only asking them to hit a controlled down ball for the first, even 10 minutes, so if we carry it through they'd be hitting full out by the end, but it would take, 15 minutes? so the warm up is supposed to progress, like the physical warm up is supposed to progress with the game itself, but the mental part is completely different.

Interviewer: Right. Because they're probably not used to this style of warm up.

Coach: Exactly. They're used to being able to come in and run around a bit, get loosened up, sit down and stretch, play some pepper, not, not have to be accurate for the first 15, 20 minutes of practice even the first half hour, or play a game or whatever, but I think they'll learn that this summer.

Interviewer: So can you tell me why, what are you trying to accomplish by doing this style, different style of warm up?



Coach: A few things. I think um, they get to the point where you're utilizing more of your practice time, like we can spend shorter practices getting more work done if we use the warm up as repetitions and as, you know, doing volleyball things as opposed to running around and playing an unrelated game. And I also think that um...they'll learn to come to the gym better prepared, and that they'll be able to play without what they perceive as a full warm up like it they're on the end of the bench and they've been there for a while, and they jump into a game, uh, they might physically be cold, but might still be able to turn their minds on and perform, and I think that's a skill you've got to learn too, which is tough to do in a practice because everybody starts practice at the same time and you don't bring somebody in partway through, they don't ever get the feeling of coming off the bench, and I think it all ties together that way. At least those three areas are what I'm hoping they'll get out of it.

The coach's actions in this regard were consistent throughout the summer, with only one warm up being non-gamelike. This is what the coach 'said' about warm up, but I believe that it was translated into an action when the warm up in question started at 11:10 a.m., developed into a ball control requirement drill (15 over net) at 11:25 a.m., and at 11:41 required a time out by the coach to allow the players to 'meet and determine their strategy'. This ended by having the warm up completed (37 over net) at 11:50 a.m., followed by the coach asking the following of his players:

Coach: Why did it become easy after 15?

Players: No pressure.

Coach: Where does it come from? The drill?

Players: No, from ourselves.

Coach: Learn that pressure is from you, and that relaxation is what you need. That's why some guys can't put over the easy down ball; pressure. You've got to learn to love it.

This coach had a well thought out framework regarding warm up. He covered areas regarding the efficient use of practice time, player preparedness, and substitutions during games. This thought process and the ensuing actions negate the notion that this coach might just be 'miming' warm ups that he has seen in the past, and provides evidence that this coach has a foundational belief regarding more game oriented and game play centred practices. This was further supported by the type of practices this coach conducted. There was virtually no instruction given on technical aspects of the game to the group as a whole. Instead, players were given instruction individually, and most often during a drill, if they were having problems. This is different from the 40% that is supposed to be given according to Fiedler et al. (in CVA Level III manual), who are still widely quoted in volleyball training manuals today. The coach's decisions regarding the practice time to match time ratio provide further evidence of this belief. During the summer, the team participated in twenty practices, six practice matches, and six competition matches. The coach summarizes his belief about this by the following:

OK, um, I think there were a lot of good things that came out of this match which, I think there are every time you play a match,

um, from my point of view, every chance you get to play is a good opportunity and usually something good comes out of it.

### Self-Motivation/Determination, Mutual Respect, Punishment and Coach Conduct

The next beliefs that I shall discuss concern the areas of self-motivation/determination, respect, punishing and coach conduct/ego. These areas are all tied together for this coach. He felt that the whole operation should be based on mutual respect, and felt that he could enhance this by respecting the athletes, and by giving them a lot of responsibility and a lot of credit for what they had accomplished. Some of the examples were subtle, such as when questioned by an athlete "Where do we serve from?", his response was, "You're OK. You decide." Other times, he would let the athletes perform a drill and struggle somewhat, hoping that they would notice and say "It's unacceptable" rather than stopping the drill himself and telling them. If they did not notice, then he would calmly mention it at the conclusion of the drill and let the athletes know his expectations. More pointed examples would be when he would call a time out for the athletes to 'meet and determine their strategy' as he did in the previous warm up example. Finally, twice during the summer he stopped practice; once to send the athletes out of the gym to regroup and return when ready, and once actually stopping practice altogether. However, in neither instance was the coach angry with the athletes. In fact, this coach never displayed any emotional outbursts during the entire time that I was with him. His actions always appeared to be calm and well thought out and his ego did not seem to be a factor. There was never a time during the entire summer when it

appeared that he had lost control, or even raised his voice. He explained himself as follows:

Coach: Umm, at any rate, practice, we pushed through it for a while and ah, in the more physical drill, the 5 aside, um. tried to push through the sloppiness there, but it sort of, it never really got better through the drill and then as we moved into the more controlled drill they were having to ah, dig and then transition a down ball or a free ball or a hard hit ball, the control got worse and worse and so, umm when it got to the what was sort of the end of that drill but it wasn't really, we still had a couple more rounds that we never got to, um . . . and I quickly talked it over and decided to bag the practice and um, and sorta I guess in a sense kick them out. Umm, we tried to make it clear that it was, that it should be an insult to them to be kicked out of a practice, but we also tried very hard to make it clear that we as a coaching staff ah, aren't pissed off at them um, that we're ah, we don't hate them or anything like that and it's not, not a matter of us being mad but it's a matter of us being here to try and improve their skills and to make them better players and if they are unable to come to practice in a state or prepared to improve that they are wasting their time and our time and that would then become, I guess, unacceptable and it got ugly enough to stop the practice I thought.

Interviewer: There was one other thing that you said about the team that they had 'surprised faces' towards the end.

Coach: Oh, yeah, I was just saying to [the assistant coach] that ah, some of the, oh I guess I said that to you as well that um, some of the guys were surprised, I think because they knew the practice had been bad and were expecting, I don't know whether they were wanting it, but they looked like they were expecting one or both of the coaches to blow up at them and expecting more anger from the coaches. Umm.. and they looked a little surprised when it didn't come, and we said, "Look, practice is over. You know, you guys are playing at an unacceptable level. We're bagging it." I think there were a few guys that were kinda surprised by the tone of my voice and that it wasn't ah, more aggressive or angrier and, I think that comes from, maybe some of the coaches that they've had in the past and more that, you know, when players play that badly coaches tend to get upset but I'm really trying very hard to put that control of practice and that, not the blame but to try and put the onus on them that ah, they're the ones that are putting in the time and the work and they're here to improve and ah, you know, it's not ah, it's not, it's not coming down on me. Like, I'm not mad because it's not my career or my ability that is on the line, it's theirs. So I want them to take that responsibility and say "Yeah, I've got to come to and get better" and, you know, [the head coach is] not gonna lose it if I don't work hard, but I'm not gonna get any better and so it's up to me. I want them to be self-motivated I think is the main thing. I want them to take that responsibility for their own

improvement. And I don't want to create artificial situations where they're playing well because I've yelled at them or they're playing well in fear of running lines and that kinda thing is what I think needs to be avoided. Eventually, three years from now when we hit Canada Games, to have guys that um, are playing well because they've worked hard to play well and they know what it takes to play well. And, they'll be able to control their level of play rather than external things.

Interviewer: How do you think you came to trying to do things that way?

Coach: I guess a combination of the way other coaches have done it with me as a player. And that's definitely something that came out of my playing days and what I felt was, I responded to and my teammates responded to when I was playing. I think kids are smarter than a lot of times we give them credit for, and they see through it. I've had coaches that would put on the big blow up and it would be, kinda staged, like you knew he was gonna get pissed off and you knew he was gonna kick the ball. And so it would lose its effect and us, as players, would just say "Ah" you know "Screw him. Great! He's giving us an hour off practice. We're outta here!" And, instead of thinking "I'm losing an hour of practice time where I could be improving, and when we had it put to us that way, which we did a few times with the National Team, it was much more of an insult, and we responded much better, thinking that, you know, "Forget this

noise. I need the practice time" and I'm the one who wants to get better here and I want to get on the starting line-up or, I want to beat whatever the team we're coming up to face and you can't take practice time away from me and I'm working hard and that kinda attitude is what I think you can get outta that. And if, if it's out of fear of the coach then it loses that effect and, just as a player you see that and you see through it, and you know, running lines doesn't motivate you. It gets to the point where you're doing the physical work and hating the physical work, as opposed to athletes who enjoy physical work. It's the same kinda idea that, if, if training is a punishment then how do you get them to do training as something that they need to be able to enjoy and do well. Same kinda idea. Plus, I think, there's a real lack of consistency in that, 'cause a lot of times I would, as a player, we could come into a practice and know by the mood of the coach, or even by the way we played the weekend before, that we'd spend the whole practice just running, no matter what we did. And there's a real danger of that too when you're use those kinds of punishments as, it just loses its effect. So, I guess that's one of the upsides of having played a lot is that you see that side of the coin, and coaches that haven't played and experienced that, and they see people working athletes really hard and think that's the way its got to be done; is one aspect that it helps to have played. Not that you have to have played to coach, but it's one of the areas that it has helped me, anyway, and I think in the

long run that this'll be more effective, and at this point, on a day to day basis, maybe not, but I think they'll learn more down the road.

Interviewer: So you think, short term maybe the [Coach: for sure] being aggressive, that sort of thing?

Coach: For sure. Oh yeah, oh yeah. You get the response out of them. Especially with a coach that they're not used to. They want to impress and they wanta be liked and if I'm pissed off at them I know they'll react and play well, but, I think down the road, especially if I stay with this group of athletes for another two summers, um, I think down the road, I'll lose them if I use that approach, just like some of my coaches lost our teams down the road.

#### Team Conduct - Process, Not Outcome Combined with Respect

The beliefs this coach had regarding the conduct of the team on and off the court is the next area I wish to describe. His actions in this area were not often overt. However, he did mention team conduct at the very first meeting, stating that he expected them to respect and to take care of the facility they were practicing in, to be responsible (e.g., by keeping the showers and washrooms clean), and to listen to the school caretaker and do what he said. What this coach did that was most notable from my point of view regarding the expected conduct for the team was to set a good example himself. He always acted in a manner that was calm, confident and very composed (self-possessed and relaxed). He paid attention to what was in his control (for example, no yelling at referees). He practiced what O'Toole (1995)



believes to be a requirement of leadership. He listened carefully to what the players said they needed and wanted, responded thoughtfully, and engaged them in the process because they had been given what they craved: respect. This does not mean that he was all over the map trying to please each player on the team. Rather, his actions were based with the whole team in mind. The following is an example of his reaction to a player who wants to play but who has not been practicing:

Coach: And as I walked over, the guy who's been the biggest disappointment is . . . he's supposed to be one of our captains, and he's been struggling through that whole playing, not playing, shoulder injury, not a shoulder injury, and he's asking, he was doing the "put me in coach, I'm ready. Put me in." I just kinda looked at him and [facial expression], and then when [the assistant coach] didn't put him into the one game, he gave out the old sigh and, "Ah, [@\$%]" Can I say that on your tape?

This coach's actions agreed with his beliefs in that he kept the whole team in mind and was conscious about the message that his actions would send, and he also respected the individual player enough to talk to him about his reasoning process later on.

This player was also involved in an incident that forced the coach to take action:

Coach: We had a little incident there with . . . um, yelling some derogatory comments that, he was, you know he was pumped up and he was, pissed off and frustrated but, they were really derogatory towards the Quebec players and ah, it was heard by a

lot of people in the gym, including the Quebec coaches, and they were really upset and, I think . . . put me in a position where I had to, ah, had to do something, I couldn't just let it go. So I sat him for that last game, but I think that really hurt us, at the start of it. We lost 4 or 5 points where we weren't even passing the ball onto the net, and they were serving the ball to . . . who was replacing . . . but, I wasn't going to make the change to put him back. And ah, not so much teaching . . . a lesson 'cause I know, he's not that behaviour of kid like, he's a good kid, with really good intentions, and he was frustrated at the moment. I just wanted to draw across the point that, above all else, we play as hard as we can, and play with class and, you know, we don't lose our composure as a team and, that's what all our team meetings afterwards and stuff were about was the kind of ethic we want and the kind of team we want to be over the next two years. That it should be a classy team and a hard working team and the things that we want to be known for. And ah, we don't want any of those to be negative.

Interviewer: Anything else you can think of?

Coach. No. I mean we had some incidents that I didn't like but, it was fatigue and frustration, and as long as the guys learn from that, that, I mean . . . will never forget that, it'll change the way he plays, 'cause he takes those things to heart and, he was feeling pretty bad.

Interviewer: Yeah, I noticed he came and talked to you again

afterwards so

Coach: A few times. . . he was a little sheepish [laughs].

I think this incident demonstrates admirably that this coach respected his athletes. It would have been very easy for him to 'hang this player out to dry', but he did not do this. Instead, he treated the player with respect, and listened to him when he came to talk to him. Furthermore, the fact that the player voluntarily came to talk to the coach shows respect by the player, so this 'incident' also ties in with the coach's belief that the entire program should be based on mutual respect.

#### Base Playing Time on Asked For Improvements

This coach's stated beliefs about playing time for the athletes were also carried out through his actions. He started the summer by stating that matches were "an opportunity to give everybody a chance to play." Eventually, at the end of the summer, the attitude was one of "we're not going to put guys in just to give them floor time, it's gonna be because we feel they're gonna do a better job than whoever's out there." To determine if this was the case, I analyzed the amount of time each player was on the court from a practice match and a competition match point of view. I did this by averaging the number of points played in each game of a match, and then determined the number of points that each player had been on the court for each game. (e.g., game scores were 15-5, 15-10 and 15-0. This means that there were 60 points scored in the whole match, averaging 20 points each game. If a player played for a total of 10 points in each game, then he played 50% of this match.) Analyzing the previous matches played during the summer, the amount of playing time for an individual player ranged from 70% to 22% (See

Appendix C), whereas the range at the tournament in Sherbrooke went from 99% to 1% (See Appendix D). I think this shows that the coach attempted to give opportunities to all of his players during the practice portion of the summer, but went with the players he felt could get the job done during the actual tournament. Also, the order of the players receiving the most playing time during the practice matches was somewhat different than during the actual competitive matches. Although the starting players still received more playing time during practice matches, there was still some shuffling done at the competitive matches, implying that the coach felt that certain players were performing better during the competition than they had in practice, and therefore they received more playing time.

### **Deviations**

This section was included to discuss deviations between stated plans and actual actions to see if there were any situational considerations that arose, or did the coach actually apply his articulated beliefs consistently. This section is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all the changes the coach made during the data collection, but rather as a method to present examples that are representative of the types of changes that he made. As suggested by the heading, deviations, or changes, from the stated will be the focus.

There were three types of changes that occurred during the summer. The first changes were those that the coach made because he felt he had made a mistake. He had either forgotten something that he normally would have included, or he had included something that was 'unrelated' and wanted to leave it for another time. These changes were subtle, and were not likely noticeable to the players or anyone else watching unless, like me, they had a

copy of the practice plan. He explained these changes by stating:

Well, there were things that we did different from what I had planned, but I'm like that. Out of the things that I write down and plan, I get out there and stand there, and just as I'm about to do it I kinda go "Ahh, that's not going to work".

The second type of change that this coach engaged in was related to time, or rather, lack of time. This happened twice over the summer, which I think is remarkable because I almost always run out of time every time I have a practice. However, I do not think of this as a major change, but rather a difference in planning strategies. This coach like to plan on finishing what he has set out to do, I like to always have 'extra' things available in case things go exceedingly well.

The changes that occurred that are most significant are the ones where practice deviated in a way that was definitely noticeable to players and spectators alike. Changes of this nature occurred three times during the summer.

The first major change took place on July 9. The coach was not satisfied with the way the team was practicing; he felt they were not 'mentally prepared' and told them so. Then he changed the practice and incorporated a 'scramble drill' to try to wake them up and get them to be more aggressive; to actually be focussed on what they were doing, and not just going through the motions.

The second major change occurred on July 10. The team was again performing in a sloppy manner, so the coach brought them in and 'bagged' the practice. During this time he mentioned to the team that "we're getting

worse, not better" and "we want to train to get better, not worse." It was also mentioned that the team was supposed to 'stay out of the gym' that night and to 'get outside and take a break' so they could be more mentally fresh the next day.

The third major change took place on July 17. Again, the athletes did not seem to be mentally into the practice from the coach's point of view, so he tried a variety of things to try to help his team. His explanation follows:

we kinda struggled through the whole practice and uh,... we tried to use the approach today of ah, showing them we were frustrated, letting them know that they weren't performing, and then trying to find ways to work out of it and um, we stopped a couple of times to talk about it; went out of the gym to talk about it to try and get away from the court situation um.. and then the coaches, we added in a defensive drill to try and, ah, let them touch the ball a little bit more and pick them up a bit with something a little more intense, and it didn't really work [laughter].

Although all three of these changes could be viewed as 'the team is performing poorly I have to do something knee jerk reactions', I do not believe this to be the case. In all three cases, the coach perceived that the players were not 'mentally' prepared; they were not intense, aggressive and competitive, and given this coach's beliefs, he felt that he needed to do something to change this. In every case, though, he did give the players the opportunity to be self-determining. It was only after he felt that they had come up short that the coach made a change. Taken from the perspective of

the NCCP, it would appear that this coach has focussed the majority of his attention on the psychological development of his athletes. However, his approach to this component is not that which is traditionally espoused by the NCCP. This coach does not focus on relaxation or visualization, for example, but rather focuses his attention on intensity, aggressiveness and competitiveness. This deviation from the current curriculum suggests to me that this coach has thought about what he wanted to do, and has developed his own set of foundational beliefs along the way. He has not taken the NCCP at face value, but has adapted it and made it his own.

## Chapter 4: Conclusions and Recommendations

### Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if the coach being studied had some foundational values and beliefs and, if so, did he put these values and beliefs into practice. As well, secondary consideration was given to determining if there were any major situational considerations which might cause the coach to ignore his foundational beliefs (if he had some) or to modify existing ones. This implied that there would be three factors at work: 1) the coach and his foundational beliefs and values, if any, 2) the environment, and any possible situational considerations and, 3) the actions and behaviours of the coach. This study focussed on the relationship between the coach's foundational beliefs and the resultant behaviours and actions. What the coach was trying to accomplish, how the coach was trying to accomplish it and why were the elements of the 'Cascading Multi-level Event Model', which was developed to conceptualize the relationship amongst and between each of the elements over time. The research design used ethnomethodology to unpack the meaning of the coach's words, while still allowing for context. Data collection required the coach to articulate his beliefs, directly and indirectly, and then he was observed to see if, or how, these beliefs manifested themselves. Results suggested that this coach was able to articulate his foundational beliefs, and manifestations of this articulations were found. As stated previously, it was not the intent of this study to pass judgement on any foundational beliefs that were found, but rather to determine if foundational beliefs were present. Finally, deviations from planned actions were noted and investigated to determine if they were



situationally caused, or due to a change in his foundational beliefs.

### **Findings and Conclusions**

The findings are that this coach has some foundational beliefs. These beliefs were articulated by the coach, and then manifested themselves in his actions. For the purpose of this study, what the actual beliefs themselves are is not important. What is important is that they exist and that the coach applies them consistently during training. He did not just apply knowledge that he gained from taking NCCP courses, but rather he developed his own foundational beliefs. I also found no evidence of 'miming' (doing something just because another coach had done it). In fact, I found quite the opposite. This coach, because of some past experiences, made sure that he had well thought out reasons for his actions, and that his actions were consistent with his basic philosophy of the game before he proceeded. The coach stated it as follows:

So, I guess that's one of the upsides of having played a lot is that you see that side of the coin, and coaches that haven't played and experienced that, and they see people working athletes really hard and think that's the way its got to be done; is one aspect that it helps to have played.

While this coach did consistently apply his foundational beliefs, there is some evidence that his beliefs were not necessarily compatible with each other, and may even oppose one another. For example, while intensity, aggressiveness and competitiveness play a major role in this coach's belief about how the game should be played, so does respect. These two foundational beliefs sometime, came in conflict with each other. An

example of this (which was quoted earlier) is when a player became frustrated and unnecessarily aggressive during a match versus Quebec. The player made some derogatory comments toward the team from Quebec, and the coach was put in a position where he had to take action as the concept of being aggressive had crossed the line and was jeopardizing the notion of the team being a 'class act' and showing respect.

### **Recommendations for Sport Administrators**

Currently, there is a National Coaching Certification Council (NCCC) that is in the process of evaluating the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP). They have determined that the current program has been focussed on 'what' coaches should do, and that "there has never been any data collected on what the best coaches are doing and how they are doing it" (Canada's Model Coaches, 1996, p. 2). They have conducted a survey of 'model' coaches (see Appendix E for a listing of qualities displayed by a 'model' coach) to "provide an opportunity for some of Canada's best coaches to describe *how* they coach" (Canada's Model Coaches, 1996, p. 2). By conducting these analyses, they now believe that they can answer "'How can new coaches be *trained* to model these behaviours?'" (Canada's Model Coaches, 1996, p. 2). I am concerned that putting the emphasis on 'how' the best coaches coach will just encourage other coaches to mime them, and that this approach is just replacing 'what' to do when coaching, with 'how' to act when coaching. This approach appears to be very situational. When situation A occurs, coaches are supposed to act according to 'how' they have been taught. But what happens when a situation occurs that has not been covered? To cover this contingency, coaches need to know 'why' they are

acting, and what objectives they are trying to achieve. Coaches need to have their own foundational beliefs, and then they can act accordingly. This research has shown that one coach who has foundational beliefs tends to act in a very consistent manner, mainly because he has a strong belief base from which to work. This strong belief base allows this coach to orchestrate the 'whats' and the 'hows' of his coaching to work together in harmony with his values and beliefs, and situational considerations only become a complementary factor.

As for the NCCP, I think the NCCC is moving in the right direction by analyzing the program, but needs to also help new coaches develop their own foundational beliefs. I believe that this research reinforces the idea that a coach's behaviour is dictated by his foundational beliefs, and if this is true, then the next logical step is to ascertain how these beliefs are developed, and then help new coaches develop their foundational beliefs.

### **Recommendations for Coaches**

My recommendation for coaches is to determine why you want to coach. While I believed this to be true before the start of this study, I am now even more strongly convinced of this. Being able to answer such questions as, "Why are you involved in coaching? What is your purpose in coaching athletes?" is even more important than ever. I believe that taking the time to reflect and determine the answers to these questions will be well worth it, because whether you know it or not, these answers will colour every coaching decision you make. That is because these answers define some of your most basic coaching values. This research indicates that the decisions made by a coach who has strong foundational beliefs can be traced back to the

foundational beliefs and that they influence this coach's actions. Thus, there is a link between foundational beliefs and actions, and if you know your own foundational beliefs, your decisions regarding what actions to take will be based on the beliefs, and you will have a solid foundation from which to operate.

I also realized that if you are able to determine your own foundational beliefs, then you will probably avoid the pitfall of 'miming'. You will not have the desire to blindly copy what another 'successful' coach has done because you will realize that **why** a coach acted in a certain way is much more important than **what** the coach actually did or **how** the action was accomplished.

### **Recommendations for Methodological Improvements**

The first area for improvement concerns the multi-level event framework. This framework was designed to work from a macro level, which might include up to two years in the future, to a micro level, an event specific instance. The problem was not so much with the framework itself, but with the uncertainty of the coach as to his future involvement with the program. As he did not know if he would be involved with the team over the next two years, it was difficult to obtain much information at the macro end of the continuum.

The second problem area concerns the research process itself. My presence affected the coach's behaviour and thoughts and consequently, the data collected. By his own admission, I caused him to engage in 'enforced reflection'. However, it should be noted that this 'enforced reflection' was part of the research design, and we hoped that each of us would improve our

coaching as a result.

Another area for improvement involves the idea of video taping the coach during matches. The idea seemed to make sense at the time, but it proved to be useless because I was unable to get close enough to get the coaches words on tape. The chosen methodology required words and language to be analyzed and, as the video tape provided only visual data, it did not work.

The final area for improvement deals with data collection prior to the season. More insight might have been gained if I had given the coach more time to talk about his philosophy and expand on his ideas.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

- i) This study examined one coach over a short period. Further studies could examine this phenomenon over a longer season, or over several seasons.
- ii) Longitudinal studies could be conducted to determine if a coach's foundational beliefs change, and if so, how and why.
- ii) If, as my research indicates, a coach's behaviour is influenced by his/her foundational beliefs, then the next logical step is to ascertain how these beliefs can be developed. Once this could be determined, then it should be possible to help other coaches develop appropriate foundational beliefs.

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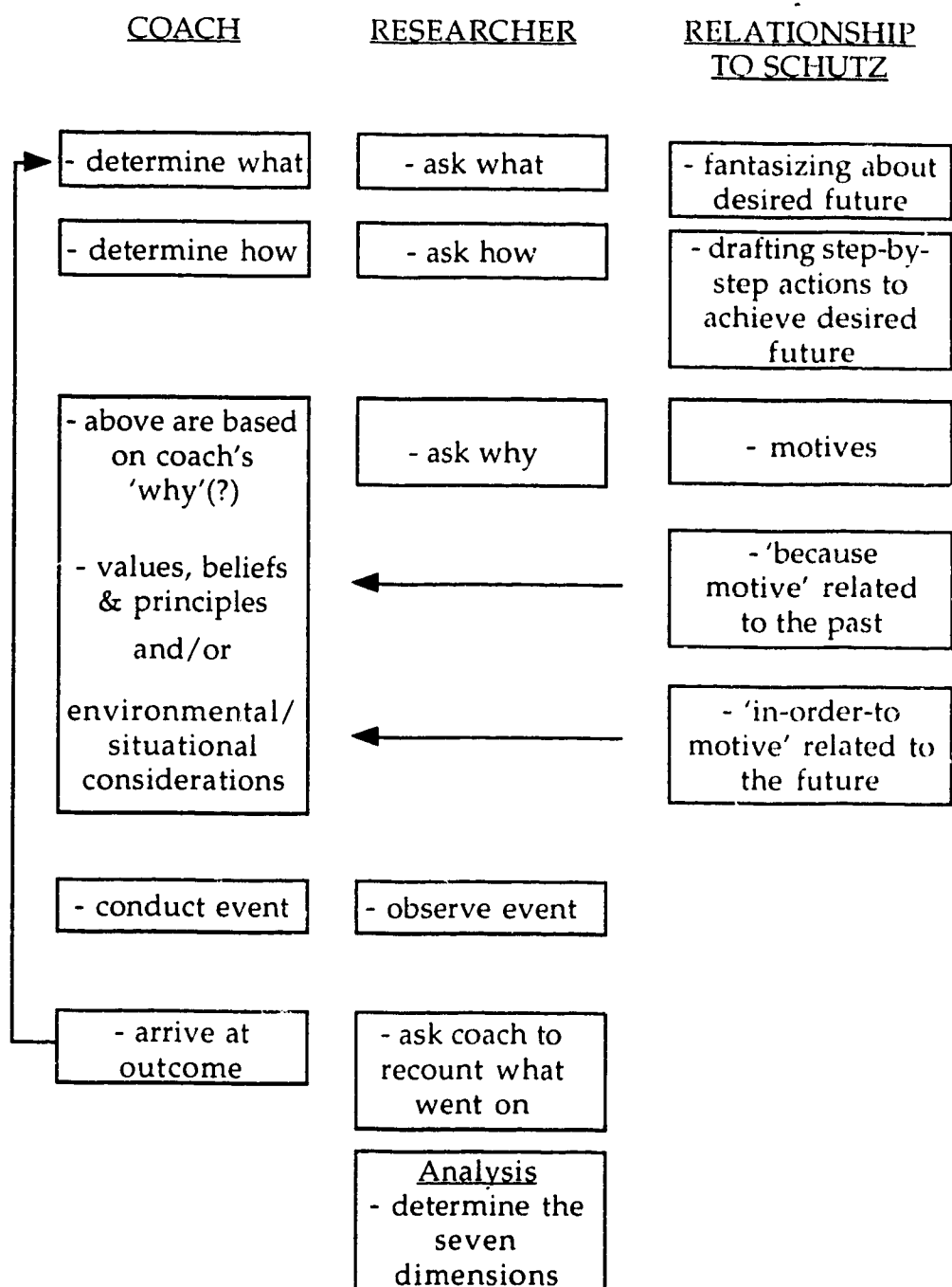
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## APPENDIX A

Daily Activities Chart

## APPENDIX B

### INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH PROJECT: "WHY DOES A COACH COACH THE WAY HE DOES: A CASE STUDY"

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to participate in the research project conducted by Daryl Young and Dr. Barry Mitchelson to describe and analyze the reasoning a coach uses to justify his strategies and behaviors. The research involves an analysis of what the coach is attempting to accomplish, why he is trying to accomplish it, and how he will attempt to accomplish it during the course of the season. To perform this analysis, the researcher will interview the coach extensively, observe the coach and team during practice situations, and video tape the coach and the team during match play.

1. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice.
2. My confidentiality will be guaranteed during both the participation phase and the subsequent publication phase of this study.
3. I understand that should I have any questions related to any part of my participation in this project, my questions will be answered fully and to my total satisfaction by either of the principal investigators.
4. I understand that I shall not receive any direct benefits from my participation in this study. At the conclusion of the study, the results of the research will be made available to the coach, who may request anonymity.
5. I understand that I will spend approximately sixty to ninety minutes a day being interviewed during the duration of the study.

#### SUBJECT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

#### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

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Telephone: Dr. Mitchelson 492-2163      Daryl Young 433-9568

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Match Time Play Analysis

Player #	Cumulative percentage of matches played to July 4	Cumulative percentage of matches played to Jul 11	Cumulative percentage of matches played to Jul 12	Cumulative percentage of matches played to Jul 19
11	100	73	70	70
2	50	61	69	66
5	85	78	69	63
4	50	61	57	57
10	50	47	52	54
7	75	53	52	49
6	31	41	48	48
9	35	34	41	41
8	25	18	23	27
1	25	22	21	26
12	10	20	20	25
3	12	19	16	22
14 <sup>a</sup>	25	22	21	
15 <sup>a</sup>	25	40	36	

<sup>a</sup> Players 14 and 15 were younger players who were brought to this team for two weeks of additional experience.

## Appendix D

### Sherbrooke Time Play Analysis

#	Cumulative percentage of matches played after playing MB	Cumulative percentage of matches played after playing SK	Cumulative percentage of matches played after playing QB	Cumulative percentage of matches played after playing Ont	Cumulative percentage of matches played after playing BC	Cumulative percentage of matches played after playing QB
7	100	97	98	99	99	99
10	100	97	98	99	93	95
2	85	77	87	89	87	85
6	85	81	85	76	76	78
4	70	49	43	46	49	56
5	75	71	54	63	58	55
11	12	7	38	41	43	50
9	55	66	65	61	56	46
12	22	31	18	14	19	18
8	0	14	8	7	10	11
1	0	4	2	2	5	4
3	0	4	2	2	1	1

## Appendix E

### Model Coach Definition

A model coach is one who creates an environment in which

***Athletes would report that***

- they enjoyed being in the coach's program and wanted to return for another season with that coach.
- they learned a lot from the coach, not just skills and strategies of the sport, but also skills that would be helpful in other aspects of their life.
- the coach made them feel confident.

***The parents of the athletes would report that***

- their child enjoyed the program and looked forward to participating in sport.
- their child had the opportunity to develop friendships with other children.
- their child's self-esteem increased.
- their child's skill and fitness level increased.

***The athletes, parents, and program organizers would report that***

- the coach conducts himself/herself in a mature and professional manner.
- the coach has the interests of the athletes as a primary concern.
- the coach is a knowledgeable leader.
- the coach is well organized.
- the coach provides challenging and enjoyable practice sessions.
- the athlete demonstrates respect for each of the athletes being coached.
- the coach is able to communicate well with the athletes.
- the coach provides good corrective instruction.
- the coach is knowledgeable about the sport and about the development of athletes.
- the coach is an exemplary role model.