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Creators of the GMP Ready-to-Use Training System™

Wisdom of John Wooden

John Wooden (October 14, 1910 – June 4, 2010) was an American basketball player and coach. Nicknamed the "Wizard of Westwood", he won ten NCAA national championships in a 12-year period — seven in a row — as head coach at UCLA, an unprecedented feat. Within this period, his teams won a record 88 consecutive games. He was named national coach of the year six times.

As a player, Wooden was the first to be named basketball All-American three times and he won a national championship at Purdue. Wooden was named a member of the Basketball Hall of Fame as a player (inducted in 1961) and as a coach (in 1973), the first person ever enshrined in both categories.

He was one of the most revered coaches and was beloved by his former players, among them Kareem Abdul Jabbar and Bill Walton. Wooden was renowned for his short, simple inspirational messages to his players, including his "Pyramid of Success." These often were directed at how to be a success in life as well as in basketball.

John Wooden's maxims, or "Woodenisms", have brought wisdom and inspiration to generations of people. Here are a few of them:

"Things turn out best for the people who make the best of the way things turn out."

"Never mistake activity for achievement."

"Adversity is the state in which man mostly easily becomes acquainted with himself, being especially free of admirers then."

"Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are."

"Be prepared and be honest."

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"You can't let praise or criticism get to you. It's a weakness to get caught up in either one."

"You can't live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you."

"What you are as a person is far more important than what you are as a basketball player."

"Winning takes talent, to repeat takes character."

"A coach is someone who can give correction without causing resentment."

"I'd rather have a lot of talent and a little experience than a lot of experience and a little talent."

"If you don't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?"

"If you're not making mistakes, then you're not doing anything. I'm positive that a doer makes mistakes."

"It isn't what you do, but how you do it."

"Ability is a poor man's wealth."

"Failure is not fatal, but failure to change might be."

"Consider the rights of others before your own feelings, and the feelings of others before your own rights."

"Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do."

"Don't measure yourself by what you have accomplished, but by what you should have accomplished with your ability."

"It's not so important who starts the game but who finishes it."

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"It's what you learn after you know it all that counts."

"It's the little details that are vital. Little things make big things happen."

"Talent is God given. Be humble. Fame is man-given. Be grateful. Conceit is self-given. Be careful."

"The main ingredient of stardom is the rest of the team."

"Success comes from knowing that you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming."

"Success is never final, failure is never fatal. It's courage that counts."