Sport Psychology Goes to the Movies

ESS 220: An Introduction to Psychology of Sport
Tim Bacon

» Consultant to world ranked athletes since 1987

» Registered, Canadian Mental Training Registry

» Level 4 Squash Coach - Canadian Jr. National Team, Smith College
The main goal of this course is, by spending some time at the movies, to introduce some of the ideas and applications of sport psychology.

This course is based on the premise that films represent a kind of collective visual memory through which many of these concepts and applications can be illustrated and discussed.
To recognize sport psychology themes, concepts, & principles in concrete form, is to bring sport psychology down to earth in an important way, and to show how sport psychology issues and concerns enter deeply into our everyday experience.
One limitation that needs to be mentioned is that whatever engagement films may themselves have with sport psychology ideas and concepts, this can only be part of what is going on in the film.

The primary objective of this course remains the extent to which the films can be used to illustrate sport psychology themes and applications.
Pedagogical Approach Used in this Course

» Smith students are expected to become acquainted with certain bodies of knowledge - but they are also expected to learn the intellectual skills necessary for using and extending that knowledge (Bourque, December, 2007).

» By the time they graduate...
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» Write clearly
» Speak articulately
» Reading closely
» Evaluating and presenting evidence accurately
» Apply scientific reasoning
» Work both independently and collaboratively
» Understand multi- and interdisciplinary approaches
Sport Psychology

» Motivation
» Group Processes (Cohesion & Leadership)
» Psychological Skills Training
» Special Topics: Children, Injuries, Overtraining, Cultural Studies
Approach to Sport Psychology
Step-by-Step Approach

» Brief article or lecture
» Watch film with question guide
» Write 1.5 page paper or outline
» Read text, short lecture
» Class discussion
» Write short paper (3-5 pages)
There is not a perfect match between films and text...

» Global level - overall topic, “Miracle” is about Olympics
» Major SP themes: “Titans” is about styles of leadership
» Secondary themes: psychological skills for hockey and football
» Recuring themes: group development, peak performance
References

» The Sport Psychology Movie Database: http://www.geocities.com/sportsmovies/index.html
