

# Utah Area Sports

## Sports News—July 2010

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### Thoughts from an apostle

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*Kindness is the essence of greatness and the fundamental characteristic of the noblest men and women I have known. Kindness is a passport that opens doors and fashions friends. It softens hearts and molds relationships that can last lifetimes.*

*Kind words not only lift our spirits in the moment they are given, but they can linger with us over the years. One day, when I was in college, a man seven years my senior congratulated me on my performance in a football game. He not only praised how well I had done in the game, but he had noticed that I had showed good sportsmanship. Even though this conversation happened more than 60 years ago, and even though it's highly unlikely the person who complimented me has any recollection of this conversation, I still remember the kind words spoken to me that day by Gordon B. Hinckley, who would later become President of the Church. Joseph B. Wirthlin, "The Virtue of Kindness," *Liahona*, May 2005, 26–28*

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### Billy Casper Fireside Prior to Utah SLC Area Golf Tournament – Friday August 27, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

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This year's golf tournament will be held at the Stone Bridge golf course in West Valley on August 28<sup>th</sup>. A fireside will be held in advance of the tournament that features golf legend Billy Casper. The meeting will feature lots of golf stories, as well as testimony—a great missionary and reactivation opportunity. Bring all the golfers in your family, including young men. We'd love to fill the building.

Plan to attend at the meeting house at 2350 East Creek Road in Sandy, on Friday, August 27 at 7:00 p.m.

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### Types and Shadows –

#### An editorial by Jerry Borrowman

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President Henry D. Moyle, a member of the First Presidency from 1959 to 1963, once said, *"I shall go to my grave saying that missionaries, generally speaking, with very few, if any, exceptions will never rise in their lives above the stature that they carve out for themselves in the mission field."*

This puzzled me as a young missionary in Texas. How could it be that the accomplishments of sixty or seventy years of service after a mission would not be of greater value in magnifying a person's stature—their standing within the Church and the community—than what they

did as a 19 year-old in the mission field? What I failed to fully grasp at the time is the idea of "types and shadows," which is a metaphor for identifying patterns. For example, Elder Bednar identified the Liahona, with its ability to show the proper course to follow, as a type and shadow that can be compared to the Holy Ghost giving individual guidance in our day and age. (May 2006 *Liahona* magazine). A type, then, is something that is like another, and a shadow is a "foreshadow" of the future based on the type.

So, what I believe Elder Moyle was saying is that the young man or woman who serves the Lord faithfully in the mission field can be expected to do so throughout the rest of his or her life. The missionary who demonstrates leadership skills at a young age is likely to exhibit those same qualities in future callings. In a negative way, the missionary who shirks his duty in the mission field may be prone to do so in the other ventures of his life, and so forth. A mission is like a life lived in miniature—a type and shadow of what is to come.

**So how does that relate to sports?** I believe a number of recent articles in the media show types and shadows of the men and women who compete at the highest levels of athletic competition, providing both positive examples and negative. They are a commentary on our society and what it values. Consider the following:

*"Disgraced U.S. cyclist Floyd Landis revealed new cheating allegations alleging that former teammates...not only joined him in doping but taught others how to beat the system and paid an official to keep a failed test quiet."* (Tim Reynolds, Associated Press, May 20, 2010)

*"A trainer who previously admitted supplying Jose Canseco with steroids now says he also gave performance enhancing-drugs to Mark McGwire...McGwire last week admitted for the first time that he used steroids and human growth hormone on and off for a decade, including when he set the season home run record with 70 in 1998, but said it was for his health. ...There are other things you can take for health that are anabolic, but it wouldn't be that type of combination," trainer Wenzlaff said. "If Paris Hilton were to take that array, she could run over Dick Butkis."* (Deseret News, Friday, Jan 22, 2010) Something of an ominous shadow.

Fortunately, not all stories are negative and we often have magnificent examples from the world of sports, like this inspiring story:

*"It has been called the 'imperfect ending.' Maybe in baseball terms, but certainly not when it comes to class, dignity and civility. In Wednesday night's Detroit-Cleveland baseball game, Tigers pitcher Armando Galarraga was one out away from retiring the minimum 27 opposing batters*

*and achieving the no-hit rarity labeled ‘a perfect game.’ Then came the infield grounder, the throw to Galarraga covering first base for the would-be final out, and the call from veteran umpire Jim Joyce, ‘Safe!’ After instant replays revealed Joyce’s blunder, the public outcry intensified, fueled by publications, posts and tweets. Some wanted the call reversed, others acknowledge the sport’s ever-present human elements, and still others begged for instant replay to overrule such egregious errors. However, those closely watching the national broadcast were treated to remarkable reactions from the two individuals most directly involved in the controversial finish.*

*After the questionable call, a surprised Galarraga simply shrugged and returned to the mound to face the next batter, rather than join teammates in jawing at Joyce. After the game a visibly shaken Joyce—aware of his historic mistake—made an unprecedented move, going to the Detroit locker room to personally and tearfully apologize to the pitcher, and then hug him.*

*Addressing the media afterward, a disappointed Galarraga never criticized the umpire, instead praising Joyce’s postgame gesture...*

*No perfect game, but plenty of perfect poise. A New York Times reader summed it up best with his online comment: ‘I think we got something better than a perfect game—an example of perfect sportsmanship and stoicism in the face of great disappointment. To me, that’s more stunning than a perfect game would have been.’ (Deseret News editorial, June 5, 2010)*

So think about types and shadows. Who among these men would you prefer to go into business with—McGwire and Landis, or Galarraga and Joyce? While the genuine accomplishments of all these men are noteworthy, the grace, honesty, and charity shown in the latter story is by far the more inspiring. I would like to meet Armando Galarraga and perhaps have him speak at a fireside for our young people. His example in this incident is the type that is worthy of following.

**How does this relate to Church Sports?** Think about this; if it’s true that a missionary will “never rise above the stature they carve out in the mission field,” what about how members of the church compete on the ball diamond, or on the gym floor? Is it possible that our behavior there is a predictor of how we will act in our roles as fathers, mothers, employees, and priesthood holders? Can Church Sports be a “type” that reveals much about the rest of our life? When you consider the way you participate, is it something that an editorial writer could write about favorably, or would you be embarrassed to be called out for the way you play?

**Can shadows be changed?** For my part I don’t believe for a second that Elder Moyle was saying that men and women can’t change, repent, and improve—to say otherwise is to deny the power of the atonement. Fortunately, I believe that the idea of types and shadows give us a powerful key to self-improvement. For, if we can identify a weakness and improve on it, that becomes the new type and shadow—one of improvement and progress. Stated another way, we can make great changes in our ultimate destination by making small changes in the direction we are currently traveling. If there are things amiss in our lives that have started us into unproductive patterns—whether at work, at home, or on the playing field—it will be hard to change, but we can change.

Consider some examples: some people lose their temper in athletics; others are tempted to cheat, perhaps just a little; still others are too timid to even try to compete. Some may shrug off their athletic accomplishments as unimportant, while secretly using it to feed their vanity. Whatever temptations you are subject to in sports will inevitably tempt you in other areas of your life as well.

The Deseret News editorial of June 6 wrote, “*Modern athletes, with few exceptions, honor winning above sportsmanship. That attitude filters down to the youngest players in beginning recreation leagues, often egged on by parents who berate referees and complain endlessly about how their children are treated. Successful players often beat their chests, spike the ball or in other ways trumpet their own accomplishments. But if sports is just about winning, it has no meaning at all.*”

Hopefully none of that can be said of you or the members of your ward and stake teams—for if a parent yells at the referees, the child knows that the same anger can one day be directed at him or her. That’s why “types” are so important. It’s also why changing our behavior in one area can’t help but affect the rest of our life.

Church Sports, then, offers members a relatively low-threat way to learn self-discipline and control with the help of friends. We’re not competing for millions of dollars like the professional athletes, nor are we risking censure at work or home when we go out on the playing field. Thus, whatever it is in your life that makes you less effective than you might otherwise be—whatever it is that diminishes your “stature” among your friends and family—consider using your participation in Church Sports as a way to start changing the pattern. It can’t help but have a positive impact in everything else you do.

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