

Hudson coaches and athletes on gender differences in sports

by sophomore Kylee Sallee

While some may think girls and boys are coached differently because of their gender, Hudson coaches disagree. To them, it's less about the athlete's gender and more about the individual.

"It comes to the coach knowing the athlete(s)- what works and what does not work for each person or team," said head coach of the boys track team, Blaire Puls.

While some may think

coaches yield to the stereotype of being more gentle when coaching girls, Jeff Curley disagrees.

Curley, who coaches girls basketball and softball, as well as girls and boys golf, believes some individuals need to be pushed harder and talked to in a more stern voice, while others respond to a different approach.

Boys basketball head coach Sean Leonard, who has also coached girls basketball, agrees coaching is less based on gender and more by the athlete, no matter the gender.

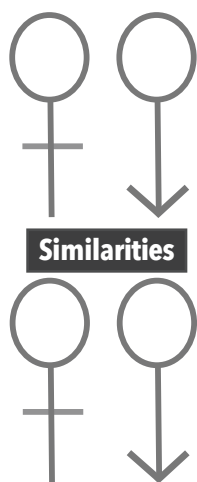
"You have to know who your players are," said Leonard, "whether it is a boy or a girl."



photos by junior Tara Jochumsen

Junior Morgan Hansen and senior Alan Jackson run the open 800 meter dash at state last spring.

The way we see it: Athletes share views on equality in sports



Similarities

Off-Season Opportunities:

- Both genders feel there are many opportunities that coaches have for their athletes out of season. Some are out of season leagues or even just simple open gyms.

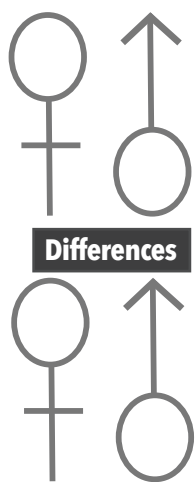
Practices:

- The average practice for boy and girl athletes is 1.5-2 hours.
- "We begin with shooting drills, then scrimmage, and end with conditioning."

- sophomore Jessica Carolan

- "We start with shooting drills, and then we scrimmage at the end."

- sophomore Bryce Griffin



Differences

Focus:

- 100% of the girl athletes polled admitted that they get off task during practice.
- 25% of the boy athletes polled admitted that they get off task during practice.

Conditioning:

- "We condition a lot. (Our soccer coach) wants us to be the best conditioned team, so we run a lot."

- junior Maddie McKenna

- "We don't condition at all because (our soccer coach) believes that soccer is already running, so we don't [take time to] condition."

- junior Payton Stuart

Crack of the Bats | In the fall of 2018, the Hudson Athletic Booster Club approved an indoor batting cage for the girls softball and boys baseball teams. "I am excited for the new batting cage because it will really benefit us when we are getting more batting reps in during the off-season," said sophomore Jada Gaskill. The set up and final look of the new batting cage is pictured right.



photo by baseball head coach Joe Bahnsen

From a female athlete's perspective

by sophomore Hannah Tjepkes

If your coach told you that you needed to try harder, would you get upset, or would be fueled to prove them wrong? I know my answer to these questions, but perhaps the answers of the guys are different.

In the sports world, you hear arguments about whether males and females should be coached differently. To me, the answer is plainly: yes. Why? Simply put- it's not a matter of whether we should be coached different, it's a matter of

who we are. We are different.

"With female teams, there's more of a 'work together or it doesn't work' mentality. They often play down personal successes to avoid making teammates feel insecure or envious."

Team chemistry is one big difference between girls and boys sports. Typically, girls teams realize the importance of team bonding. If it isn't there, the team might struggle in games and practices. It is essential for girls to feel support from each

other out of the game, so they can succeed in it. As a result, you'll notice female sports teams dedicate as much time to team bonding as they do to practice. Rarely will a week go by without a group dinner or a movie night.

Boys, on the other hand, have a "survival of the fittest" mentality- you either step up or get stepped over. The word 'teammate' is more valued in boys sports than 'friends'. That's just how it is. Often times, the older you are, the more you lead. The

older male athletes are expected to outrun, out skill, and outplay the others as if a trophy depended on it. When was the last time you saw a guys team bonding outside of practice? Just saying. Silent admiration of others' skills is what unites them as a team. There is no downplaying success here- they're in it to win it.

"When was the last time you saw a guys team bonding outside of practice? Just saying."

Another difference between male and female athletes is the way they respond to coaching. For girls, when coaches give out criticism, often to the entire team, female athletes tend to take it personally and beat ourselves up. We can become down on ourselves, because we feel as if we have disappointed the coach in a way. For some female athletes, that feeling is unbearable, ending confidence and even some athletic careers.

Male athletes take criticism differently. Often, coaches give out criticism to guys specifically by name. In response, the male athlete will then try to prove the coaches wrong, showing defiance to win the coach's approval and solidify the admiration of teammates.

My point: It's OK for male and female athletes to be coached differently. In fact, I don't see how we can be coached the same, because we aren't the same. It's not discrimination or gender stereotypes, it's good coaching and common sense.