

ATTITUDE OF A CHAMPION

Every young man possesses an interest in athletic competition dreams of becoming a champion. For many, dreaming is the extent of their efforts. Others are willing to go part way, but only those who have the desire and courage to do everything within their power to fully utilize their God-given ability will ever reach the height of a champion. The road to a championship is long and hard, but possible by those who are willing to accept the challenge. If we are to accept this challenge, we must develop the following ATTITUDE FACTORS, which are common to all true champions.

1. DESIRE -Desire is the most important single characteristic to the success of a football player. Most of the following factors can be developed, providing the desire is great enough. There is no substitute – you must love to play football and possess the desire to become the best in the game.
2. COURAGE -Many great champions have achieved their success primarily because of courage – courage to overcome any obstacle, regardless of the sacrifice involved. We may meet teams with bigger lines and faster backs, but we must promise ourselves that we will never meet a more courageous team.

ANYONE CAN BE ORDINARY, BUT IT TAKES COURAGE TO EXCEL!

3. AGGRESSIVENESS -At least 50% of our success in football can be attributed to your desire, courage and aggressiveness. The biggest and fastest football team will fail if they lack aggressiveness. Football is a sport where you will either hit or be hit. We are looking for the men who hit and enjoy hitting.

As a candidate for the team, it will be to your advantage to demonstrate aggressiveness from the moment you report for practice. If you possess this quality, you can become a fine football player. Without it, you are wasting your time.

4. PRIDE -Pride refers not only to personal pride, but pride in your team, school, family and community as well. Personal pride does not consist of telling everyone how great you are, but involves caring for personal appearance, practicing good health habits, maintaining high moral standards and conforming to rules of etiquette, so that your total behavior will COMMAND the RESPECT of OTHERS.

When you make the commitment to play for the UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI, you are no longer representing only yourself, but you are a member of a team representing your school and community. Conduct yourself in such a manner that they can be proud of you, and you can be proud of yourself.

Another aspect of pride is pride in your position on the football team. If you are a tackle, you should be proud of being a tackle and continually strive to become the very best at your position. Every time you make a block or tackle, it must be better than the time before. Never be satisfied to remain the same – work to improve.

5. COOPERATION There is no job in the world which permits you to have unrestricted expression of your own wishes. In all jobs, in all associations and in all games, you must learn to give a little personal feeling for the cause of the group. Cooperation in football refers to the willingness of each man to play in the position assigned to him and to perform the duties of that position to the very best of his ability.

If you feel things are not going right for you, do not air your troubles among your fellow players. Come directly to one of the coaches and talk frankly about your problem; but first let me urge you to analyze yourself carefully. It is a good habit – develop it early in life.

6. RELIABILITY Reliability is a must in athletics. Our success may hinge on how well you discharge your responsibilities. We must all strive to perform every duty assigned to us in the most sincere and reliable fashion humanly possible. Do a thorough job of everything asked of you in football, and you will be cultivating a characteristic which will forever stand you in good stead.

7. CONFIDENCE Every great athlete and every great team possesses the mental attitude of confidence. Confidence is not complacency, but is that quality which stirs within you the feeling that you are superior to your opponent and wish the proper effort you will win. Confidence does not just happen – it must be earned. It is the product of rigid training and conditioning, long hours on the practice field and conforming to everyday standards of a champion.

8. DISCIPLINE Discipline is a factor which goes right along with cooperation. Discipline includes not only strict adherence to training rules, but also the acceptance of criticism from coaches, the acceptance of hard work in practice, and willingness to follow the leadership of coaches and captains.

Many players resent comment and criticism from their coaches because they fail to understand the reason. If you are criticized, it is because you are considered a part of the team. The coaches see in you the ability, which is not taking expression, and it is hoped that it can be brought to full functional capacity. It is the coaches' wish to help you bring out your best. Really, everyone is working for a common goal, a winning team for the UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI.

You will be a much better football player if training rules are observed. Any man who does not live up to them is unfair to his school, his teammates, and above all, he is unfair to himself.

Discipline yourselves to follow rules, carry out assignments and follow leadership of your coaches and captains. Make the necessary sacrifices and develop these qualities we have been discussing. You will find the result of your efforts of lasting value and great satisfaction. Make your football experience worthwhile and enjoyable by doing it RIGHT.

LAW OF THE JUNGLE

*Now this is the law of the jungle
As old and as true as the sky;
And the wolf that shall keep it may prosper,
But the wolf that shall break it must die.*

*As the creeper that girdles the tree trunk
The law runneth forward and back--
FOR THE STRENGTH OF THE PACK IS THE WOLF,
AND THE STRENGTH OF THE WOLF IS THE PACK.*

by RUDYARD KIPLING