



Kids Should Seize Their Many Opportunities

By Bill Gosse

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When Boston Celtics general manager Danny Ainge decided to keep Glenn “Doc” Rivers as head coach for the NBA season, many Celtics fans wondered if Ainge knew what he was doing.

After a horrendous season last year, Ainge gave Rivers another chance and Rivers took advantage by guiding the Celtics to a 42-game improvement and the NBA championship.

It didn’t hurt that the Celtics added Kevin Garnett and Ray Allen, two exceptional basketball players, to the roster. Nonetheless, Rivers made the most of his second opportunity with the Celtics.

Those that follow the NBA know that Rivers’ head coaching career began in Orlando, and the careers of Garnett and Allen started in other cities. Opportunities will follow those who are dedicated and hard-working. Even though he had a losing record, ex-NBA coach Bill Fitch is ranked sixth all-time for regular season coaching victories. That’s someone who took advantage of opportunities.

Are you preparing for your opportunities?

When I was a walk-on at Marquette, Rivers was a teammate of mine. Based on his attitude, I didn’t think he’d last thirteen days, let alone thirteen years, as an NBA player. We repeatedly had to wait for him to saunter in before we could start practice, and I never really saw him work at his game. It appeared he thought he could get by on talent alone. We all knew he was gifted enough to make it, but would he?

I’m happy to say, he proved many people wrong and turned out to be a very good player and coach.

Sometime after college, he worked hard and took advantage of his opportunities.

We are all given opportunities, even second chances at one time or another. Do we take advantage of them as Doc Rivers has? Are we appreciative of the opportunities life provides us?

When I was young, we had some options for participating in organized sports: school teams, the local recreation department, the YMCA and a few sports camps. That was it.

I tried to take advantage of what was available to me. I never felt I was slighted of opportunities.

Nowadays, kids are provided with so many chances to succeed in sports. Not only do athletes have sports at their respective schools, but there are club teams, speed camps, SPARQ training and sports camps everywhere.

Some of these options can be cost-prohibitive for some. However, incredible facilities are popping up all over and await most athletes as they arrive at school on a daily basis. Swimming pools, field houses and weight rooms rivaling many small colleges are commonplace. Off-season contact by head coaches recently was allowed.

So many opportunities await our young people, yet our obesity rates continue to climb.

Let's get off the couch, put the X-Box or PS3 away, and have some active fun.

Opportunities await. Take advantage of them!