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News for Swim Parents

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Well-Meaning Parent Fuel Kids' Sense of Entitlement

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[In "The Secrets Of Leadership Are Often Found At The Bottom," SportsBusiness Journal, June 6-12 <http://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com/Journal/Issues/2011/06/06/Opinion/Burton-Oreilly-column.aspx>] Rick Burton and Norm O'Reilly accurately articulated an all-too-familiar sense of entitlement among today's young adults. But that sense of privilege begins much earlier than college years.

As the article points out, their parents are "history's most successful generation," and many of those parents are sincerely determined to see that their offspring are never less than successful at any endeavor – academic, athletic, artistic, and others.

***For some, it may be hard to believe but here's a hard truth:
Entitlement without hard work is a recipe for disaster.***

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For those of us involved in youth sports, it becomes a real dilemma.

In Pop Warner, our rules prevent tryouts, cutting, and require mandatory play, yet, we've been forced to defend lawsuits that, at the most basic level, were filed due to playing time, or lack thereof.

Beyond the tremendous waste of our limited organizational resources defending lawsuits and the threat of suits, we often think of the values that the children are learning.

Instead of the positive values of team sports, they're learning that Mom and Dad will fight their battles and will make any negative situation go away.

What a tremendous disservice to our children!

All of us learn that we win and we lose in life. I'm not a psychologist, but I believe that lesson is most easily and less painfully learned while young. Those of us in the youth sports world will continue to do our best to teach sports' positive values.

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