

Kirill Volodin, coach of basketball players: “The whole secret is just work”



This May, the “Black Bears,” women's basketball team of Polytechnic University, became champions of the Russian Association of Student Basketball (ASB). This victory could have never turned true if not for the key person in the girls’ sports life, Kirill VOLODIN. As Kirill himself has admitted, for him as a, the basketball is an opportunity to move forward and teach other people do the same. The team spirit and the high results demonstrated by the "lady bears" confirmed that this scheme does work. What else should the coach be for the team, why girls are better fit for work than men are, how to manage emotions on the eve of an important match - please read about this and many other things in the interview below.

**- Kirill, we congratulate you with the victory in the ASB Russia championship! Please tell us, how you and your team were moving towards this victory?**

- Thanks for the congratulations. I’d love to point out that the team started to take part in the students’ cup 5 years ago. This was the season of 2013/14. Due to the fact that the team had then just got together, we had to apply to the lowest, third in the row, student league. Next season, we got into the second one, and in the season of 2015/16, we had already debuted in the top division of ASB St. Petersburg. This is to say that we should start counting exactly from the season of 2013/14. As far as the success is concerned, there are no secrets at all: consistent work and focusing on the result.

**- Are there any differences in the work with men's and women's teams?**

- In the absolute majority, girls are a lot better fit for work than men. This is particularly important at the student level. This helps to keep increasing the level of playing and allows me to progress as a coach. Sure, there are special features in the training which should be taken into consideration, but there are no cardinal differences.



**- It is used to believe that girls are over emotional, especially, if we are speaking about particular highlights, like, for example, the final games. Is there any secret way to motivate the team before the match and charge it to win?**

- I think this is no more than just a myth. In the reality, emotions are immanent to all people. Men are no exception. The question is how to build up your work with the team and what model to follow in your behavior. All people can control their emotions, but not everybody wants to do this. When you invest a lot of your own efforts in the training process, you usually would need no additional motivation. You just want to come out and show what you can. If you have worked everything out and are well-prepared, you have nothing to fear of and, consequently, there is no reason to worry. The whole secret is just work.

**- What is the most difficult in the work of a basketball coach?**

- It's hard to say. Probably, it would be to stick to the balance between the player-to-coach and person-to-person relationship.



**- Why are you coaching a student team? Would not you be more interested to go into professional sports?**

- At this stage of my career I am exactly where I should be. As the time goes by, if everything is done in the right way, professional sport will come into my life on its own.

**- Are you expecting any new players at the university team and how one can get to it?**

- We decided to take a short break after the final. First, I need to discuss with all active players their plans for the future season. The fact is, we already have several people written to us that they would like to join the team. To do this, you should have basic basketball training and be ready to work hard to make progress. If anybody is interested in getting to the university team, the best way would be to write directly to me.



**- They say that some students enroll to Polytechnic University to a big extent for the reason of joining its basketball team, just in the best traditions of American schools. Is this true?**

- It is. All those studying in the Master's degree program of the Institute of Physical Culture, Sports, and Tourism, in the first place came for the reason to play with us.



**- And here is the last question: the next stage for the team would be the European University Games which will take place in Portugal in July. How are you going to get ready for them and what goals will you set for the team?**

- It is hard to say anything specific about the European games. We certainly would very much want for the University to find funds to send our team there to defend the honor of our country. For that reason, I cannot so far say how and when we will be getting ready for them. As far as I know, the level of competitors at the European Games is very high: as long as there are no student championships in other countries, to take part in the tournament are coming professional players.



**- We will sincerely hope that everything will work out and the girls under your guidance will show their best at the European competition. And that you will keep pleasing us with new victories!**

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