

BESTOW YOUR GREATNESS

Yesterday (Wednesday 12th February 2019) was the First Anniversary of the passing of my father, John Morrison. It was an emotionally charged day spent with the family, comforting and condoling ourselves again as we reluctantly played that fateful day over in our heads once more. The 'Year of Firsts' was certainly by no means an easy one to get through, especially given the popularity of my father, it was very hard to escape. There would always be someone somewhere who would have known him wanting to share their own personal fable to tell of how Daddy had touched their lives in his own quirky unique way. But even though these poignant stories only served as a way of reminding us of what we had lost, it also served as a reminder of how lucky we had been to have had him as our father.

Sitting in the prayer service to mark Daddy's Anniversary on Tuesday night, there was a part of the service set aside for quiet reflection which took all of about five minutes. In this quiet reflection I thought of my father, his quirky ways and all of the different principles and philosophies he had taught me. We didn't always see eye to eye but most of the time what he tried to teach us all was to help us not only succeed in sport but in our everyday lives as well.

In these five minutes of reflection I looked back over the past year and the more I reflected the more I realised how much of Daddy's teachings I had been using without ever consciously realising I was using them. They had just become autonomous. Some of them even irritated me growing up as he would repeatedly use them to prove a point or create a learning opportunity. "Be like an onion" he would say, "Onions have layers, so always wear plenty of layers to training. You can always take a layer off if too warm but if they're not there you can't put the on if you're too cold." He would tell me this one frequently on a Saturday night as I tried to go to the disco on a frosty December night with just a shirt and a pair of jeans on. Now I would have three maybe even four layers on.

It amazed me just how much of the teachings he bestowed onto me that I was now using in both my sporting and everyday life. For years he had been preaching his messages to me but now in his absence his messages had now awoken within me and quietly became my habits. Even the style in which I write these columns are written to the same style my father would have penned his own. His messages may now be gone but he has instilled all of his wisdom into me without me ever realising and within this past year it has continuously come to the fore in everything I have been doing.

For any coach, this is exactly what you are trying to achieve whenever you are moulding your goalkeeper to be the best that they can ever be. You are their teacher, their mentor and in some regard you are their father as you continuously bestow your coaching ideologies onto them in the hope that they will be accepted by the goalkeeper for them to use as a platform to increase their goalkeeping ability.

Every coach will be different as will every goalkeeper. Every coach will have their own unique philosophies and principles and it is these principles and philosophies that we try to pass on to our goalkeepers. We hope that the goalkeeper will see the usefulness of our ideals, take them on board and ultimately use them to their advantage both in their goalkeeping but also their everyday life as well.

For us as the coach, it is imperative that we have a strong sense of patience with our goalkeepers as passing our coaching philosophies from us to them will understandably take time and many hours of cohesive effort. The most important part to remember as the coach is to never lose faith and never give up in sharing our message with our goalkeepers. There will be times whenever you will feel as if your goalkeeper is further away from where you are looking them to be but just as my father did, you must stay the course and continue to deliver your coaching message in the understanding that one day it will all come to fruition. We must trust both our goalkeepers as well as our own coaching beliefs within this two-way process and know that at some stage what we have taught them will finally become innate forming their habits.

All coaches, just like any father, want to leave their goalkeepers with the best possible set of core values to ensure they can not only be the best goalkeeper they can be but also become the best person they can become. The coach/father wants to be able to instil these beliefs in the hope that once they have left the goalkeeper, they will be confident that the goalkeeper will have these values ingrained into their everyday habits. My father ingrained his best knowledge into me knowing that one day I would use them as habits in my everyday life, for all coaches working with their athletes it really is our ultimate goal to achieve the exact same thing. I cherish the memories I have of my father and proud of the lasting impressions he left on so many people within his lifetime. He passed on as much of his coaching knowledge to people all over the globe hoping to create better people. I now encourage you to do one thing whenever you are coaching your own people and that is to 'Bestow Your Greatness!!'