Does Participating in Sports produce Leadership Abilities

*Introduction*

Leadership has been defined as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northhouse,2001, p.3). The Leaders have been looked upon by society as strong individuals that are able to be successful and have followers look upon them for guidance and be a model for example to his or her followers. Leaders all have certain qualities that set them apart from the rest of society. Are these qualities innate or are they something that is learned. Most people look upon major figures in society like the President of a Country, or CEO’s of a company, and heads of social committees as leaders. They have the responsibility of guiding a movement or group of followers to a common goal. It may not be what everyone wants in that group at the time but the leader stands alone and is not afraid to take calculated risk at the benefit of bringing success to his or her group.

Some of the greatest leaders that we have witnessed have come from the area of the sports world. What is it about sports that creates or distinguishes what is a good leader? In sport, the importance of an effective leader has been established by athletes and coaches as a vital component to achievement in that sport or team. You learn early in sports that the goal is for the team to be successful and not the individual. Research has been focused on the most part on the Coach and the leadership styles, and qualities they possess and pass on to their athletes. In this review we will take a look at leadership from the stand point of the athlete and the leadership qualities they possess and where did that leadership come from. We will look to see in this review wether team sports create the qualities that a leader has or is it already apart of the leaders makeup and how it sets them apart from the rest. We will also look at how these qualities that are developed and enhanced during sports competitions are transitioned to areas outside of the sports arena.

*Overview of Literature*

*Selection of leaders*

The articles all show that throughout the sports that the studies examined emerged leaders from the teams. These leaders were either selected by peers on the team or by coaches on the team. According to (wright, Cote) a leader athlete selection was designed to ensure that chosen participants demonstrated outstanding leadership within their team. The term leadership is largely ambiguous and could potentially have numerous meanings to different athletes, each team member was asked to personally define leadership and what it meant to them personally. During the studies questionnaires were used to help with decisions that helped focus the teammates to who would qualify as a leader. The leaders were picked by which teammates were selected the most by their peers. There are two types of leaders on sports teams. A formal leader can be viewed as an individual who has been prescribed that position by the organization or group. However, the election or appointment of a formal leader does not ensure that leadership provided will be effective or fulfill team leadership needs. An Informal leader emerges as a result of the interactions that occur among group members. Taken together, athletes who occupy either a formal or informal leadership role within their team represent a source of athlete leadership (Loughead,)