

## The Coach Approach

The Newsletter of the Wisconsin High School Golf Coaches Association

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### From the Clubbouse:

Excitement coming for coaches

Das past March, the WHSGCA presented our annual Spring Clinic. With the evaluation forms in, we must admit that this clinic was one of the very best that our membership had an opportunity to participate in. Michael Riggs, a certified Sports Psychologist, discussed the following innovative topics during our AM session:

"Getting to the Top...Success Planning" (setting realistic yet challenging goals to increase motivation and focus),

"Learning to Practice...and Practicing to Learn" (the Practice versus Play Mind-Pre shot routines etc.), and finally, " Playing Golf in the Zones", (Stay positive, motivation, arousal, staying present and imagery).

Our afternoon seminar presented by Carol Rhoades focused on "Player Development and Maximizing Potential" and complemented the Riggs material beautifully. Carol's 5 P approach including Plan, Professional Instruction, Patience, Persistence and Perseverance, was discussed in a user friendly way. Other topics covered included, the players support system, equipment, instruction, course management, competitive experience and intangibles. The WHSGCA's sole goal with the Spring Clinic is to provide a top notch learning experience for all coaches attending.

The WIAA and Tom Shafranski have become a listening partner to our Coaches Association providing policies, procedures and rules that are really in tune with our coaching and team needs, allowing for a steady progression toward being the best and fairest we can be for our programs. The girls involved in boys programs this spring will realize a 15% reduction in length from the boys tees, making for a more competitive environment for them.

The WIAA, the WSGA and the WHSGCA have teamed up to create a Pace of Play policy for 2003 which will be a model or test for this year. The policy suggests 2 hours and 15 minutes for 9 holes, and 4 hours and 30 minutes for 18 holes. It also suggests that groups stay within 10 minutes of the group in front of them or approximately 2/3rds of a hole behind and that upon completion of their round that entire playing 3 some or 4 some comes into a scoring table to discuss and present their card or cards to the coaches before signatures and within the 2 hours and 15 minute or 4 hour and 30 minute requirement. This applies to both our spring and fall seasons.

Our Girls State Tournament to be held next October at University Ridge will see 2 divisions for the 1st time, with division 1 to be comprised of the 90 largest schools coming out of 5 sectionals, and the remaining 49 schools coming out of 3 sectionals for division 2. Growth is good for girls golf and all parties involved hope this will reinforce and create future growth of girls golf programs in Wisconsin.

All State Forms for playing and academic are enclosed in our newsletter and are always available on our web site. The registration form for our Summer Clinic.

meeting and tournament to be held at the Hayward Golf and Tennis Club is enclosed as well. Hayward's lakes, restaurants, resorts and hotels should make for a great family environment, so please bring up the whole family to enjoy the area for a day or two. For hotel numbers and a golf course overview, refer to our last Coach Approach. Tiger and Annika continue to raise the bar for all of golf, making the impossible seem attainable. What a great mind set for that creative and focused individual.

Thanks to our hard working WHSGCA Board for helping to make Wisconsin High School Golf some of the best in the United States.

Good luck to all the spring boys golf coaches as our season begins. We hope you enjoy a successful and rewarding season a result of your hard work. Please feel free to contact myself at 715-634-2760, or any other board member with your suggestions, or concerns, or forward any articles, or items of interest, for our Coach Approach to Kaz at:

LKaz1819@aol.com.

Have great season. Dave Blake WHSGCA President

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# The Practice Tee Coaching Ideas To Benefit Your Players

From the recent W.H.S.G.C.A. Spring Coaches Clinic and personal experience; the use of personal journals is a highly effective method for enabling high school golfers to take ownership of their practice time in order to improve their games. Each golfer should have their own journal into which they record improvement goals. To enable each player to correctly recognize their weaknesses, a computer program, similar to the one used by my players for the past 15 years, has proven to be quite helpful. The program records numerous stats such as fairways hit or missed, greens hit or missed, putts, recoveries, sandies, penalties, birdies, pars, bogies, double bogies, etc. By correctly recording and imputing this information, a player can recognize his/her strengths and weaknesses and with your help, he/she can begin to formulate a plan for self-improvement. These plans are then recorded in their journal. It works best if each player limits his or her plan to just a few goals at one time. For instance, a golfer may want to improve their accuracy with the driver, hit their short irons closer to the flagstick and improve their lag putting to prevent or reduce three putt greens. If a golfer was to choose to improve three aspects of their game from inside 50 yards, then 90% of their practice sessions would need to be focused on short game improvements.

In order to give your golfers the best possible chances for success, have them set specific goals for improvement such as averaging five fairways hit every nine holes. Only when they have met these goals in two or three consecutive meets should they be allowed to establish different goals. Remember, they may have a long game goal, an iron game goal and a 50 yards and closer to

the green pitching, chipping or putting goal. If a putting goal is reached, then a new goal for shots from inside 50 yards can be established, but until each goal is achieved, they may not be abandoned. Never let go of goals until they are successfully met in the competitive arena!

Because I drive my varsity players to and from practice and meets every day, South players read aloud their goals on the way to practice and then formulate verbally what practice plans they intend to use. On the return trip they verbalize how successful they believe the practice session was in their search for improvement. On the way to competition, they again tell the team what improvement they hope this meet will reveal. On the return trip they check their successes and inform the team of their progress. With some goals, it may take numerous practice sessions for improvement to occur. It will, however. be during competitions that the players true improvement gains will be noted. Only under the stress of competition can strengths and weaknesses be completely revealed.

I have noticed that an interesting phenomenon develops when using the individual journal for formulating goals. You will probably see an increased level of concentration at practice. If you will stress to your players the importance of focusing on these goals as a method for improving their individual games, a resulting improvement in the teams score will occur. The golfers should see that proper practice is necessary for self-improvement as well as being essential for team improvement. Using a journal will allow your players to more correctly focus on making improvements in their goals during competition, instead of focusing on a score. Educate them to recognize that if their weaknesses become strengths, their scores will automatically improve!

The most important reason for using the journal is that it gives a sense of "ownership" to your players. It has now become their team. You are the coach, it is your program, but it is their team. They must realize that your discussions on proper preparation resulting in better scoring must be **their** goal.

You can lead, you can direct, but only they can want to work hard enough to be successful! As coaches we encourage, we lay out a program for them to be successful, but they must be the ones make it work. Using the journal will give them a feeling of control over their own destiny. Most players become more committed to reaching goals when they become involved in setting those goals themselves.

It is extremely important to have all your players verbalize their goals, because each player will become more cognizant of fellow teammates working hard to achieve their personal goals in order to help the team. Or, they will see a player or two who is not committed to your program and is therefore hurting the team's chances for success. Here is the opportunity for your captain to speak to those players about their failure to focus on improvement and how it harms the team. Teammates helping teammates. You won't have to discipline! There couldn't be a better scenario for a great coaching opportunity. But, what is your role in all of this?

Your first responsibility would be to ensure that your players are taking ownership of their practice session Remember, you cannot make the golfers want to improve, they must see the benefits that self-improvement will bring. not only for themselves, but also for the entire team. As their coach, you need to provide correct interperations of their weaknesses, especially as the younger golfers may want to focus just on hitting their drives farther. And while that may be a problem, you need to suggest goals that will result in more immediate scoring improvement, such as working on their short game. Otherwise, a few who do not really understand the road to low scoring will just want to boom the ball out there! You also need to provide time for your players to share their goals and their achievement plan with their teammates. If the entire team buys into being interested in and concerned with all the golfers goals, they will encourage each other to succeed. And that is the ultimate coaching situation!

I encourage you to try this coaching technique. See how your playe react. Work on ways to keep the focus

going in the correct direction. NEVER have a practice session without your golfers knowing what their goals are and then focusing on reaching for success. At seasons end you may want to direct awards to those who have recorded the greatest achievements. They may not be the best scorers, but I'll bet they are the most improved!

### For The Advanced Coach

If you understand the physics of the golf swing and hold practice sessions where you work on the improvement of swing fundamentals, then read on. In this section I will try to give several examples of how you can be of additional help to your golfers by incorporating swing work with their journal goals.

In case #1, a player determines that he/she needs to hit more greens with their 7,8 and 9 irons plus their pitching wedge. You determine that their swing plane is too flat, and like a lot of youngsters, they tend to put the head of the club behind them on the backswing. From this position the ball flight can be left or right, but rarely is it at the target. Begin with half swing wedges. Put a chair to their backswing side so that if they swing the clubhead behind them they will strike the chair. Or, if you like to live dangerously, stand in the same position as you would put the chair, warning them NOT to hit you with their club. Remember start them with easy half swings so even if you do get struck it will not hurt. The golfers will quickly get the feeling of keeping the club swinging in front of them. With the club now on the proper swing plane, their ball flight will become much more accurate.

Then progress to the full swing. Encourage them, once the shaft is in a half-swing horizontal position, to swing the shaft of the club on a vertical plane to the finish of the backswing. From here the club moves down and through the ball towards the target on the correct, accuracy-producing plane.

In case #2 the player is infatuated with how far he/she can hit the driver and so swings at mach 10 whether on the course or practice area. The resulting ball flight is long, but the player cannot control where on the course the ball will land. You suggest that long is

good in today's power game, but lost or unplayable balls are not! Begin by having the player tell you where the ball will land before they swing. After all, touring professionals can do that successfully for probably 80% of their shots. It's how they can score so low. If your young gun has a problem with not being able to land the ball where they have predicted at least 40% of the time, then a change might be in order. Suggest as a goal that they work on hitting 57% of their fairways or 4 out of 7 fairways in nine holes.

Begin by watching backswing. If they move the club back at mach 8, then ask, "how often do they hit the golf ball on their backswing?" Reason with them that it might be wiser to slow the backswing down and save their energy for the forward swing. That will usually make sense to the golfer, as they normally have no clue how fast their backswing is anyway. Once they have achieved a more relaxed pace going back, begin to work on maintaining connection between the club and the swing center or sternum. Emphasize that the club is moved back and through by a turning of the sternum and that one part does not move without the other, i.e., they are connected. I often will ask my players how fast they swing a certain club. The correct answer is "as fast as I turn my sternum."

One of the swing problems that has plagued Tiger Woods, and he has darn few swing problems, is that his body will outrace the club on the forward swing. He often describes this as having the feeling that the club is stuck behind him. The resulting shots either go way right or he will flip his hands over just before impact and the ball goes way left. Notice that the accurate shot is NOT in this equation. So, Tiger's problem is that he does not connect the club and his sternum when his swing is off. The solution? Tiger strives to move the club and sternum at the same speed and, as if by magic, shots begin flying toward the target. It will also work for your player. Slow the forward swing down so that connection is maintained and accuracy will be achieved. Many youngsters will balk at the notion of hitting the ball shorter in order to hit it straighter. Make sure they understand that awards are

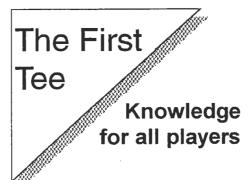
### presented for how many, not how far!

In case #3 the golfer is unable to make solid contact on many iron shots. in almost all of these cases, head movement is the culprit causing the problem. In their journal, hitting more greens in regulation might be a goal, but you must teach them how to hit the ball solidly in order to satisfy this goal. One drill that may help is the narrow stance drill where the player takes a stance so narrow that the feet are only three or four inches apart. Hitting shots from this narrow stance will cause the player to focus on their balance or they will fall over. And, in most cases, head motion destroys balance.

Recognize that head motion during the swing is often caused by incorrect knee motion. Teach them to maintain their right knee (for a right handed player) in a flexed and motionless position during the backswing. A straightening or stiffening of the right knee will invariably cause the golfer to reverse pivot. That is, to move their head and their body weight left during the backswing. This movement will result in fat shots or in shots hit to the right for most players. But, by keeping their right knee motionless during the backswing, they can correctly move their body weight to the right without moving their head. This puts them in a much more correct position for the forward turn through the ball and on towards the target.

These are but a few of a hundred or more situations that high school golfers can find themselves in. If you are an advanced coach who understands the importance of developing good swing fundamentals in order to achieve excellence among your players, then make use of the journal method of coaching with the understanding that you can also help your players achieve far greater success by having them learn good swing fundamentals as part of their goal setting path to success.





Föllowing are some lists of information that your players either should know or might want to know prior to beginning competitive play on the first tee. The must know list includes information on etiquette and speed of play that varsity high school golfers must know and that younger golfers should be in the process of learning. The might want to know list includes a variety of mental focus points that you might want your players to be aware of prior to beginning a competition.

### Must know:

- 1. Etiquette plays an important role in allowing players to compete against complete strangers without animosity developing between them. The key concept is to allow your playing companions to feel they are they only person on the course while they are preparing to play each of their shots.
- a. High school players will often be moving when other golfers are trying to play their shot. Especially disconcerting is the player who moves 20 or 30 yards ahead of the others in his/her group. Not only is that player disturbing others he/ she is putting himself in danger of being struck by a golf ball.
- b. Better players seem to want to talk less and focus more. Please be sure your golfers understand that, especially among the more dedicated male and female players, socialization is not an important part of the competitive golf experience. Sometimes knowing whether to converse or not converse puts players in a delicate situation, but always remember that it is better to remain quiet than to talk. Anyway, less talk should result in a greater ability to focus on one's own game.
- c. Your players must be taught that it is always essential to leave the course in

- better shape than what they found it in. This means always replacing divots, repairing ball marks on the green and raking bunkers. These actions are a sign of being a knowledgeable golfer.
- d. Always watch your ball until it stops rolling. It is most disconcerting for players to have to help a fellow player spot their ball on every hole because they don't pay attention to its eventual location.
- Speed of play is also a most important concept that must be taught to high school golfers. It amazes me that many high school golf coaches still indicate an unwillingness to exhort slow players to get moving! Yes, your players might be unhappy with you at first, but all golfers must recognize that they are not the only player on the course. They have NO right to slow down play for the members of their group or for those in the groups following. In an effort to address the growing slow play problem it is incumbent upon all coaches in the state to teach the techniques for faster play and then insist that their players follow these concepts. The most frequent complaint among high school players is slow play! The WIAA has addressed the issue by developing a slow play plan that will result in penalty strokes being added for groups out of position. It will now become necessary for the golfers themselves to police slow players in their group, or all will be penalized. Let's get our golfers aware of their speed of play before the state tournament qualifiers begin. It's far too late to begin addressing slow play at the state tournament! Following is a list of easily followed suggestions for speeding up play. TEACH THEM TO YOUR PLAYERS! a. Be ready to play when it is your turn
- to play. Line up your putt while others are lining up their putt, making sure that you are not being a distraction. Think about club selection while approaching the ball, not after you have put your bag down. Walk onto the teeing box while the previous player's ball is still in flight. Some golfers must think there is a rule that there may only be one golfer on the teeing area at one time. THERE IS NO SUCH RULE! I find it intolerable to watch each player parade, one at a time onto the teeing area then proceed to go through their preshot routine, execute

- their shot, then walk off the tee box and put their club into the bag before the next golfer walks onto the tee. It should not take more than 90 seconds for a four some to complete teeing off! The almost 25 seconds per player. NO additional time should be needed unless a golfer needs to hit a provisional ball.
- b. Place the golf bag off the green, on a line between the flagstick and the next teeing area before walking onto the green. Walk immediately to your ball and mark it. Putt out short putts; don't mark them unless you will be required to play your next shot while standing in another player's line.
- c. Walk quickly between shots. Understand that you are not out for a stroll with yourloved one. Golf requires each player to move quickly between shots, always being aware of not walking ahead of one's playing companions.
- d. Leave the green immediately upon the completion of play on that hole. Mark the scorecard while walking to the next tee.
- e. The second last player to finish putting should grab the flagstick and prepare to replace it into the hole immediately after the final player retrieves h her ball from the cup. Then all shou walk quickly towards the next tee box, grabbing their bags along the way.
- f. Help playing companions look for lost balls. This seems to have become a lost art. I have even seem some players finish play on a hole while a playing companion is still searching. Talk about being rude! Everybody will benefit if all players assist fellow competitors when in need.

### Might want to know:

- 1. Probably the most important concept I can impart to any coach or player would be: Do not think score before teeing off. Since there are so many factors that contribute to one's score, a number of which may be out of the player's control, it is prudent to focus on positive thoughts. The following is a list of possible ideas, by no means a complete list, which high school golfers can control and therefore should be the object of their focus.
- a. Concentrate on reaching goals e tablished in one's journal. By judiciously selecting the correct goals, weaknesses

should be turned into strengths. The more strengths that become part of a player's game, the better the scores that will result. A word of caution is needed here. Focusing on journal goals should not mean focusing on swing fundamentals. Focusing there, will almost always result in a failed effort. So when asked, "How are you doing?" They may answer, "I seemed to have improved in two of my goal areas, but not the third." Notice that their response does not focus on a score since that is not a focal point. However, as your season nears its conclusion. players should be become more aware of their scores since it is in your conference championship and the WIAA tournament series that scores do matter. I have always tried to look at all competitions before that time as an opportunity to measure progress towards individual goals, not as an end unto itself. Yes, it is nice to win invitationals, but I would rather have my players playing their best golf at the end of the season when it truly matters the most. And if their goals to eliminate weaknesses in their game are not addressed, then little or no improvement will occur during the season. When I see teams who have shown little or no improvement from the season's beginning to conclusion, I wonderwhat the coach has been doing since improvement should be our mantra.

- b. In our program, I have for many years tried to get my players to focus on their target while playing competitively. Sometimes a player also has problems with nerves and starts to get quick so then I ask them to focus on "T N' T" or target and tempo. For high school players, this focus can really help their scores because it gets the players thoughts on ball control.
- c. Use the eraser: Teach your golfers to take one practice swing after a poorly struck shot and use this technique as an eraser which eliminates all future thoughts about that shot. This technique works quite well with those golfers who seem to focus on previous poorly played shots instead of focusing on the shot at hand. Playing in the present, not in the past is an important concept if a player is to stay in a positive frame of mind. And since being positive is extremely important when playing competitive golf, techniques such as the eraser may help

to that end.

The above lists, by no means complete, are designed to give you the high school coach some ideas in handling your young golfers. You may indeed have additional techniques that work with players who present different problems. It is important to remember that all of your players are unique individuals with their own set of strengths and weaknesses. Each needs a program tailor made to enable them to achieve their potential, whatever that may be. As coaches, it must be our goal to accomplish that task.

### Test Your Knowledge of Past WIAA State Individual Champions Can You Name These Past Champions?

Answers found on page 7.

- Presently a great Wisconsin amateur. A nationally know golfer and curler.
- Played college golf for the University of Southern Mississippi Golden Eagles.
- Was a long time head professional at Tripoli C.C. Known around the state as a true gentleman of the game.
- Now a dentist in the Madison area.
- A nationally known Dallas plastic surgeon specializing in reconstructive hand surgery.
- Played many years on the PGA Tour and now plays the PGA Senior Tour in addition to being a TV announcer.

- 7. An outstanding high school golfer and basketball player.
- This former champion played in an early Masters Tournament.
- Present day PGA Tour player who once won the Big Ten title by 20 strokes.
- A former ACC player and now a financial analyst whose services have been used by numerous foreign governments and institutions.
- 11. Holds the WIAA 36 hole scoring record at 140.
- A long-time member at Bluemound C.C.
- This former state champion would make an even bigger name for himself as the basketball coach at the University of Wisconsin.
- Present day tour caddy for Rich Beem on the PGA Tour and former three time state champion.
- Owns a golf course with his wife in southern Wisconsin.
- A three-time Division 3 state champion.
- Once shot a 59 at North Hills
   C.C. Played in college at Notre
   Dame.
- These brothers won three state championships between them.
- Became a very successful stockbroker.
- Still one of the finest amateur players in Wisconsin and a nationally recognized senior player.

The Coach Approach will soon be available via e-mail. Get your copy sooner! Ask for your copy by email at: coachapproach2002@yahoo.com NOW!

	HSGCA Competition Ho	le in One Av	vard
Name : Address:	City	:	Zip:
Course:	,	Hole #	Club:
Date:	Event: :		Score:
competition. Coac	Please enclose a photo for the C Any player on a high school boys or g th <b>must</b> be a member of the WHSGC report the hole-in-one. Send to TJ Di Street; Milton, WI 53	girls team making a A at the time of the eck, Milton High S	e hole-in-one. Please

# At the Turn WHSGCA Executive Board Meeting Minutes Winnegamie GC, Neenah, WI November 3, 2002

1. President Blake called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Members present included Dave Blake, Bill Berkholtz, Chuck Menzel, Steve Lien, Kaz, Brian Scrobel, Mark Rechlitz, Roger Prickette, Don Marx, Sandie Johnston, Dick McKichan, John Lonergan, Bob Lehninger, MaryBeth Nienhaus, and new member Mikki Duran.

Discussion centered on current board membership. All 17 members will return. We do need to cover each of the districts. Districts 2, 3, and 12 are currently without representation. Chuck M. agreed to represent Dist. 11, Mary Beth and Mikki will represent Dist. 10. Two possibilities for additional board members were discussed.

- 2. The **June minutes** and annual meeting minutes were approved unanimously. (Prickette/Lehninger)
- Ireland Trip- Doug Thorn of Westosha Central HS drove up to work on the details of the Ireland trip. We have a \$1500 deposit with the travel company. This sum is enough to reserve our trip for the coming summer of 2003. The package is the same as last time. The cost for that package would be approximately \$2245, depending on air fare. The courses are the same. Doug and Roger suggested making Old Head an option, replaced by a good local course, which would then drop the cost of the package to less than \$2000. We need to have more than 20 people by the end of January.

Roger and Doug think that a three-fold flyer should be circulated to golf courses and coaches to get the requisite number of travelers. It was moved and seconded to send out a mailing and cover the cost of same, to golf coaches, members and non-members, alike. Motion passed unanimously

(Kaz/Lonergan)

There was a suggestion to look at additional sites (domestic and foreign) for possible future trips.

- 4. Treasurer's Report- TJ reported via long distance that we are doing OK this year. We have spent about \$1000 more than we've taken in this year. However, our expenses have gone back to the membership. Treasurer's report was unanimously accepted. (Berk/Lonergan)
- 5. Membership Report-Steve Lien, our new membership chair, reported that there are currently 249 members. Based on past numbers that is an excellent figure. A suggestion was made to somehow get to the different conferences early in each season so that membership increases. Also, we need to approach assistant coaches. Membership reportwas accepted unanimously. (Menzel/Marx)
- 6. Girls All-State Report- The committee (Roger, Sandie, Mary Beth, and Mikki) worked very hard on the nomination forms. They seemed to think that there were natural breaks in the nominations. After discussion among the board a motion was made and seconded to accept the committee's recommendations. (Lonergan/Kaz) Unanimous. See associated article for selections!
- 7. Raffle Report- This year it was reported that the prizes will include Titleist equipment due to a change in vendors. The process for the raffle at the spring and summer clinics will be the same- 5 tickets for each participant with the option to purchase additional tickets.
- 8. Spring Clinic- Speakers for this coming spring clinic are being set and could include a real suprise. The clinic will begin at 9:00 a.m. and will include the luncheon as usual.
- 9. Summer Clinic and Tournament- The host next June will be Hayward Golf and Tennis. Dave Blake is the host pro and is looking forward to the clinic being at his course. The cost will

be \$80.00 as it has been in the past few years. The board also approved the appointment of Brian Scrobel as committee chair. There will be descriptions of the holes as well as lodging accommodations in an upcoming Coach Approach. The clinic will be held on June 17, 2003.

- 10. **Web Site-** John Lonergan (and others) have the web site up and Running. John is asking the membership and the board to send him pertinent information to include in the site. There have been over 160 hits to the site so far. Good job, John!
- 11. Awards- Dick McKichan reminds everyone that forms for nominating people for the various awards can be found in the Coach Approach or on the web site. Please have forms submitted by February 15.
- 12. **Welcome Gift-** The board has decided to give a leatherette attaché case, crested with the association's logo at the summer clinic and tournament. It will come in black or tan.
- 13. College Report- None.
- 14. WIAA Report- Most of the items listed need approval by the WIAA Staff and Board of Control before implementation!

Dave reported that the main issues discussed and acted upon by the WIAA Rules Advisory Committee were issues brought up by our board. They included:

- a. Posting hole-by-hole scores on a big board during tournament play. (Unanimous)
- b. Pace of play was another topic. Each meet manager will mark the starting time on each group's scorecard. The host coach, in conjunction with the course management, will determine the pace of play (2 hrs 15 min for 9 holes/ 4 hrs 30 min for 18) Groups that are not within 10 min of the group in front will be warned, then penalized. Penalties will include 1 stroke for all members of the group that is off pace. The WIAA and WHSGCA are encouraging faster play!
  - c. Girls playing in the spring was