

THE BEYOND SPORT STORY

Bud

Like many young athletes, Beyond Sport's Founder Troy Lorenson was influenced at an early age by two unique coaches and mentors. The first was his junior high P.E. teacher, Bud Morrison. Bud was also the football and volleyball coach. He recognized that Troy had involved himself with a group of friends that were heading down the wrong path of drugs and alcohol. Bud challenged Troy (while driving him home from a team dinner in his Mini Cooper) to devote himself to sport and find a new team with whom to associate.

At the impressionable age of 13, thinking that Bud “saw something in him”, Troy dove in and spent every spare hour from that day forward training and practicing. Not the best natural athlete, or the most physically gifted, he became captain of the school's volleyball, basketball, and soccer teams, and quarterbacked the football team.

Big Al

Later, in high school, a P.E. teacher and coach named Al Lutz, who was affectionately called “Big Al”, presented a new set of challenges and opportunities to Troy. Big Al’s philosophy was to “create better young men through sport”. Not a unique concept – but he lived it through his personal example.

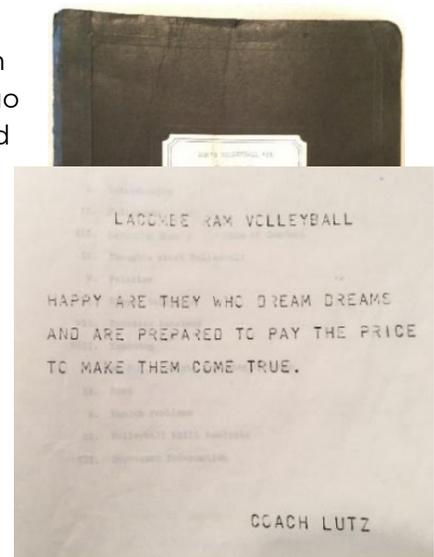
It started with a goal to win a Provincial volleyball championship. Something the school had never done, or even come close to accomplishing. In Big Al’s words, “The school did not have a very proud volleyball tradition.” The football legacy was huge; the volleyball legacy was non-existent. Troy chose to play volleyball, rather than continuing to play football, which turned out to be a great decision.

The Black Book

At the beginning of the volleyball season, Big Al presented each player with a Black Book. It was a manual, for how they would go about reaching their goal. Yes, the Black Book had some X’s and O’s, but more uniquely it laid out a detailed team philosophy, code of conduct, physical training plan, nutrition plan, and so on.

The Black Book provided a system of ideals and beliefs that everyone understood and bound the team together. The following quote was adopted as the team philosophy, and was written on the first page of their Black Books:

“Happy are they who dream dreams and are prepared to pay the price to make them come true.”





The Black Book would be a guide on not only how to play on the court, but also how to conduct themselves off the court. Big Al knew that “athletes could tear down more off the court than they could build on it”. The players bought into the team purpose, and principles completely.

Ram Tough

The team, the Lacombe Rams, was given a motto by Big Al: “Ram Tough”. It was agreed that so long as they put in the effort, dedication and determination required, they would keep this motto as a badge of honour. Troy spray painted this slogan on a large cloth banner on the street beside his house and hung it proudly in the school gym – where it remains today.

This first ever Ram Tough team went undefeated during the season and even challenged some college teams in exhibition play. The offence was complex and took the high school volleyball community by surprise. They went into provincials as the favorite – but one bad morning match and their dreams of a championship came to a halt. A painful lesson on taking an opponent lightly.

The following week, the team lost its captain in a tragic accident. This further solidified the groups bond for life.

The next season, Troy captained the school's first provincial champion volleyball team, was named Outstanding Volleyball Player, Male Student of the Year, and Male Athlete of the Year. Upon graduation, he went on to captain the University of Alberta Golden Bears volleyball team, where he played for five years, was a 2-time MVP and received the U of A President's Trophy for Sports Leadership. Troy was also honored as Valedictorian of the physiotherapy class of 1990.

Beyond Sport

Troy co-owned a volleyball camp business while attending university, called Up With Volleyball. At these camps, young athletes participated in evening classroom sessions where coaches taught some of the valuable principles from the Black Book. This was the initial inspiration for Beyond Sport, which Troy incorporated in 1992, to help student athletes implement principles of success both on and off the court.

To this day, Troy treasures his Black Book and it is displayed proudly on his office bookshelf.

In recent years, he has provided his club and high school teams with similar books to carry on the tradition.