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Academic versus popular press perspectives in sport leadership: a comparative analysis

Frank Spina

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Academic versus Popular Press Perspectives in Sport Leadership

A Comparative Analysis

by

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Senior Project

Jepson School of Leadership Studies

University of Richmond

April, 1996
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April 15, 1996
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Introduction

Athletic competition has been an increasingly integral part of society for the better part of three millennia. Beginning with the dawn of the ancient Olympics, sports have remained a highly valued component of all cultures in forms as different as the Medieval Tournament and the World Series. The role such competition plays has also taken on varying forms including sanctioned violence, alternative entertainment, spectatorism, and exercise, and has ultimately evolved into the current status of sports as a multi-billion dollar industry. Surely this popularity of professional competition is indicative of the powerful impact of sports on modern life: "few phenomena in contemporary society touch as many people, both vicariously and directly, as does sport" (Smith and Smoll, 1978). In sport we are awed by the beauty and grace of the athlete, as well as his strength and determination, and we can identify with the struggle for victory inherent in all competition. In participating in athletic activities the individual fulfills the need for achievement and is pleased when goals are attained. In observing sport, the spectator also gains by emulating these athletes that "epitomize the human pursuit and achievement for excellence" (Hemphill, 1995).

The study of leadership has increasingly become a major interest amongst scholars in several fields associated with behavioral and social science. The aim of understanding leadership is that being a phenomenon that transcends much of human existence, its theories can be applied in many realms, thereby promoting systematic ways of understanding various institutions of society. Despite having its
origin in this century, the field has become widely accepted such that "few would deny that leadership is of great practical significance in the effective functioning of social groups" (Smoll and Smith, 1989). A Rauch and Behling (1984) definition of leadership is "the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement" (Yukl, 1994). This "process" has, and will continue to be, the object of much scrutiny as we seek the answers as to how best reach our established objectives in every facet of life.

Although having relatively little conclusive research to date, the study of leadership within the sports context seems an almost natural endeavor. In a study of leader behaviors, Fry, Kerr, and Lee (1986) wrote "the arena of organized sports holds a number of advantages with respect to research on organizational performance and the satisfaction of organizational members" (Fry, Kerr, and Lee, 1986). Within the inherent nature of competition is the existence of a pragmatic, well-defined goal. While we may participate in athletics simply for exercise or enjoyment purposes, the object of every game is to win; as legendary football coach Vince Lombardi’s saying goes, "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing." Teams striving to win appear to be quintessentially organized groups with common goals. Furthermore, the interaction amongst team members must be organized in some particular fashion through a formulated means in order to induce that goal achievement. Measuring the performance and leader effect within the team setting is made easier by the consistency of many intervening variables within the sample: Not only are data and data collection methods standardized, but team size, shape, rules, position descriptions, job-related terminology, and game schedules are nearly
identical in most sports to help to assure that goal difficulty for each organization (team) will be nearly equal (Fry, Kerr, and Lee, 1986).

It has also been speculated that those leadership findings in studies concerning sports may be applied elsewhere: "any insight gained regarding leadership in athletics may also be profitably used in other settings" (Chelladurai, 1984).

Much of the current research in sport leadership also has found that although leadership is derived from various sources in differing situations and at different levels, the coach remains the legitimate team leader (Case, 1987). The role of the coach/leader has added to the validity of sport leadership studies, in that his or her behavior can be closely monitored, accurately recorded, and has often proven a causal variable in player/follower response. Thus, it is the coaches who are central to the application of leadership in athletics as their interaction with their players is the force which organizes a team toward its goals. Therefore, it must be determined through comparison of leadership models with empirical data and experiential approaches of successful coaches what behavior is most effective in various situations.
Part I: Academic Perspectives of Sport Leadership

The Multidimensional Model

The earliest studies of leadership within athletics somewhat mirrored those preliminary theories that leadership itself was first believed to hinge on. Much like the "trait" theory and "great man" theory, coaches' effectiveness was determined by the host of traits and behaviors that were believed to cause certain success and failure. Such studies were deemed inconclusive, as the leadership theories themselves, and soon gave way to a more empirical trend in sport leadership research which aimed at assessing perceived behavior and preferred behavior, and depended not only on the coach's self-reporting system, but began incorporating the player's role as well. Chelladurai, et.al. (1978), made "a major breakthrough in sport leadership research theory" (Maby and Brady, 1996) by developing the Multidimensional Model of Leadership. This model has been refined from its original form, but currently remains the major paradigm in sport leadership.

The multidimensional model was the result of research by Chelladurai and Haggerty (1978) who had begun research for an alternative to the management science models that were the basis for research in the late 1960s and early 1970's. These early models "began to focus on the situational aspects of leadership and postulated that the most effective way to lead depended on the leadership style required for a given situation" (Maby and Brady, 1996). Based on the earlier work of Vroom and Yetton (1973), the
first proposal was a normative model "focused on the extent of participation in decision making preferred by athletes and/or allowed by coaches in varying situations" (Chelladurai, 1990). The situations were described via a combination of seven attributes including time pressure, problem complexity, and coach's power base, and the decision styles included autocratic, democratic, consultative, delegative, and variations thereof. Research questions put to the coaches and players alike found that the situation, not the individual, usually governed decision style, that the autocratic style was used as frequently as the democratic style, and that the delegative style of decision making had no place in sport leadership.

Stemming from the normative model, the multidimensional model (Figure 1) makes the athlete (member) an integral part of the leadership equation. It is essentially a combination of the leader, follower, and situation characteristics in conjunction with the leader style such that "group performance and member satisfaction are considered to be a function of the congruence among three states of leader behavior - required, preferred and actual" (Chelladurai, 1990). As seen within the model, the leader is required to coach in certain fashion based on the situational characteristics (e.g. time pressure, score) as well as the member characteristics (e.g. skill level, receptiveness). The preferred behavior is influenced again by the situation, but more significantly by the personality of the athletes (e.g. need for achievement, need for affiliation, cognitive structure, and competence). The actual leadership behavior then becomes a function of the leader's own personality traits and the forces of the required and preferred behaviors; "for instance, the differing goals of
Fig. 1 - The multidimensional model of leadership.
a professional sports team and a high school team would require the respective coaches to exhibit different leadership behaviors. . . .

[and] the athletes in the above two settings would prefer differing leader behaviors" (Chelladurai, 1990).

The degree to which the three functions of leader behavior can be satisfied will then determine the overall performance and satisfaction of the model. Chelladurai and Carron (1978) noted that member performance and satisfaction were interdependent: "Insofar as the subordinates (athletes) are oriented toward task accomplishment and insofar as the leader (coach) meets these preferences both satisfaction and performance are enhanced" (Chelladurai, 1990). The underlying notion then of the multidimensional model is that players will reach peak performance simultaneously with complete satisfaction in their coach's style, and therefore the coach must remain informed as to how to make his players content.

The multidimensional model soon led to the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) which was designed by Chelladurai and Saleh, (1980) to aid in validating further sports leadership studies. It was created through an extensive system of surveys physical education students until an original pool of 99 items was reduced to five dimensions of leader behavior which are most prevalent amongst coaches. The dimensions include training and instruction, democratic behavior, autocratic behavior, social support, and positive feedback, and each is briefly described in Figure 2. The researchers noted that "training and instruction focused on the task while social support and positive feedback related to motivational aspects, and democratic and
autocratic behaviors referred to the decision style choices of the coaches” (Chelladurai, 1990).

**Figure 2.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Dimensions of Leader Behavior in Sports</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dimension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training and Instruction</td>
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<td>Democratic behavior</td>
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<td>Autocratic behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
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<td>Positive feedback</td>
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</table>

From: Chelladurai, 1989

The LSS provides a consistent, reliable, and valid way of assessing leader behavior, and in conjunction with the multidimensional model is considered as having "a major role in advancing the study of leadership in sports" (Dwyer and Fisher, 1990). This is evidenced by the numerous studies and analyses of sport leadership that utilize these two models as their basis. The findings, however, often remain conclusive only within the context of the study. Of these studies with results contradictory to the multidimensional model and LSS there are often instances of discrepancy in perception and satisfaction, which are extremely
individualized and non-standardized criteria. Horne and Carron (1985) in a study of coach-athlete compatibility "found that coaches rated themselves higher on training and instruction, democratic behavior, social support, and positive feedback than did their athletes" (Chelladurai, 1990). In one study of basketball, track and field, and wrestling participants Chelladurai (1984) found that "discrepancies in training and instruction and positive feedback were the most common dimensions of leader behavior affecting the athletes' satisfaction" while Schliesman's (1987) study of college track and field athletes found that "perceived democratic behavior and social support were slightly better predictors of satisfaction with general leadership" (Chelladurai, 1990).

There nonetheless remains a significant amount of research that has successfully concluded that these models are in fact valuable tools in assessing and predicting coaching behavior versus athlete performance based on many given variables. The most notable of these studies are summarized in Figure 3.

Coaching Behavior Assessment System

A contemporary approach to the multidimensional model was the collaboration of Smith, Smoll and their colleagues over a span of several years beginning in 1979. This research was based on the Coaching Behavior Assessment System (CBAS), and its primary objective was to "assess and code coaches' behaviors, train the coaches to improve their behaviors, and measure the effects of these changes on players' enjoyment and satisfaction" (Chelladurai, 1990).
Figure 3: Summary of research on the multidimensional model of leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Antecedents</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chelladurai (1978)</td>
<td>Member personality (cognitive structure, values), task attributes (competence, dependence)</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
<td>Satisfaction with leadership, Performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiks (1982)</td>
<td>Member sex, Experience, Member perceptions, Goal perceptions, Organizational goals</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Robinson &amp; Carron (1982)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived leadership</td>
<td>Dropping out</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chelladurai &amp; Carron (1986)</td>
<td>Member maturity</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Summers (1983)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived leadership</td>
<td>Athlete satisfaction, Performance</td>
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<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Antecedents</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chelladurai (1984)</td>
<td>Sport type</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
<td>Satisfaction with leadership, Overall involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terry (1984)</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horne &amp; Carron (1985)</td>
<td>Coach status</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
<td>Leadership satisfaction, Coach-player compatibility</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Player status</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gordon (1986)</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Perceived leadership</td>
<td>Performance success</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chelladurai et al. (1983)</td>
<td>Task type</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schlesman (1987)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
<td>Leadership satisfaction, Leadership satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Garland &amp; Bayre (1988)</td>
<td>Member abilities</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chelladurai et al. (1988)</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Preferred leadership</td>
<td>Leadership satisfaction, Personal outcome satisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Multiple studies (Cruz et al., 1987; Horn, 1985; Rejeski, Daracott, and Hutslar, 1979; Smith, Zane, Smoll, and Coppel, 1983) have concluded the high reliability of CBAS in discerning, coding, and scoring various leader patterns and behaviors across different sports (Smoll and Smith, 1989).

The CBAS model is composed such that leader behavior corresponds to one of three dimensions: supportiveness, instructiveness, and punitiveness. The first includes factors of reinforcement and mistake-contingent reinforcement; instructiveness is comprised of general technical instruction and mistake-contingent instruction versus general encouragement and communication, and punitiveness is punishment and punitive technical instruction versus organizational behaviors. These dimensions make CBAS similar to earlier models of behavioral researchers (Fiedler, 1967; Stogdill, 1959) in that "the first two dimensions correspond closely to the classic leadership styles of relationship orientation identified through traditional methods in a wide range of leadership situations" (Smoll and Smith, 1989). The dimensions are subdivided into twelve other specific leader behaviors which are classified as either reactive or spontaneous behaviors. The collected data from each study, based on perceptions and attitudes of both players and coaches, is coded and placed against the CBAS in a format somewhat related to the coding system of the multidimensional model. The results tend to substantiate the heuristic value of model in that those coaching in like situations to those in the conducted research have clear numbers that differentiates between more and less satisfying coach behavior.
The most viable findings of CBAS studies tend to come from the research of sport leadership within the child-athlete setting. Of these, the work of Smith, Smoll, and Curtis (1978) had the greatest effect upon use of the CBAS model within sport leadership. The methodology consisted of collecting interviews and questionnaires from 542 players (ages 8-15 years) and fifty-one coaches assessing the leader's behaviors by determining "what the coaches were doing, what they thought they had done, what the children thought they had done, and how the children felt about the coach, their experience, and about themselves" (Smoll and Smith, 1989). The major conclusion reached within the preliminary study affirmed the hypothesis that coaching can be likened to situational leadership theory and thereby established a paradigm in child coaching: "players responded most favorably to coaches who engaged in higher percentages of supportive and instructional behavior . . . whereas punitive behaviors were negatively related [to attitudes toward the coach]" (Smoll and Smith, 1989). Other findings regarding children's self-esteem levels and their response to coaching showed that supportive or instructive behavior is most effective amongst children of low self esteem, while coaching behaviors in general "had far less impact on high self-esteem children" has been confirmed by further studies (e.g. Swann, Griffin, Predmore, and Gaines, 1987; Tesser and Campbell, 1983) (Smoll and Smith, 1989).
Application of Leadership Theories to Sport

Both the multidimensional and CBAS models have been used extensively in research on sports leadership, and despite slight changes and revisions the two have remained the predominant paradigms that are the basis of such studies. However, there does exist research in the field which applies already established leadership theories to coaching. This area of research has been evolving concurrently with the study of leadership, and has since made some relevant findings. Examples of research which has aimed to specifically locate such theories within sports include Case (1987) and Fry, Kerr, and Lee (1986).

Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (1977) and its application to basketball coaches was the focus of the study "Leadership Behavior in Sport: A Field Test of the Situational Leadership Theory" (Case 1987). The study was conducted using a sample of forty selected successful junior high school, high school, college, and Amateur Athletic Union head basketball coaches and three hundred ninety-nine of their players. The study's purpose was three-fold: to identify the prevalent leadership behaviors amongst coaches using Case's Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ); to find the significant differences and commonalities in initiating structure (task behavior) and consideration (relationship behavior) as practiced by coaches at the different levels; and to interpret the results in terms of the Hersey and Blanchard theory.

The Hersey and Blanchard theory uses follower maturity as the primary variable for leader behavior and basically states that
effective leadership must change as the subordinates mature. This maturity has been defined as "the capacity to set high but attainable goals, willingness and ability to take responsibility, and education and/or experience" (Case 1987) and in this study directly correlates to the level of competition beginning with junior high as the lowest maturity level and ending with the AAU (semi-professional) level. Hersey and Blanchard theorize that "as the level of task-relevant maturity of the followers continues to increase, the leader should begin to lessen task behavior and increase relationship behavior" until the follower matures to an above-average level at which time "leaders should decrease not only task behavior but relationship behavior as well" (Case 1987). The Hersey and Blanchard model is depicted in Figure 4.

The study's first finding was that coaches often do demonstrate the LBDQ traits that had not been delineated by either the multidimensional or CBAS models as sport leadership behavior: "the leadership dimensions of consideration and initiating structure appear to be discernible components of the leadership styles of successful basketball coaches" (Case 1987). The results also showed that there were consistently lower levels of leader task behavior at the junior high and AAU levels, while within the moderate maturity groups there existed an emphasis on task-oriented leadership (Figure 5.) "Furthermore, a consistent pattern for the leadership dimension of consideration was identified for each competitive level which included a high relationship style at the junior high and AAU levels and a low relationship style at the senior high and college levels" (Case 1987) (Figure 6). Although these results are not completely
inconsistent with the situational theory, this study does not support its application to coaching theory.

Another leadership theory that has been researched in athletic settings is the path goal theory. This contingency theory, first developed by House in 1971, incorporates motivational theory and leadership behavior into formula of performance and satisfaction based on the follower's valences of potential outcomes. One such study entitled "Effects of Different Leader Behaviors under Different Levels of Task Interdependence" (1986) was based on the path-goal theory that "under conditions of relative high uncertainty, leader-initiating structure will be motivating and satisfying to subordinates to the extent that it provides clarification of roles and smoothing of paths" (Fry, Kerr, and Lee, 1986). When combined with the belief that high interdependence calls for initiating structure and controlling behavior, the primary hypothesis of this study was that "in high interdependence groups, effective leaders may be more concerned with initiating structure through communicating task-related information, scheduling, and planning" (Fry, Kerr, and Lee, 1986).

The study was applied to athletics, in which not only the leader behavior was assessed, but the interdependency of tasks was easy to identify from sport to sport. The study used data from eight different sports (basketball, ice hockey, football, volleyball, swimming, tennis, track, golf, and wrestling) from fifteen different colleges and one high school involving players from a total of twenty-two teams. The data measured team size, respondent tenure on the team, win/loss ratio, and number of coaches with respect to
the LBDQ XII which was used to measure subordinate perceptions of coaching style. The leadership variables were leader consideration which regards the comfort, well-being, status, and participation of the followers and leader-initiating structure which involves a definite coach role and makes his/her demands well-known. In terms of path-goal theory, supportive and participative leadership can be grouped under leader consideration whereas directive and achievement-oriented leadership are more leader-initiating structure traits.

In short, the findings of this study supported the "robustness of the path-goal theory for leadership" (Fry, Kerr, and Lee, 1986) and its relation to task interdependence. For application in sports leadership it supports the following views:

The relatively autocratic, highly controlling and coordinating styles of successful coaches such as Vince Lombardi, Woody Hayes, John Wooden, and Bobby Knight would be most effective in sports like football and basketball, which depend so much upon coordination and control of highly interdependent activities (Tharp and Gallimore, 1986). . . on the other hand, leaders of teams in sports requiring little interdependence would be more effective when they emphasize leader consideration through counseling, participative, and egalitarian behaviors. (Fry, Kerr, and Lee, 1986)

These findings have therefore indicated that the situation, in this study the type of sport, is the predominant basis of determining what leadership style is most effective.

Analysis of the Academic Approach
The academic approach to sport leadership has undoubtedly produced enough research to justify its use as a means to further study leadership. The multidimensional and CBAS models have laid the foundation upon which future studies may continue to explore the subject, and given the data already compiled it is a safe assumption that those findings will, as Chelladurai predicted, be applicable to leadership in other settings. The major consistency within these studies, however, has not been a predominant style or trend in sport leadership that produces intended results throughout, but rather the notion that "leadership is significant only in the context of the group" (Chelladurai, 1990). Therefore it seems that although athletic competition exists within certain parameters such as the size and structure of teams which make it empirically sound, the current academic approach relies on too many varied contexts to make even general assumptions about sport leadership and its relation to performance.

The shortcomings of the academic approach to sports leadership are similar to those that are at the core of leadership models, specifically contingency based models such as the situational and path-goal theories. Leadership is a living thing and therefore it is difficult, if not impossible to apply across situations; McCall (1977) contends that the endless variables that are associated with the leader, the follower, and the situation "make it impossible to apply complex theories that specify the optimal behavior for every type of situation" (Yukl, 1994). This is also the case in sports. Studies have reported similar findings amongst different sample groups and have made different claims when dealing with the same ones. If the
research is determined test-retest reliable, but remains inconsistent with other studies, then it must be inferred that either the research is invalid or academic sport leadership is inconclusive.

There are many examples of such varied, even contradictory findings within the field. For example, the Case (1987) found that the most appropriate leader behavior for coaches of high school basketball was a high task style (initiating structure, directive) and low relationship style (consideration, supportive) and was therefore contradictory to the Hersey and Blanchard situational leadership theory. However, "Eichas and Keane (1993) found that social support and training/instruction leadership styles preferred by high school basketball players predicted their task satisfaction" (Laughlin and Laughlin, 1994) thereby supporting the application of the situational theory to sports. Were the differences in the findings the result of different measures of leader behavior, or were they simply two teams that react to behavior in different ways? The answer is probably both.

Although a recent study by Salminen and Liukkonen has proven the convergent and discriminant validity of the LSS and concluded that it "can thus be seen as a valid instrument in assessing leadership behavior" (1994), there are recognized problems with the measures used in the earlier versions of the LSS and multidimensional model and the CBAS. Firstly, many assessments do not provide contextual consideration when identifying leader behavior, allowing a coach to appear autocratic throughout when in fact he/she is only autocratic when strategy is most important. Another example is the case of "two coaches [who] may be
democratic to the same extent but in two different sets of circumstances" (Chelladurai, 1990) that are both assessed simply as "democratic." Secondly, since these concepts of leadership were born in business and industry, most measures in the academic models fail to have sport specific questions. This means that there may be different causal variables in the athletic realm that are being ignored because they do not apply to the business world. In addition, assessment of leadership behavior in one sport tends to be regarded as a general assumption for others, when in fact coaching even basketball and football can be two distinctly different endeavors. Finally there are the pitfalls of self-assessment. There often are discrepancies between the coaches' actual behavior as viewed by the followers and their own perceived behavior. As Smoll and Smith discovered, "coaches have limited awareness of how frequently they engage in other forms of behavior, and that the athletes are more accurate perceivers of actual behavior" (1989). Each of these different measures, and many other more subtle differences, make the current sport leadership models and theories difficult to test and compare.

The notion that the two high school basketball teams each perform better under opposite styles may simply be because they are different teams. High school athletes, though all relatively the same age, certainly differ in skill and maturity levels, which is to say nothing about possible cultural, regional, and psychological differences. In addition, these academic approaches all indicate to some extent that "the more the leader's actual behavior matches the group preferences and the situational requirements, the better the
group performance and the greater the group member satisfaction" (Maby and Brady, 1996). Therefore, it is likely that unless each team member has exactly the same preferences, one coaching style will not work with all members of the same team, let alone two that have nothing in common other than their age and gender. In fact, no two different people will react exactly the same to a specific coaching behavior.

What sport leadership has gained thus far from the academic approach is the understanding that if preference's correspondence with behavior truly does amount to successful coaching, then the wise coach must simply evaluate his player's needs from time to time. He or she does not need to understand group dynamics or the multidimensional model, but simply find out what each individual needs in coaching behavior in order for them to peak. This could be accomplished through the LSS and multidimensional model, CBAS, interviews, questionnaires, or simple observation, but in either way the research confirms that the coach that does so may "increase their effectiveness by modifying methodology based on these measurements" (Laughlin and Laughlin, 1994).
Part II: Popular Perspectives of Sport Leadership

As the study of leadership has become increasingly widespread so has the focus on coaching. Through the popular press medium many of the successful coaches have taken advantage of this added attention and published books describing their styles. Many insights provided by such coaches regarding sport leadership have been widely accepted, even lauded by others in the field, and have been translated into business management and self-motivation techniques. Upon analysis of the styles delineated by coach's popular press books those most common have been grouped into three major approaches to sport leadership: the autocratic style, the supportive style, and the team empowerment style.

The Autocratic Style

This method of leading teams is undoubtedly the most traditional, and is consequently the style most commonly associated with successful coaches. Many often envision winning coaches as having to do so at all costs. They are usually perceived loud and are always demanding, and often seem only content when the team functions at its peak level on every occasion. This image was promoted by the fierce disciplinarians of the founding days of professional sports who ran their teams like military regimens. Autocratic coaches do not necessarily exhibit each of these traits, but they commonly believe that the coach is the only authority, and
hence, the players, or subordinates, must act in response to his/her directive style. Although somewhat less common amongst current coaches, the autocratic style of such famed coaches as Vince Lombardi, Red Auerbach, and Leo Durocher certainly remains intact due in part to its stress on performance and reliance on trust.

It is likely that Vince Lombardi is the most recognized coach in recent times and his belief in the coach's authority has itself become renown. Lombardi's methods stemmed from an inordinate lust for winning; he would rhetorically ask, "If it doesn't matter whether you win or lose, then why do you keep score?" He stressed rigorous mental and physical preparation in order to maximize one's talents and was known to be a perfectionist. Despite his severe coaching style, every player in the league wanted to be a Green Bay Packer just to be a part of Lombardi's system.

The Boston Celtics became legends under the autocratic coaching methods of Arnold "Red" Auerbach, who during his twenty year tenure with the team lead them to thirteen world championships. He believes that the primary reason for his team's success was not his ability as a technical coach nor for his team's raw talent, but rather it was his style of coaching that forced his player's to perform. One player described Auerbach as "very, very tough, and he played on the natural fears of certain athletes" (Auerbach, 1977). Auerbach views the coach's role as analogous to the head of a family, and since he was the boss he felt no remorse in using directive behavior, even if it involved a certain degree of hostility: "Sometimes it meant they weren't going to like me. I couldn't be
their buddy, and be their coach, too. I don't care what anybody says, that won't work" (Auerbach, 1977).

In the sport of baseball, no successful team leader has ever been more autocratic than long-time manager Leo Durocher. Like his contemporaries Lombardi and Auerbach, Durocher firmly believed that his players needed to be treated as subordinates. His stern manner is best represented in the quote which made him famous: "Nice guys finish last." Durocher was among the first of managers in baseball to use a monetary fine system not only for restricted behavior off the field, but also to penalize players for poor performance during games. It was not uncommon for Durocher to berate players for making mistakes because he believed the player's desire to do well would be reinforced by the desire to avoid his abuse. Therefore he would "hop all over a player who was caught out of position, and the player would keep his mouth shut and listen" (Durocher 1975). At the time of his retirement, Durocher lamented that his methods simply were not producing the same results in "this new breed" of player.

The commonality in all three examples of this autocratic style, and indeed, most directive behavior coaches, is that leadership in sports is reliant on discipline and respect. This sense of disciplining may take several forms, but in all it is meant to make players realize and exercise their potential. The coach possesses legitimate and positional power and therefore has the authority to require his followers to do so. Lombardi was demanding "to make every single person in his organization do the best job he was humanly capable of performing" (Bengston, 1969). Bobby Knight, the volatile, yet lauded
disciplinarian of Indiana University basketball describes his methods as being intolerant of people "who don't reach their limit," and believes that once his players sense he is tolerating such mediocrity they lose motivation (Mellen, 1988). Hence, it is common for autocratic coaches to feel the need to discipline their players, as they see it as the only way of guaranteeing performance.

The concept of mutual respect is extremely important to autocratic coaching in that the coach loses all legitimacy once he is not respected. Firstly, the coach's authority must be respected. It is not likely that a player would respond to a fellow player's directive orders, and the same is true for a coach that the player feels should not be in such a leadership position. Therefore this authority is made very clear by the autocratic coach; one of Lombardi's players once commented, "Coach Lombardi makes the rules, and you go along with him, or else he rips the corner off your paycheck" (Bengston, 1969). Secondly, the player must respect the coach's knowledge of the sport, and thusly be receptive to it. Auerbach's player's responded to his "iron fist" because they regarded him as a "master." One such player states, "Today it seems so many players think they are smarter than their coaches. No one on our club ever thought it for a minute. If Red said do it, we did it, because we knew he knew what he was talking about" (Auerbach, 1977). The final essential element of the respect theory is that it is truly mutual. The players must know that they are respected if they are to perform for a coach who is often overwhelmingly critical. Several autocratic coaches have been in situations in which they had to remind their players that their shortcomings are accentuated by the fact that their
potential is so great. Perhaps, the best example is Durocher's accounts of the young and delicate Willie Mays, who despite being the best outfielder Durocher ever saw, often felt scorned when yelled at. During these times Durocher had to communicate his respect in order to make Willie's "eager to confirm [Durocher's] high opinion of him" (Durocher, 1975).

The Supportive Style

Many recent coaches turned authors are selling their brand of coaching as the less authoritarian and more relationship-oriented leadership that can best be termed the supportive style. Rather than making strict demands on their followers, these coaches have taken a page from the current leadership craze and rejected the boss mentality for a more facilitative approach. This style is closely related to Chelladurai's social support behavior which aims to promote a positive atmosphere in which the motivated player will be comfortably able to attain his/her optimal level of performance. The style described by coaches Rick Pitino, John Robinson, and Bill Parcells all reflect this style of sport leadership making them what is commonly referred to as "player's coaches."

Rick Pitino has coached basketball successfully at both the professional and college level, most recently by leading the University of Kentucky to a NCAA championship, and has exemplified this style of social support throughout. Pitino is known for his intensity in preparation for games but stresses that players do not
need to be yelled at to put forth their greatest effort. Therefore he has adapted his own philosophy behind supportive coaching in which everything, including criticism, is positive; "above all else [Pitino] believes that a coach must remain positive, because the team basically reflects the coach's attitude" (Pitino, 1988). His players laud him for his ability to instill confidence in them. Pitino is supportive of his player's strengths but does not condemn them for falling short of his expectations: "I never get on a player for missing a shot. In fact it's just the opposite. . . players must know that you as a coach, have complete confidence in them" (Pitino, 1988).

This notion of establishing confidence through supportive coaching is also key to University of Southern California football coach, John Robinson. He feels that his players are all highly capable athletes but may need to realize their skills before they can peak. Therefore, he states "one of the major roles of the coach is to help players say, "I can do it!" because it is "that confidence that gives them the strength to get up and keep going when they have been knocked down" (Robinson, 1996). Robinson's coaching behavior also resides on the importance of the atmosphere surrounding the player. At the center of this is the player-coach relationship, which should be accommodating rather than adversarial; the coach should facilitate improvement by providing the "optimum environment for success" and making it clear that "we (his staff) are going to treat you well, but we are also going to ask you to perform" (Robinson, 1996).

Bill Parcells, coach of the New England Patriots, is considered one of the finest motivators in the National Football League - a talent which he attributes to a supportive style of coaching which is
extremely relationship-oriented. Firstly, Parcells believes that the supportive coach must be flexible, contrary to the underlying belief of the autocratic style. He states the case of then New York Giant Mark Bavaro, his all-pro tight end who despite being able "to go the extra mile and then some," (Parcells, 1995) was coming off major knee surgery at the beginning of the 1990 season. In order to facilitate his recovery, Parcells made exceptions for him in the workout and practice sessions, restricting him to only what he thought he could handle. This flexibility reaped rewards for Parcells as Bavaro lead the team into the playoffs, while only missing one game. Parcells cites that this style also makes people "even more loyal to the [team] that supported them" (Parcells, 1995).

The second reason Parcells is a supportive coach stems from his belief that establishing a caring relationship with his players is conducive to enhanced performance. Like Robinson, he subscribes to the theory that players are more likely to perform for the coach when they are aware of his concern for them rather than when the coach is perceived as an unapproachable boss.

I've always spent time talking to my players, getting to know them. I try to say something to each individual every day - not a long dialogue, just, "How you feeling? You looked good in the tapes last night, keep goin'." . . . I don't socialize with my players, but I like to meet their wives and see their babies. I care about whether they pay their taxes, or if their child is over the chicken pox. I've done some of my best coaching walking of at the end of a practice with a player to discuss some current event from a play on the field to his family or his favorite basketball team. (Parcells, 1995).
Parcells believes that through this rapport he can give the player positive reinforcement and constructive criticism in a friendly manner, all while gaining insight into what makes that individual operate. Players do treat him differently than they would an autocratic coach, as is indicated by the celebratory Gatorade showers that were originated by Parcells' players; he feels that they "reflect something positive about our relationship - that they're glad I'm in there with them" (Parcells, 1995).

All supportive coaches believes firmly in the concept of positive feedback. Their methods are widespread, from coveted player of the week honors to large monetary incentives, each having its own effect. Robinson writes, "When they do perform, reward that . . . we can recognize performance in a thousand ways and we should" (1996). However, although Chelladurai chose to devote an entire coaching behavior to the use of rewarding and recognizing players, all three coaches suggest that the positive relationship is the element that makes the feedback most effective.

The Team Empowerment Style

The popular press has helped this brand of sports leadership, most consistent with Chelladurai's democratic style, to reach its current level of acceptance. Although coaches of this style maintain their position as an organizer and strategist, they allow participation from the players in their own leadership functions and encourage the team to develop its own internal leadership. Two coaches who
practice this team empowerment style, and have advocated its use in other settings are Pat Riley and John Lucas.

The fundamental premise behind Pat Riley's empowerment theory is that sport leadership should be a function of the team, both from individuals and the group. In his many successful years in the National Basketball Association he has had the opportunity to coach some of the most talented players in the world and has concluded that these players will reach their optimum performance when they are able to function not as individuals, but as one. Riley states that his "driving belief is this: great teamwork is the only way to reach our ultimate moments" and therefore utilizes a style in which his role is to "blend the talents and strengths of individuals into a force that becomes greater than the sum of its parts" (Riley, 1993). To promote this team development Riley fosters an environment in which each team member, regardless of personal differences, must trust and respect each other. Once the team has reached the level, it establishes goals, sees the emergence of team leaders, and peaks its performance as each player enhances the skills of their teammates.

At the heart of Riley's coaching style is the belief that each individual has the ability to motivate others, and therefore team empowerment puts demands on the players to do so. Riley first began coaching the Los Angeles Lakers in 1979, the same year nineteen year-old Earvin Johnson would join the NBA and soon become the epitome of Riley's individual team leader. "Magic" was a point guard, and therefore was by position central to the operation of the team, but his skills in elevating the morale, enthusiasm, and even skills of others became uncanny. He "showed a rare ability,
something on which every commentator has since remarked over and over: he made all his teammates better" (Riley, 1993).

The best example of both Johnson's empowered initiative and Riley's democratic behavior came in the sixth of a seven game series in the 1980 NBA Finals against the Philadelphia 76ers. It was a crucial game and the team's superstar center, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, was injured, prompting the entire team to expect a loss. Riley was at a loss for strategy until the rookie Johnson audaciously took Abdul-Jabbar's prized seat on the plane and said, "We're missing Kareem? O.K. fellas - I'll be Kareem today" (Riley, 1993). After the suggestion Riley and Johnson developed a game-plan that would have Johnson fulfilling the center's role and the result was an amazing forty-two point effort leading the team to a blowout victory and the world championship.

John Lucas, currently the coach of the Philadelphia 76ers, has developed a style of coaching that is so democratic, that it was considered unorthodox when he was first hired to coach the San Antonio Spurs in 1992. His style of team empowerment is the result of his dedication to his players, having played successfully in the NBA himself (he, like Johnson, could also "get people to overachieve"), and his confidence in the players' own views, strategies and opinions: "I think my players know as much about basketball as I do, and I need to listen" (Lucas, 1994). In comparison to Riley who encourages participative leadership from his team, Lucas actually delegates a large portion of the leadership responsibilities to his players. On the Spurs almost everything was up for debate amongst the players and Lucas even established a
"kind of players board of directors" with its own hierarchy used to allow players to "either make or be very involved in decisions about travel, trades, and team discipline" (Lucas, 1994).

Lucas feels that it is this notion of team leadership that gives added incentive to players to perform. The added responsibilities increase the individual's stakes while eliminating the "us-them" mentality that Lucas sees as often inhibiting the coach-player relationship, thus making players less motivated to achieve. Regardless of performance, the empowerment methods have had a favorable effect on the players who have embraced the coaching style. Perennial all-star David Robinson has said that the pre-Lucas team had "good players, but they weren't doing anything with leadership; it was mainly the coach" but "once I (Robinson) had someone to talk to, I think he (Lucas) got more production out of me in every area" (Lucas, 1994). Another San Antonio player, Dale Ellis made the following comments about Lucas:

We began doing well because he made us feel like we were really a part of things. We were able to make decisions. We were a team. We were winning, and it wasn't just one guy telling us what we were going to do. We all had a say, and that really made us want to work hard, to play hard, and to respect each other. We really went out to win for him. (Lucas, 1994).

These sentiments were common amongst Lucas's players, and some stated that his style was particularly suited for the professional level since it is as they out it, "we are the game" (Lucas).

The team empowering style of sport leadership builds off the supportive style, in that the worth of the individual and the player-coach relationship are stressed. However, as both examples of this
style in practice have indicated the players actually become the leaders in one way or another, making the coach's role more laissez-faire than in either the supportive or autocratic styles.

Analysis of Popular Press Perspectives

Leadership is among the many social phenomena that cannot be reduced to specific formulas or theories which transcend every situation. Organizing, motivating, and leading people involves as many variables as are inherent in the subordinate individuals themselves. Hence, there can be no simple equation which automatically results in successful leadership. This assumption is perhaps most clearly verified when the phenomenon is applied to the complex scenarios that are the heart of athletic competition. Therefore an assessment of prominent coaches' chosen methods provides experiential schools of leadership that have been proven effective in practice.

The obvious strength of the popular press perspectives of sport leadership is that they are the product of the best coaches in the country. These men were given the opportunity to be "armchair psychologists" as some put it because of their success in the coaching profession. It is this expert power that makes their own styles legitimate, worth reading about, and possibly even using in one's own coaching endeavors. However, the popular press approach to sports leadership is not without its own drawbacks.
Despite the varied coaching methods that are represented by coaches in the popular press, those are still a small sample of styles and approaches to sport leadership that exist. Firstly, there are little to no books published about sports leadership at a level below college. Secondly, for every published coach, there must be at least fifty in various sports at the college and professional levels, each successful in his/her own right, whose methods will never reach an audience quite so large. Thirdly, in becoming authors several of these coaches no doubt had their writing affected by a push towards motivational speaking or business leadership, which may have caused their sports leadership theories to become altered, or even embellished to fulfill the given purpose of the book. For example, it is very possible that the more autocratic leader describes only his supportive side in order to make better analogies to the flattened hierarchies that exist in today's business world. Finally, in conjunction with the outside spin, there is also the problem with self-assessment as was seen in one of the negative aspects of the academic approach. Although each of these coaches may have felt that they were painting an accurate portrayal of his own style, the fact may be that their players view them completely differently.

The individual behaviors also have their own problems. The underlying problem of being the directive, autocratic leader is that this type of coach disregards whatever intrinsic motivation his players may have to succeed. They often assert their position like dictators and demand performance, suggesting that the player would not try to perform at his/her peak level without some form of external impetus. This simply is not the case with most collegiate
and professional athletes who are highly skilled, highly mature in terms of the situational theory, and are expected to be highly motivated. In addition to this problem there is the more obvious problem that many people can not be pressured to perform. Continued behavior towards such people will likely hinder performance, cause ill will, and possibly burnout; "threats and intimidation are likely to undermine working relationships and may lead either to avoidance of the manager by the target person or counteraggression against the manager" (Yuki, 1994).

According to the path-goal theory "if a task is interesting and enjoyable, and the subordinates are confident, then supportive leadership has little, if any, effect" (Yuki, 1994). This view makes the use of supportive style at the upper levels of athletic competition seem futile. Some players under this style of leadership are likely at a disadvantage because they do not need the good relationship with the coach, or the reinforced confidence in their ability. They may tend to suffer from a lack of demands being put on them and begin to rest on their laurels. However, it seems that if the players are intrinsically motivated, this coaching behavior can only further encourage individuals to continue to perform.

The team empowerment style of coaching is rather rare at levels other than the professionals because it hinges on the maturity level of the team being able to accept the shared leadership role. Lucas was able to empower his team because he trusted them as intelligent players. Riley was able to watch his team and their internal leadership become a substitute for Riley's own leadership. Since most players in the NBA "clearly understand their roles, know
how to do the work, [are] highly motivated, and [are] satisfied with their jobs" (Yukl, 1994) the leadership substitutes theory indicates that the head coach needs merely to watch his team and intervene only when necessary. Fortunately for Riley, he also was aided by the efforts of Magic Johnson, who in "making the players around him better" epitomizes the transforming leader in sports leadership.

It is difficult to read about successful coaches' philosophies and try to judge which are better than others. Two things that are evident in each coach's personal style are vision and the ability to treat different players in the proper way. The first of these is very practical; as Kouzes and Posner suggest, the successful leader "must inspire a shared vision" (1987). Parcells echoes this statement by saying, "In an unstable environment, it is especially vital for leaders to articulate their vision for the organization - clearly, explicitly, and often" (1995). In this case the vision is of a victorious team and the means of communication may be strengthened by use of "slogans, emblems, codes, and stories" (Robinson, 1996).

The second common thread amongst all of the popular press coaches is that each of them, either consciously or subconsciously, has a process of discovering what motivates their players. Even the autocratic coaches had those they could yell at and those that they had to be more reserved with. This is even true of Lombardi: "He had the true psychological gift of seeing which player responded to a pat on the back and which to a kick in the ass and then dealing out the appropriate pats and kicks" (Carroll, 1993). Parcells writes, "Flexibility is a make-or-break component of motivation, the art of getting people to do what needs to be done. Your message, your
tone, your timing - all of these vary with the circumstances and your target audience" (1995). This all reflects back on the concept that there is no one correct way to lead, because no two people will react quite the same way to the same style in the same situation.
Part III: Jim Reid Case Study

In order to fully assess the status of leadership in athletics, it seems necessary that a case study gives a portrayal of its use in a specific scenario, with a given coach and single team. Such a study can potentially provide an excellent opportunity to relate the findings of both the academic and popular press approaches to sports leadership. The University of Richmond football team is an appropriate study for the purposes of this paper due to its Division I-AA level of competition, accessibility of coaches and players, and most importantly the different style of leading the program that first-year head coach Jim Reid has brought.

Jim Reid came to the University of Richmond program as head coach in the spring of 1995 and completed his first season with the Spiders in the fall of the same year. At first glance it would appear that Reid had some sort of coaching secret judging by the fact that he had inherited a team with a unimpressive record of three wins and eight losses and in less than one year was able to lead virtually the same team to a successful 7-2-1 record. However, his changes in coaching his players, both on the field and off, were not only noticeable, but gave the Richmond community a feel that the disrespected team would be transformed into a promising program even more so than the winning record. How did he bring about these results? In Reid’s own opinion, the answer was treating each player as an individual, but at the same creating unparalleled team unity.

When presented the different academic theories of sport leadership Reid admitted to only a vague familiarity at best with
them, but stated that there are no prescribed formula for successful coaching. In regards to Chelladurai's dimensions of leader behavior he did not find one to which he felt he exclusively belonged, but rather said that a "good" coach can and will be a little bit of each. He stressed that all players must have a solid core of training and instruction in order to peak on game day and therefore says that discipline is of the utmost importance in getting a team to win. However, he is quick to point out his Spider Football coach's manual which states, "Players thrive on organization and discipline, not harassment" and "sincerity, true care and concern for the player are the ingredients which must accompany discipline" (Reid, 1995).

Players find training and instruction to be an integral part of Reid's coaching methods which is evidenced by rigorous 5:45 am practices in the "off-season," long hours of weight training, and mandatory weekend study halls for selected players. Although many of Reid's players regard him as a disciplinarian, they feel that this style is the most prevalent amongst Division I college coaches.

Reid is decisively autocratic and states that of the five styles he is least democratic. "I am the coach. It is a privilege to be playing football for this university and in my program and therefore my players will do what is demanded of them or that privilege will be revoked" (Reid, 1996). He rationalizes his lack of democratic behavior with his belief in the inherent value of the team and that that unity is somewhat belittled when individuals are making decisions. However, Reid does say that in being autocratic he must first establish trust with his players. He feels that as the coach his players must trust and respect his authority, and he maintains this
trust by constantly letting the player know why he is doing what he is so as to give the demand an actual purpose, rather than simply barking out orders.

Of the five dimensions, Reid believes that he is mostly a social support coach that uses a good deal positive feedback. He believes that his players "reap the benefits every day" (Reid, 1996) from simply seeing their own improvement, but believes in personally reinforcing good performance in the several ways including positive comments, added playing time, and celebratory team outings. Of the many various forms of feedback, the most noted and appreciated by the players were "giving his players hugs in broad view when they make good plays" and "stopping players in the hallway just to tell them he noticed how hard they have been working." Reid's players have also noticed that even when giving criticism he remains positive; Reid has made a strict rule that none of his coaches shall berate a player.

Reid is undoubtedly a believer in the social support style of coaching and has centered much of his coaching philosophy on his theory that the player reacts better in a more favorable environment. Therefore, his aims are to have an excellent atmosphere in which to play football, both internally on the team, and externally throughout campus. Internally, he tries to create a good rapport with all of his players which emphasizes his confidence in them and his devotion and loyalty to the members of his program. Perhaps the best example of this was Reid's promise to his players this fall that in the event that the Spiders beat James Madison University he would shave his head. After the inspired team won
the hard-fought game, the team's seniors shaved their coach's head in a celebration of both victory and dedication so original that a tape of the incident appeared on ESPN. Another example of Reid fostering a good environment is his movie night on the Fridays preceding Saturday practices in which he personally rents a movie and screens it for his players and their guests in the team's film room. Despite being optional, around ninety-percent of the players are usually present.

A major problem Jim Reid saw in the University of Richmond program was that the team was unknown, unappreciated, and disrespected. A major objective of his leadership efforts off the field have been to create the ideal external environment in which to best play; it seems fairly obvious that a player will work harder and perform better when his efforts are being noticed. Reid first sought to get his players known because there "is no reason to isolate athletes on a campus this small" (Reid, 1996). Prior to Reid's arrival the players were discouraged from affiliating themselves with fraternities, were made to sit in a removed portion of the dining hall, were clumped together in the dorms, and were essentially isolated from every aspect of the University of Richmond other than the football team. While Reid believes strongly in the necessity of team cohesion (he has mandatory team breakfast during the season), he feels that it is important for the player to assimilate with the other students if they are to gain the support and respect of them. Hence, he has met with representatives from each fraternity and members of the Interfraternity Council, both student governments, resident assistants, and various campus organizations to both promote his
team and find ways to integrate them fully into campus. Reid has created and chairs a Spirit Committee which organizes events to support the team. He has also established a system in which his players must attend other students' events such as field hockey games and theatrical productions in hopes that their support would be reciprocated on Saturdays in the fall.

Reid's relationships with his players are remarkable and stem not only from his social support style, but also from his belief in one of the essential keys to effective coaching: knowing each individual personally and determining what motivates that person. This notion is prevalent throughout the popular press literature and has been suggested by studies and models indicating that players respond best to their preferred coaching behavior. His coaching manual states, "each coach must find the key to motivating his players. Discover the personality, home life, and priorities of each individual" (Reid, 1995) and he has said that the reason there is no one coaching behavior that "works" is because there is no way to generalize how all players will react to one specific style. Reid is proud of the fact that he is so close to his players that he can provide the grade point average of each of his sixty-six players from memory. When asked if he felt this was true a junior player added, "He not only knows our GPA, he knows what courses we're taking, what our bench press is, what our forty [yard dash] time is, and probably who we are dating at the time."

Most of the players providing their opinions on Reid's methods feel that he is predominantly autocratic but is also a large proponent of relationship-based support. They all perceived autocratic
behavior as the most prevalent style amongst college football coaches, but most commented that the same methods would not be as effective at lower levels because players would not be devoted enough to tolerate such stringent demands. In general, all agreed that Reid is an effective coach citing reasons ranging from his enthusiasm, to his involvement in players' lives, to his own work ethic.

The case study of Jim Reid supplements this paper well because it summarizes what both research and experience have indicated: sport leadership, like leadership on all fronts, is a function of so many variables, including most importantly the individual, that for any coach to behave in one way is limiting his or her team's potential to those that will respond to that one coaching style.
Conclusion

Those who truly know sports have always said that anyone can diagram X's and O's, but that's not really what coaches are there to do. What is meant by this is that there are more important ways of leading a team to victory than by just diagramming the best plays. The key to leadership is maximizing the potential of others towards a goal. In sports this is no different. However, at first glance one might think that coaching and leading are two different things. This is not true. The same prevailing theories of leadership in organizations have been amended to fit the world of athletics and just as the leadership craze has taken over the popular press, so too have books about coaching. The two approaches to sport leadership are diametrically different in theory, one focusing on collected data and research and the other using solely experience, but the end result is the same: no coach can be successful by strictly adhering to one style regardless of the players involved and the situation they are in.

Research on sports leadership is not unlike the predominant findings in the rest of the field. Much of the data is inconclusive, and nearly all of it is being contested with new, related studies. The results are that despite having two paradigms upon which to base sport leadership theories about leader behavior and its correlation to performance, each study is contingent on so many different variables that it seems clear that there will be no uniform way in which to compare studies. Therefore, each study must be taken as an individual case. Therein lies the key; the student of the academic
perspective must be able to locate all of the variables in a given situation and figure out the best approach, paying most attention to the way the players want to be coached.

Despite there being numerous coaching legends in each sport, there can be no authority on sport leadership. The reason being that no team is exactly the same. There is no formula that can be applied to every sport. There is no right answer as to how to motivate players during crunch time. The popular press proves this just as the academic approach has; everyone has their own concept of what will work with the most people, and with the hundreds of ways to define success on the field, who can determine which style is the most effective? The most effective style is that which works for the individual. All of the coaches studied in this paper were categorized according to style, but each shared the innate ability to know how to treat each player in various situations.

Successful sport leadership then, from either perspective, is not a function of your personal coaching style, so much as it is the ability to restructure your style to accommodate the player who will be the object of your behavior.
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