



‘The Long Win: Reframing How We Celebrate Success

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In September 2023 at a conference, I was lucky enough to meet Cath Bishop, an Olympic rower who competed at three Olympic Games. Highlights of her career include winning the World Championships in 2003 and an Olympic silver medal in 2004. Bishop's workshops during the conference varied from high performance, resilience, teamwork, negotiation and leadership. Bishop has written a book "The Long Win" which presents a case for re-evaluating our approach to success in sport. What really stood out was her message that we should all consider a new way of redefining success, addressing the long term impact a win-at-all-costs approach can have.

This message prompted me to take some time out to think about our Sport and ECA programme at Bangkok Patana School and how we could use new strategies to reframe how we celebrate success of our students, ensuring our overriding message focuses on the process, not the sole outcome of one fixture or tournament. This led me to ask the questions - **How do we measure achievement and recognise the holistic development of our student athletes?** Could we do better?

Traditionally, success in sport has been equated with victories, trophies, and sharing our placings in tournaments. While these achievements

hold significance, Bishop invites us to consider a broader perspective that encompasses the invaluable lessons learned through adversity, the resilience forged through setbacks, and the personal growth experienced by each student athlete along their own journey. An example of how we could reframe this within our community, could simply be to start all conversations following a fixture or a tournament by asking our students 'What did you learn today?' or 'What positive traits did you display today in the game', as opposed to starting a conversation with 'Did you win?'

In her book, Bishop states, "The process matters because it is where we spend most of our time

and where we can have the biggest impact." This underpins the importance of celebrating the day-to-day efforts of students we see in training, the incremental improvements we see in individuals week-to-week or during a season, and the moments of triumph that contribute to the overall development of our students. In our pursuit of excellence, do we truly celebrate the full spectrum of achievements? Following a tournament, do we give equal importance to the journey our sports teams have been on and celebrate this, or do we solely focus on the win or loss we experienced in the final game that determined our finishing position. At Bangkok Patana we are keen to ensure students themselves start to balance both of these without prompting from the adults around them.

Success in sport transcends the scoreboard; it encompasses the friendships formed, the skills honed, and the values instilled through participation. By embracing Bishop's principles, we create an environment where students feel empowered to take risks, learn from failures, and thrive when challenged. We continue to champion a culture that values effort, perseverance, and personal progress, above all else.

Here are some quotes to leave you with from Bishop's book:

"The way we define success can shape our behaviour and the outcomes we achieve."

"The process matters because it is where we spend most of our time and where we can have the biggest impact."

"The long win is about making choices, building habits, and fostering relationships that will stand the test of time."

I would encourage all of us to reflect on these and think about how we can continue to reframe our approach moving forward. We must foster an environment where every student is given the opportunity to succeed and thrive, not just on the scoreboard, but in life.

