

Chris Voelz is positive about PMA

Oregon's spikers use coach's attitude through tough year

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Of the Emerald

When the subject comes up, the response is nearly fanatical. Believers treat it almost like a religion, expounding in passionate terms about its benefits.

Reports abound on how it has changed lives. The faith radiates from those possessed with this inspiration, making it sound too good to be true.

Is this the Hare Krishna, the Moonies or some other group that's always hanging around airports selling their idea of THE way to live?

No, this is Positive Mental Attitude (PMA), a concept of believing totally in yourself and what you are capable of doing. It is a self-belief attitude where you can achieve anything you want to.

"The only limits to your success are those you impose on yourself, and with PMA, there are none," said Chris Voelz, Oregon's volleyball coach and PMA's chief advocate on campus.

"It's an attitude that allows you to be the best that you can be, whether you're talking about individual self-growth or volleyball. You take in all the information you can, positive and negative, and use it constructively to make yourself better."

PMA involves taking an affirmation, or motto that is constructively applied to provide direction for self-improvement. Goals are then set to judge the improvement and to keep it in perspective.

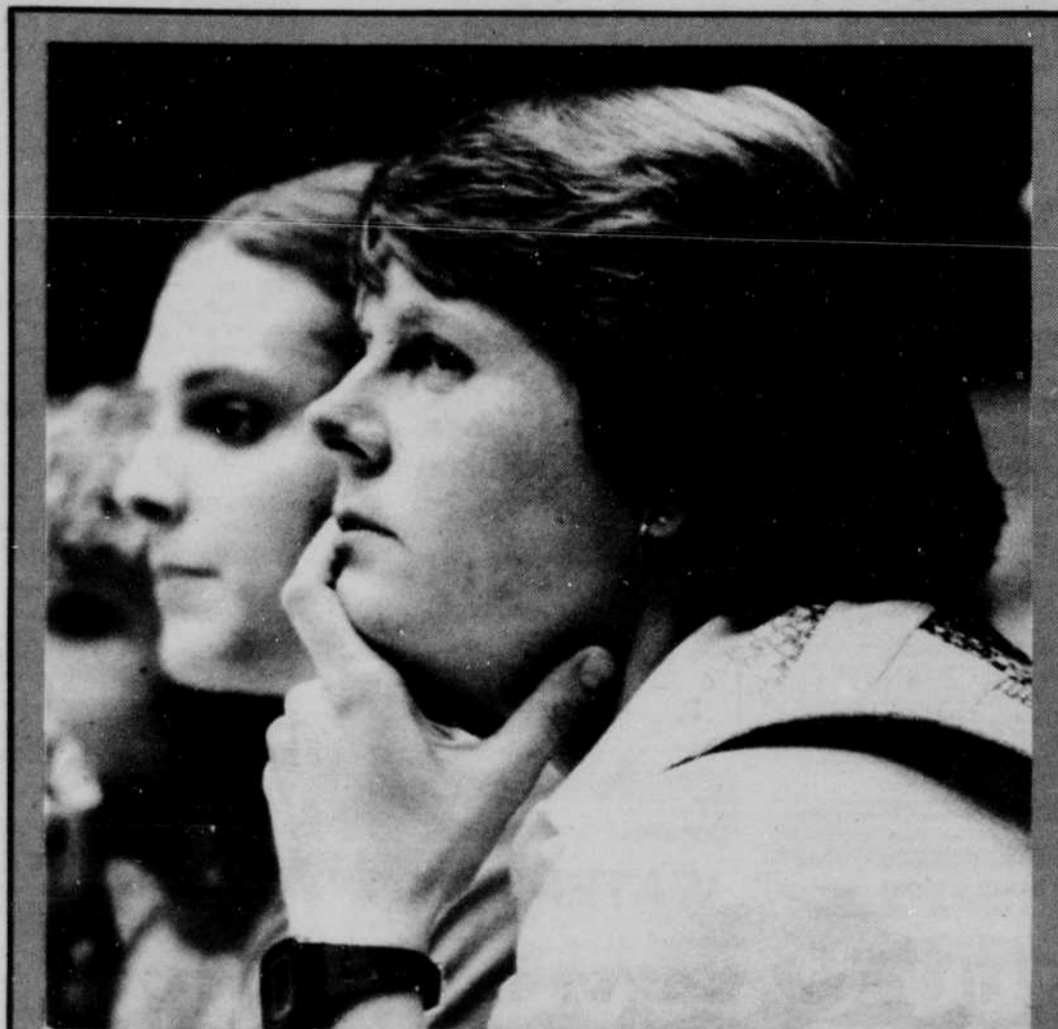
"It is a way to improve yourself to any level you desire. By working hard, you can accomplish anything you want, but it takes the hard work to do it," Voelz said.

"You can't be unrealistic and say you are going to beat the best team in the nation when you have nowhere the skill or the talent of the other team. But it does allow you to set goals to improve each time you play and maybe score a few more points against them than you did last time.

"Improvement is the key. And if you do have a chance to beat the top team or land the best job around, PMA allows you to have the self-confidence to do it."

It becomes difficult to separate Voelz from PMA. They seem to go together like beer and pretzels — one is not the same without the other. To understand PMA and its affect on the Oregon volleyball team, you must first understand Voelz.

She has written a book on the subject entitled "Motivation in Coaching a Team



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Sport", is a frequent lecturer and has given numerous workshops.

Brought up from an early age with a positive self-outlook, PMA went hand in hand with Voelz's attitude before she had even heard about it. She began coaching this attitude out of necessity, and found that it worked so well, it became integrated into her coaching style.

"I was coaching at a school in Chicago where I was forced to coach not only women's basketball and volleyball, but archery," said Voelz with a grimace, recalling her start.

"Now I didn't know anything about archery, and since I couldn't coach the sport itself, I had to find some way to help the athletes. I began to look at their outlook on the sport and decided the best way to help them was to manage their minds and their attitudes concerning the sport."

This started Voelz to study what actually were the athletes' mental thoughts on the sports they played, and what different type of coaching methods got

the best results. She decided the secret to a team's success lay in the way that the athlete was addressed. For some it is better to be very demanding, while for others, velvet gloves worked best. But the important point was to convey the instructions to a player the right way.

"The criticism you give a player must be constructive, meant to help a player, instead of just tearing her down," said Voelz. "We don't yell at people on our team, we care at them." Some of this caring can get quite vocal though, Voelz was quick to admit.

"If everything you tell a player is in a positive vein of thought, then they will be much more receptive and able to use it to make themselves better. But you must be realistic. You can't be dishonest to yourself and say that you did well, when you actually got creamed. You must set goals before entering any competition and work to meet those goals. That is how you tell how you are doing, not by the win-loss column, but by how many goals you've accomplished."

PMA is especially important for the Oregon volleyball team this year. Coming off a successful 41-16-1 record last year, and with a bright outlook for this season, the Ducks have met with nothing but disappointment.

Injuries to front-liners Karen Beamer, Ronda Dalthrop and freshman sensation Sue Harbour, have forced the Ducks to play with a makeshift lineup throughout the season. This, compounded by the fact the Ducks are playing their toughest season ever, with repeated trips to California to play the top teams in the nation, have left the Ducks with a dismal 8-21-2 record.

"This season is the proof of PMA. Sure it is easy to do something when you are winning and things are going well, but how about when you're getting trounced," said Voelz.

"PMA enables us to endure a season like this one," said Cathy Hill, a junior and a Region 9 all-star last year. "It helps us through the hard times and really lets us enjoy the good times, because no matter how far we are ahead, we are always working to improve."

"PMA has helped me to become a better player and a better person," said Therese Cooper, a senior setter on the team. "I feel better about my own self-concept. The growing that I've gone through has allowed me to accept people the way they really are."

"When I hear negative comments, I try to take them with other positive ones and try to use them to make myself grow and improve. When I first came here I would let the little things get to me and then I'd get down on myself. But thru PMA I've learned to grow and accept things for the way they are, and then by working hard, try to improve myself."

"It helps you when you go in to take a test," said Hill. "No matter what you do, if you're positive about it, you're going to do better on it."

Most of the players were very skeptical of PMA when they first started out, but were convinced after the method actually began to work for them.

"When I first came here my initial reaction was to reject it," said Beamer, a senior. "But now I really believe in it, it has really helped me."

"It overwhelms you at first," agreed newcomer Harbour. "But it seems to work for everyone else, so it looks like it's worth trying."

Once a player gets over the shock of trying something different, PMA definitely seems to help them. The players not only improve their game, but more important, they improve on their own personal qualities. It doesn't seem to be a concept that they use for a while and then forget, but something that sticks with them.

"We don't try to sell PMA," said Voelz. "We let it creep up on them. We want people to grow not only as volleyball players, but as individuals. We want them to graduate with it and use it the rest of their lives. College is a growing experience, and with PMA I feel it has really helped them grow."



Emerald Photo

With a season record of 8-21-2, PMA helps Oregon's club keep going through a down season. "It helps us through the hard times," said Cathy Hill.

Rain delays 6th game of Series

NEW YORK (AP) — The sixth game of the 1981 World Series was postponed by rain Tuesday with the Los Angeles Dodgers leading the New York Yankees 3-2 in the best-of-seven set.

Game Six will be played Wednesday night at Yankee Stadium with a seventh game, if necessary, on Thursday night.

The last World Series game postponed by rain was Game One of the 1979 classic between the Baltimore Orioles and Pittsburgh Pirates. That Series opened in Baltimore.

It began to rain in New York Sunday evening and rained most of the night and into Monday. Showers were intermittent all day Monday, and the National Weather Service said a storm front would move through the New York area in full force Tuesday night.

Wednesday's forecast called for

clouds and a 20 percent chance of rain.

Tuesday night's game would have been played on the latest date of the year ever for a World Series. The 1911 World Series, won in six games by the Philadelphia Athletics over the New York Giants, ended on Oct. 26 after a week of rain.

If the 1981 World Series is completed without further rain, it will end on Oct. 28 or 29.

The front line for baseball's Fall War of 1981 moved about 3,000 miles east after three Los Angeles victories at Dodger Stadium. The wounded included Ron Cey, the Dodgers third baseman.

Cey, was expected to start Game Six after being hit on the helmet with a pitch from Yankees reliever Rich Gossage in the eighth inning of Sunday's fifth game, a 2-1 Dodgers victory.