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### PLC Launches Online Recertification Course

January 2009 marks the first session of the PLC Online Recertification Course. After two years, PLC coaches are asked to renew their certification by taking this online course. The course was created in conjunction with the [Satellite Theological Education Program \(STEP\)](#), an outreach program at the University of Notre Dame that offers quality theological education to pastoral ministers and adult Catholics through online courses.



Coaches who participate in this course will navigate through eight training sessions that not only review the material from the original SAM workshop, but offer advanced training in innovative strategies of coaching. Coaches will also have the opportunity to share their ideas and experiences with other participants in the course while being able to learn from others in a discussion board about many issues in youth sports.

Specifically, the program includes introductions to new strategies in:

- FLOW
- mastery-oriented goal-setting
- team-building
- season/practice planning
- Health and Safe Environment

If you attended a previous PLC workshop and you would like to sign-up for this recertification course, [click here](#). There are three sessions remaining in the spring and summer. Registration deadlines are: February 23, April 20, and June 8. Special recognition goes out to the [Los Angeles CYO](#), which will be the first partner to fully participate in this Recertification program.

### PLC Partners with the LA 84 Foundation



Play Like A Champion Today™ and the Los Angeles Catholic Youth Organization have entered an exciting partnership with the LA 84 Foundation to implement the Parent Like A Champion Program for Los Angeles area youth sport parents. With support from LA 84, Los Angeles area parents will be taught how to help their children reap the full benefits of sports participation, while understanding how a parent can most appropriately interact with their young athlete and the sporting community.

The ultimate goal is to foster a collaborative relationship between coaches and parents so that together they support children's character as well as athletic development. The Los Angeles Parent program will officially "Kick-Off" the weekend of April 18, 2009. In addition, the LA 84 Foundation has assisted in the translation of the PLC Parent materials into Spanish.

The LA 84 Foundation is the legacy of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games. Its mission is to serve youth through sport and to increase knowledge of sport and its impact upon people's lives. The Foundation has invested \$175 million in sports programs serving more than two million youth in the eight Southern California counties of Los Angeles, Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Ventura. Its headquarters are located in the historic Britt House near downtown Los Angeles where it houses the world's premier sports library and meeting facilities. The Foundation convenes numerous forums for the exploration of the most pressing issues in sport. For additional information, please visit [www.LA84Foundation.org](http://www.LA84Foundation.org).

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## Letter from the Director

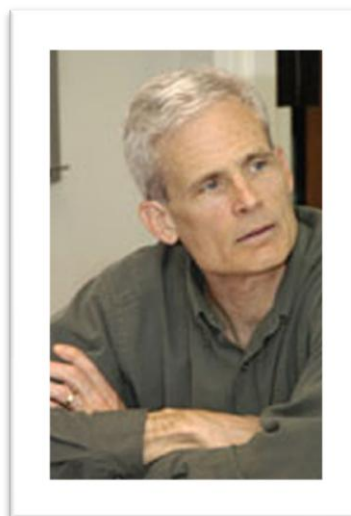
### *PLC Live Workshops vs. PLC on the Web*

**Dr. Clark Power**

As you are aware, PLC now offers an on-line course for coaching recertification. Some of you have asked why PLC does not do what some other national coach education programs have done and offer our basic workshop in an on-line format. We considered this when we were developing the PLC workshops. However, after consulting with experts in distance learning, we decided that a live, interactive workshop was the only responsible way for us to conduct our basic workshop. Why? The experts told us that the live, interactive workshop is ideal while the web-based courses try to recreate the live format as best they can. The experts also told us that distance learning works well for conveying information to highly motivated users. It can be a great tool for informing interested coaches about sport-specific strategies and skills, but it does not work well in addressing controversial or sensitive issues, such as how to distribute playing time or deal with an irate parent. Nor does distance learning allow coaches and parents to communicate directly with others as well as the workshop leaders.

In a recent review of Web-based education, Cook (2007) notes that the very advantages of web-based education are also its shortcomings. Let's consider them briefly. Rowland (2008) lists the following advantages of web-based courses: 1) Low cost and ease of enrollment, 2) Convenience and flexibility, 3) Access for those in remote areas, and 4) Individualized learning. These advantages are offset by the following challenges: 1) Well-designed web-based courses have high start up costs and are expensive to run if the instructors actually interact with the students. Most on-line coaching programs make money by substituting "canned" responses to multiple-choice errors instead of providing direct access to an instructor who can provide individualized feedback. 2) The convenience and flexibility of the course cannot possibly compensate for the fact that most of the coaches who need the basic coaching courses already think that they have nothing to learn from experts or peers. 3) Those in remote areas may have the greatest need to connect with others and exchange ideas. 4) Self-paced, individualized programs cannot build shared values and a sense of local community.

The PLC workshops provide opportunities for small group and large group discussion. The workshop leaders are trained to facilitate



discussions and respond to participants' questions and suggestions. Most importantly, the PLC workshops are designed to build a sense of community around the key moral principles of fairness, shared responsibility, and ownership that define the PLC GROW approach. At PLC workshops, participants discover that the overwhelming majority of coaches and parents favor equal playing-time (85% of coaches), are eager to learn ways of building confidence while teaching fundamentals, and are sick of the lack of civility in the stands and on the sidelines. PLC workshops build relationships that translate into action. Once coaches and parents look around and discover that they are not alone in their desire to transform the culture of youth sport, they no longer tolerate the abuses that leave so many children on the bench or drive children out of sports altogether.

That being said, PLC is proud of its first on-line course and hopes to provide others. The majority of the participants in our workshops (60%) indicate that they would be interested in attending an advanced workshop, suggesting that participants in our online recertification course will be self-motivated to learn more about the PLC coaching philosophy. In addition, an important part of the course involves interaction between participants and the PLC staff through a discussion board. We have built this course using the latest research in online learning, but we do not consider it a substitute for the original PLC workshop. Let us resist the temptation to substitute ease for effectiveness and continue to reach out to the coaches and parents who need the warmth of our smiles and wisdom of our words.

## Partner Profile: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

By Tim Fletcher, OLMC Director of Sports Ministry

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish and School are proud to be a PLC partner. In the fall of 2006 OLMC decided make a few changes to its sports department. Part of the changes included partnering with the PLC team to transform a sports department into a sports ministry.

This uniquely busy parish, lead by Father Richard Doerr, wanted to take the sports department into a more faith filled direction. Father Doerr hired a new athletic director and made it clear that the sports program would be run as a ministry. With a new athletic director and a new vision, the sports ministry needed an anchor to begin renewing. This anchor came to OLMC through Clark Power and the Play Like A Champion Today™ sports ministry program.

As a new athletic director, I knew that the challenge of shaping a sports culture in the middle of a sports crazy city would be difficult. PLC helped me meet this challenge with real solutions and resources that make clear statements about what's right in the world of youth sports. The coach's and parents' manuals outline what we all need to know and understand. Presenting the workshops gave me a chance to launch and communicate our renewed mission. I was able to communicate to the parents the expectations that we all wanted and needed.

Along with the adoption of PLC, I can honestly say that the successes at OLMC come from true understanding that being a Catholic sports program means that we have a real Catholic identity.

In my first year, I took a look at every aspect of the sports program and decided to approach it with prayer and discernment. With the help of my council, we renewed our sports handbook, webpage, and policies. I asked

Christ to be at the center of each document, rule, policy, webpage, form, email, phone call, and anything else that came from the sports office. I knew that if the sports program was grounded in Christian principles the parents that coach and children that play would be the real instruments of positive change.

One concern that my coaches and parents expressed was that PLC would fade away in time and that the energy and attitude would change after the initial implementation. For this concern, I point to the third component of the PLC GROW model. Ownership is a big part of what is needed for sustained change. I invite all families at OLMC to be part of this process and make certain to explain that all the incredible volunteers are what make up the heart of our special community. I am honored to say that we have found great success implementing PLC and its philosophies. This success shows itself through our assessments and continued participant growth. I continue to pray that OLMC will shape our young athletes in a positive way. God Bless, Tim Fletcher



## Champions Are Born!



**Holt William Record** was born at 5:02 am on Wednesday, February 4 to proud parents, Brooke and Lon Record. He weighed in at a whopping 6 lbs 8 oz and measured in at 20 1/2 inches. **Brooke Crawford Record** is a pioneer of the Sports as Ministry Initiative working with Clark Power beginning in 2005 to develop the original PLC Coach Workshop. Brooke also spearheaded the creation of PLC's "Coaching for Character" program for use in recreational leagues.

Brooke lives in the Philadelphia area with her new family where she coaches Lacrosse and works with the Academy of Notre Dame. Brooke continues to serve as a consultant for PLC. We are thrilled to welcome baby Holt to the PLC family!

**Tynan Alexander Mathias Latvala** entered the world on January 5. Proud parents are Tauno and Heather Latvala. Tauno is the Director of the CYO in the Archdiocese of Seattle. Tynan weighed in at 8lbs 8oz and was 20 inches long with healthy lungs to keep mom and dad on their toes! Big brothers Tahvo and Torin are thrilled to have a new member on their family team. Welcome to the world Baby Tynan!



## Hot Issues in Sports:

### *The Implications of Using Performance Enhancing Drugs*

A [study](#) conducted by the Department of Health and Exercise Science at the College of New Jersey led by Dr. Jay Hoffman in 2007, showed that 1.6% (2.4% males and 0.8% females) of the athletes they surveyed reported the use of anabolic steroids, while 72.1% admitted the use of at least one supplement (protein powder, multivitamins, and high-energy drinks). The most striking finding of this study may be that approximately 6% of male 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported anabolic steroid use while only 1% of the 9<sup>th</sup> graders reported such use. In other words, “reliance on nutritional supplements increases as adolescents mature.” This calls for the involvement of teachers, coaches, parents and physicians in the education of adolescent athletes about the implications of steroid use.

Studies have clearly shown the negative effects on a person’s physical and psychological health. Use of anabolic steroids by adolescents can cause premature puberty leading to short stature, acne, testicular atrophy, breast enlargement in males, excess facial hair and the increased risk of heart attack and liver damage. Also, the psychological effects include chronic aggression or depression and the increased risk of suicide.

However, arguments that emphasize the physical riskiness of the use of banned substances often fall on deaf ears because high performing athletes willingly take risks to excel at their sport. A far more compelling argument for refusing to take banned substances is a moral argument that taking such substances gives one an unfair advantage over others. In the Hoffman study, the majority of the steroid users (60%) felt that taking steroids was not cheating. If athletes do not see steroid use as cheating, then they will be more inclined to risk hurting themselves to win.

Coaches should address this issue in the context of a team meeting as well as in one-on-one conversations. When doing so, be sure to touch upon the moral implications as well as the personal health risks. If you address only the physical and psychological effects of steroid use, then athletes may only be motivated by fear of personal harm. Although this may be a good reason, true Champions are motivated to serve others rather than themselves. Remind the athletes of the values of fair play and competition (i.e. “competing with”). These are the fundamentals to becoming a true Champion.

To comment on our blog, visit:

<http://www.playlikeachampioneducationalseries.blogspot.com/>

## Mark your Calendars!

### ***PLC Leadership Conference, June 26-28, 2009***

Registration is now open for the [2009 PLC Sports Leadership Conference](#)! Act fast because space is limited. Join current PLC partners, coaches, athletic directors, and league administrators from all across the United States and Canada for professional development and training in PLC’s programs. You will have the chance to experience seminars with PLC Staff, ND coaches, professors, and inspirational athletes such as Frank Robinson and more.

For more information or to register:

[www.playlikeachampion.org/events/conference.html](http://www.playlikeachampion.org/events/conference.html)



### ***NCEA Convention, April 14-16, 2009***

In April 2009, the PLC team will be presenting at the [NCEA Convention](#) in Anaheim, California to representatives of Catholic schools in the United States about the Sports as Ministry Initiative. If you plan on attending the NCEA Convention, look for our presentation on Thursday, April 16.