

## The Athletic Mindset

Every Athletic Committee Chairman should understand that they're dealing with an "athletic mindset" that transcends theirs or any other administration. The "mindset" isn't unique to any given club. Some would suggest that the principles simply reflect a "universal human and organizational condition" while others might argue that the ideas are merely reflective of affluence, or of Southern California or of "modernity" in the United States in the early twenty-first century. The following is an effort to pin down some of these "athletic preconditions" and "operational constants" so that you'll know where your friends are located and your adversaries are lurking while running the athletic program in a private club.

It should be noted that each observation is "experientially driven" since a real world encounter---or a string of real world encounters!---were the referenced in developing the idea. The anecdotes, I can assure you, would make for highly entertaining reading!

### *A Summary of "The Top Twenty Commandments" for The Chairman:*

- 1. The Athletic Committee is the "umbrella committee" for athletics, comprised of the chairmen of the various individual athletic programs and is intended to provide guidance for and coordination of the different athletic programs.**
- 2. Tourney Chairmen will get "beat up" by players and spectators alike during the tourney experience.**
- 3. Both the tourney chairman and their tourney committee members must be present during the event and must be willing to answer all questions and to resolve all controversies as they arise.**
- 4. A paid Athletic Director is required who administers policies established by the Committee and the various tourney committees.**
- 5. The Athletic Director provides info, recommendations, background and administrative specifics to the policy makers but specifically avoids making policy himself.**
- 6. Tournament rules should be established in advance, published and followed regardless of subsequent player input.**
- 7. A program addressing the needs of the broadest spectrum of members should be created.**
- 8. Exclusionary tactics by player cliques should be avoided.**
- 9. Criteria for participation in tourneys must be set in advance, advertised and followed.**
- 10. People won't sign up, so make a point of calling players to participate.**
- 11. Referees will be needed during tournament matches.**
- 12. The club will not endorse, publicize or subsidize events which are exclusionary in nature.**

13. **Tourney entry fees should cover all tourney costs, including prizes, but not the “overhead” expense of the Athletic Director.**
14. **Youth activities are important and there should be a representative of the Youth Committee on the Athletic Committee.**
15. **Published times of play should be followed penalties published and assessed for those who are late.**
16. **Interclub events have become less popular and more of a “pain” to promote and administer than they were a decade and more ago.**
17. **The schedule of prizes rarely attracts a bigger field of players, though more prizes are always appreciated by those who decide to play.**
18. **The Committee should submit their “prize schedule” for upcoming tourneys to the Board for approval.**
19. **Those outside the committee will attribute the very worst of intentions to the committee if their own interests aren’t being served by the committee’s decisions.**
20. **Avoid the broohaha about “Committee Teams” by using the draft system whenever possible for tournaments.**

1. **There are Annual Traditional Sporting Events that “You Can Count On”:** The Chairman had best respect the traditional events which, over the decades, have become part of their club’s experience. The Chairman and the committee should concentrate on scheduling each of these, enhancing them a bit each year and, in some way, making them a “big deal” in the eyes of the community.
2. **Your Club’s Program will always compared to that of the “competition”:** People love to compare their own “things” to others. They love to say ours is better---more people, more events, better players, etc.---or, conversely, to say that ours is worse. Best to know what the others are doing so that you can create a program equal to or better than any offered at the other two “neighborhood clubs.” Use the Athletic Director as your “spy” and get their programs in advance as well as the staff they’ve committed to the effort.
3. **The Athletic Committee is the “umbrella committee” for athletics, comprised of the chairmen of the various individual athletic programs and is intended to provide guidance for and coordination of the different athletic programs:** The Athletic Committee is a brainstorming and program coordination environment. It is best to have the chairmen of the individual sports---golf, tennis, surfing, gym, paddle tennis and volleyball---sit on the committee. Each chairman would then have several tourney chairmen sit on their respective sub-committees.
4. **There’s a Big Difference between The Chairman of the Athletic Committee, The Tourney Chairman and the Athletic Director:** The Chairman of the Athletic Committee oversees all sports programs, coordinates the timing of each and helps direct broad policy initiatives. The Chairman selects the Chairmen of the various sports disciplines---volleyball, paddle tennis, gym, surfing and youth activities---who select chairmen for individual tourneys (if they themselves aren’t running them) and direct policy for each. The Athletic Director is a club employee who administers the policies set by the various chairmen and gives input into the creation of policy.
5. **Cliques and Tribes Exist:** Certain people like to play with “their own.” Part of affirming “their own” is to exclude others. This will be true of volleyball, paddle tennis and surfing. It is a natural impulse.

6. **Clubs aren't as Egalitarian in Sports as They'd Like You to Believe:** In clubs everyone is supposed to be equal. Tell that to the "A" court players or the Friday afternoon paddle tennis group. Good cocktail conversation but hardly the stuff of pick-up games or tournaments.
7. **Women and girls are hesitant to play certain "male dominated" sports regardless of prior training or formal experience:** For any number of reasons---rejection by male players, the difficulty of play at an acceptable competitive level, fear of embarrassment before their peers, concern over their physiques, concern that they won't be seen as "ladylike" to others---it's tough getting women to play the more physical sports when men are about to critique them. Most clubs have failed to attract a core group of "regulars" to play together as women or to play "mix'ies" with the men.
8. **Kids have a hard time playing "the big sports" without equipment appropriate to their ages:** Accept that kids are discouraged from doing sports which are "beyond them" at a given age. Equipment, facilities and instruction need to take this into consideration.
9. **Tourney Chairmen will be beat up during the tourney experience:** No matter how highly regarded the person is, members will bitch and moan continually about "The Chairman" and his or her shortcomings. Their "failings" will be the topic of conversation before, during and after play.
10. **Chairmen will get cynical:** It is the rare tourney chairman who'll not talk garbage about the members, their attitudes and their pettiness when the tourney is over. Those who "love people" tend not to after a three day event.
11. **Chairmen need to be present during the tourney:** Problems will arise during the event. The Chairman must be present as judge and authority figure. Those who aren't inevitably get burned.
12. **Chairmen should always have a committee to help them run tournaments:** The "collective mind" is often better than that of an individual. Collective decisions are more highly regarded by the member community than individual "command and control" dictates.
13. **Committees need to be present during tourneys:** Chairmen need to have their committee together during tourneys to help resolve issues as they arise. Doing so spreads around the "blame" and the group provides useful input into the deliberations.
14. **Chairmen need skins thin enough to listen but thick enough to protect:** Club members own the club. They want input. The chairman must be willing to listen. But when the bitching begins, which it will, they need to be able to separate the emotional content of the comments from the core issues involved. Easier said than done when one is both unpaid and a peer.
15. **The club needs a paid athletic director since members prefer to make policy and let others administer:** The days are gone when members had surplus time to truly organize, promote and administer tournaments. A paid athletic director is now the norm and the club and the budget need to acknowledge the fact.
16. **The Athletic Director will take care of the details:** Boards, Committees and Chairmen should set policy and let the Athletic Director administer them. People have come to accept this "division of labor." Leave the "grunt work" to those who are paid to do it.
17. **The Athletic Director should not make policy for tournaments:** The Athletic Director administers the policies set by the Chairman and their committee. On those rare occasions when the Director has set policy, he has been burned. They should be used to give background and advice, but the actual policies governing qualifications, play, rules and the like should be handled exclusively by the members.
18. **Questions asked of the Director which are not administrative in nature will always be referred to the Chairman for resolution:** Members who hope to get a favorable ruling in a particular matter will try to circumvent the Chairman and the committee by asking the Director for a policy decision. The Director will refuse to give that ruling and will refer policy issues to the committee for resolution. However, administrative questions will be handled by the Director.
19. **The Chairman must be present during the entire tournament:** Policy questions will arise. The chairman is the "big cheese" at the tournament. Chaos will reign and the "bad mouthing" will get out of hand if the chairman is absent.
20. **Some members are known "bitchers and moaners":** A handful of members have "bitch and moan personalities" and there's little to be done to lighten their spirits. The Chairman and General Manager know who these people are and will advise the Chairman in advance. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.
21. **Set the Rules and Stick to Them:** Make sure the participants know what the rules of the tourney are in advance and then follow the rules you've adopted. Situations will arise that test the rules but the

published rules should be followed. It's best to "brainstorm" situations in advance of their arrival and create rules which will handle them when they arise. This doesn't mean that the rules for the same tourney can't be changed from one tourney to the next, only that the rules for a given tourney can't be changed once that tourney begins. Rules aren't absolute between tourneys but they should be considered absolute within any given tourney.

22. **Members will try to change the rules during play to favor themselves:** Competitive people who are used to winning want every advantage they can muster during the competition. These types are readily identifiable and persistent, so make sure you know who they are in advance. Don't buy their comments that they're doing it "for the good of the tournament" since they (and we, for that matter!) always act in our own vested self-interest. Be suspicious of altruistic types during tournament play.
23. **The Chairman must be present when teams are selected:** The Chairman is there to ensure both balance and fairness during the selection of the teams. He or she will be asked to explain the committee's reasoning. For that reason, they must be an active participant in the process.
24. **The General Manager Gives Input But The Athletic Director wears "The Mantel of Authority" for All Things Athletic:** The Athletic Director has the full faith and endorsement of the manager and the Director may act at all times in the manager's absence. The Director understands the manager's "policy mindset" and will act in accord with it while directing the athletic program.
25. **People are spoiled and won't sign up unless called:** Members are inundated with sales messages. Most zone them out, even those from the club. They need reminders and a personal call to get commitments. Accept it as part of the "contemporary club scene."
26. **Players will sign up for tourneys more quickly when members, rather than staff, call and ask them to play:** It is better to have the Front Office call players than no-one at all; it is better to have the Athletic Director call than the Front Office; and it is best of all to have Committee members call. Members respond better to "pleadings" from other members than from any member of the staff.
27. **People will expect to play even when they sign up after signups are already over. They expect exceptions to be made:** People don't like hard and fast rules, particularly in a club setting where they are an owner and intimate with the club's movers and shakers. They want to play, they want exceptions to be made, they'll bitch and moan continually if they're not made. It takes a tough chairman or a tough committee to say no. You'll need to make your policy in advance and stick to it.
28. **Criteria for those who can play in a given tourney must be set in advance of advertisement and must be adhered to once published:** Some tourneys take everyone and some do not. Be clear about standards and then stick to them. Put wax in your ears because people will bitch whichever way you go.
29. **Tournament priorities should always consider how frequently a player participates in both pick up and in tournament games:** People are tempted to take the good player who never plays at the expense of the mediocre player who plays frequently. This causes animosity, particularly in volleyball. Have a policy and then publish it in advance.
30. **People want far more in prizes than they pay for. They expect the general membership to subsidize the prizes awarded:** Prizes are a big deal for the status involved and for the goods and services received free. One is always amazed how cheap people can be when the prospects of a freebie is present. The policy should be: prizes come from the price of admission and not from the general fund of the club.
31. **Free beer prizes are attractive to participants but rarely used:** The fraternity spirit surrounds the free beer prizes that are given. The hype is more important than the beer since most prefer to trade their prizes for drink tickets. That being the case, make sure that "alternatives" are clearly defined in advance and that the "free beer" is clearly the "best deal" amongst those alternatives.
32. **People want to change prizes into things which they want---they want to convert from one prize to another:** Accept that people want prizes to be personalized. Nothing wrong with that. But make sure the alternatives are clearly defined and equally administered. People will try to squeeze extras and will be tough on the director or chairman.
33. **Referees are needed during tournament matches:** Club members are, by definition, successful people and tend to be very competitive. They take their tourneys seriously. Accept that and have referees on all the courts to avoid the disputes that will otherwise occur.
34. **People who are refs expect to be compensated for refereeing:** People like to get a "token" for refereeing. Accept that, publish the compensation in advance, then stick to it. It's worth a drink ticket

to keep them from “negotiating” unofficially on the side. There are some members who consider this an occupation and will negotiate as if they were representing a union.

35. **Refs should be provided by the losing team in the immediately preceding match:** The “referee pool” should be established in advance. Losers should supply the refs since most accept that losers deserve no better. Since they’re compensated, it shouldn’t be a huge problem.
36. **Tradition is good though too much of the same thing (i.e.--the auction) tends to reduce the response. Continual re-invention is needed to maintain enthusiasm:** People like to repeat winners. However, winners get flabby with time and need to be reinvented. Experiment and get controversial--the discussions will provoke new ideas that will breathe life into the events.
37. **The club will not subsidize events which are exclusionary---special surf clinics, special “A” paddle tennis tourneys and the like:** Cliques are a part of sports life. Those in the clique would like theirs subsidized by the club community while excluding many in that community from participating. A very bad scenario made worse if they’re subsidized in any way by the general membership. Be cautious of this one since people will try to squeeze out favors for their crowd, suggesting in the process that they’re deserving or special.
38. **All events should be advertised to the general membership:** Events which aren’t generally advertised appear to favor one clique or another. Avoid even the hint of such favoritism and publicize for the community to review. Don’t accept the comment that “we’ll call all who are interested---you don’t need to advertise” as simply another way to exclude the “unwanted” from the clique’s event.
39. **Tourney entry fees should cover all direct operating costs relating to the tourney, including prizes but excluding the salary of the Athletic Director:** Tourneys should be self-sustaining. If they’re not, the general membership ends up subsidizing prizes, excess food, cocktail hour and the like. Tourneys should be break even events. The Athletic Director, by contrast, is subsidized and his cost should not be pro-rated into the budgeting for an event.
40. **There is a philosophical divide between those who feel we should offer programs and facilities but not aggressively promote whereas there are those who feel we should offer programs and facilities and aggressively pursue people to participate:** Each Chairman needs to determine the balance between these two philosophies. The manpower needs involved in each is different as is the cost. Both are legitimate positions. The key is to always provide the options for members to pursue. The only thing in question thereafter is how aggressively one pursues participants.
41. **Should the Athletic Director be responsible for creating games for those who are unable to find their own:** In public tennis facilities, pros actively create games for players. Our club has never done this though some have suggested that we should since we, far more than a public facility, know the personalities of the players as well as their needs.
42. **How is success defined and the need for each Chairman and each Committee to find their definition in advance of committing to a year’s worth of programs:** Some people judge success by the total number of participants, by the spectrum of players participating, by the quality of the competition created, others by the fun received by those who chose to participate, still others by the number and types of events offered. The Chairman must determine their own “definition of success” since the resources of the club will be focussed on pursuing that definition. Remember #37, above, which provides two different definitions of success on its own.
43. **The Athletic Program must have a very strong “child component”:** The future of the club is in its youth. Developing an enthusiasm for sports is a critical part of each athletic program. Provide basic skills, develop “pick-up opportunities,” offer tournament play and encourage athletic pursuits outside the club community. The Committee needs to work with the Youth Committee to ensure that this is being done.
44. **Develop “carry-over sports” for young people:** Assume that most players won’t be pro’s and that most will never play inter-collegiate sports. That said, kids should be exposed to the widest possible range of sports options so that they can pick and choose their favorites. The hope is that these sports will be enjoyed by them for decades into the future as members of this and every other club they may join.
45. **Opinionated committee members need to participate in the committee meetings and make their points there rather than during tourney play:** Some committee members are silent, or almost so, during committee meetings. Then, during the tournaments, they’re quick to point out flaws in the event, to bitch and moan and to generally undermine the efforts of that event’s chairman. Be aware of

these personalities in advance. The key: get committee members to buy into decisions and require that they be at the forefront in their defense.

46. **Unexpected issues will arise no matter how many years that event has been held:** Surprises will occur. Expect them and make sure the chairmen and committee members expect them. "Traditional" events create as many controversies as first time events. Assume nothing. However, debrief thoroughly before the event to ensure that historical issues are addressed and possible scenarios are examined.
47. **The biggest bitchers never volunteer to run events and refuse to participate if asked:** Accept that some people derive their greatest pleasure from finding flaws in what others have done. These people are the eternal nay-sayers. The best way to handle such people is, usually, to put them on the committee handling the event. But these types don't want to serve, thereby putting them in someone else's crosshairs. Find out who these characters are and prepare the team for their running commentary.
48. **Some bitchers truly want to undermine the event to ensure failure and therefore the success of their own thinking:** The really negative types don't want to improve the situation but to destroy it, then throw the failure back in the face of the chairmen involved. These subversive types are truly awful people and should be marked by the chairman and the committee well in advance.
49. **If a tourney runs well and is considered a success, the bitchers and moaners will never say that they were wrong and salute you for the success:** Don't expect the nay-sayers to say nice things about the tourney or the chairmen when the event is over and a proven success. They'll simply evaporate and wait for the next opportunity to bitch and moan.
50. **Parents should volunteer to help with the youth program since bodies are needed:** Parent participation validates an event for the kids and keeps the number and cost of staff to a minimum. Determine a list of "target parents" in advance and aggressively pursue them to help run specific events. These are "do'er" parents and aren't necessarily the same as those you have on the youth committee.
51. **There should be a liaison for youth athletics between the youth committee and the athletic committee:** Although the Athletic Director is one contact with the youth program, a member should be selected who participates in adult events and has kids who participate in kids events.
52. **The Athletic Director should train the employee support team so that their behavior is consistent between events:** The Athletic Chairman is responsible for training staff to assist him in delivering the athletic product. Beach boys, office staff, bus boys and the like must be under his control. He is to select, train, direct and monitor. The cooperation of all supervisors will be required.
53. **Staff will not modify courts or conditions unless a committee member is present:** Players are very temperamental about details. Staff have been burned for making improvements---new type of rope for the courts, sifting of sand, etc.---without the committee's approval. "The Good" is defined by each player and the staff don't want to get in the middle of a slugfest between members. They will do as the committee instructs but not as players dictate. Help them by being a "certifying presence" when changes are needed.
54. **There are big egos on the playing fields and age rarely mellows the truly competitive:** The truly great athletes seem to mellow nicely. Others, however, who have created a history which might never have existed, can be more temperamental as they age. The proof of this is the fact that the young create few controversies whereas the older create most.
55. **Drink prizes will always create controversy amongst those who are concerned about the impression such prizes have on "the youth" of the club:** Drink prizes validate the "fraternity appeal" of certain sports. However, they're controversial since they are perceived as encouraging drinking amongst the youth. Get Board approval to avoid controversy over "big prizes." *Drink tickets, however, remain as the "currency of choice" amongst participants* and are more welcome than food prizes.
56. **People will try to squeeze the Athletic Director for drink tickets whenever they can:** The Chairman and the Director will be "squeezed" for drink tickets in payment for successes, failures and for volunteer efforts. Avoid giving when asked since this validates the behavior and takes the fun out of giving the unexpected.
57. **The published times of play for the tourney should be adhered to and rarely are:** Except in the biggest tourneys where lots is riding on the line, the first game is always going to start late. If a "hard

and fast start time” is established, make sure the fact is well publicized and the penalties for tardiness clearly outlined.

58. **People will be profane during play, both in tourneys and in pick-up matches. This can represent a public relations problem in a family club:** Foul language is an integral part of competitive sports both to dramatize developments and to affirm inclusion in a particular group. People are expected to use “club sense” while playing. The standard during tourneys, however, should be higher than during pick-up play since the audience is bigger and even more diverse. If this is the case, make a point of publicizing the standard well in advance and then reminding participants of it thereafter.
59. **Tourney players will wander during play and be far from the courts when their game arrives, thereby requiring frequent paging and searches, both of which are frustrating to the director, the players and the members who listen to the paging:** Tourneys are long, people get bored or hungry and players wander. Since play times cannot be determined in advance---games go longer or shorter depending on circumstance---the teams cannot be told when to return. The paging is disruptive to non-players and is considered an “indulgence to spoiled athletes” by those who are recreating elsewhere at the club. Address this issue with the players and ask for their indulgence. Minimizing the paging and minimizing game delays requires cooperation from the teams involved.
60. **Drinking and sports seem to go together:** There is something “macho-athletic” and “smiling-social” about drinking and sports, therefore the preference for drink prizes, the need for cocktailers around the courts and the emphasis on cocktail parties at the end of play. Accept the fact and configure the rewards and the ambiance accordingly.
61. **Members love spectator sports opportunities, particularly volleyball:** People love to watch others doing their sports thing. Volleyball is the perfect spectator sport and is a natural focal point for a weekend. Use this to your advantage and schedule tourneys in whenever possible. People who watch are entertained and provide a ready market for goods and services.
62. **Machines are boring and members want them changed frequently because they have little intrinsic entertainment value:** People want to stay in shape but there are few “natural” ways of doing so. They want a concentrated work-out experience since their lives are cramped. Therefore the gym and therefore the machines. But machines are desperately dull. Compensation is received through social interaction, music or television. Most people tire of a particular machine quickly since it’s inherently a boring experience. These people will argue for new and innovative machinery, suggesting immense athletic gains from the piece of equipment they covet. Resist the temptation to purchase since the motives for doing so are less about the machine than the inherent boredom associated with machinery.
63. **Once a machine is in place in the gym, it creates “fans” who are regular users and they’ll defend retaining it to the death:** Some people prefer one machine over another. Those who use a machine, regardless of usage patterns by others, are vocal in their support for its retention. Since space is limited, if a new machine is purchased another machine needs to be axe’d. Doing so will be controversial with someone who is an advocate of that machine. Prepare for a fight if a machine is to be eliminated.
64. **Exercise classes should be “stand alone” with no subsidy by the club. The instructors carry all risk and all reward:** The club endorses certain professionals---for the gym and for the yoga classes---but only acts as an intermediary for payment. The member signs a chit for the service, we pay the instructor and then bill the member each month. The member is asked to keep their price low since we don’t take a percentage “off the top.” If they succeed, so much the better. But the risk to the club is zero and the upside in “good will” with both the instructor and the member is very high.
65. **Verbal commitments to participate aren’t actual commitments:** People will tell you what they think you want to hear to get you off their back. But a commitment thus made is quickly forgotten unless you get them to actually sign on the dotted line. Once they’re down, you need always follow-up with a call and a reminder.
66. **Interclub events are a pain---participation has been slipping for years yet the advocates talk about “the good old days” when these events were packed:** Interclub events are not very popular at the moment. Lots of effort, low satisfaction level. Some moan about this reality but they need to be reminded that it is the current reality. Keep the number of events to a minimum, put some real effort into the few that you do but don’t have unrealistic expectations for either participation or good will.  
**This new reality holds true for both kids events and adult events.**

- 67. Parents who help run kids events will try to configure the event to help their child:** Parents want their kids to win or to be seen in a good competitive light. Tournaments they run will often be organized with this fact in mind. In addition, parents are busy and will, when given tournament responsibilities, organize the tournament around their own personal needs. Don't be disappointed if you see this happening.
- 68. If you aren't a competitive parent, then you want each kid to walk away with a trophy:** Ours is a "feel-good" age. Parents want their kids to feel good. Losing makes them feel bad. The risk of feeling bad can be mitigated by eliminating the concept of winners. Many will try to do this by giving everyone trophies, giving no-one trophies or configuring the tourney so there are no winners or losers to denigrate or to decorate.
- 69. If you are a competitive parent then you want your kid to be the only one with a trophy:** Some kids have real athletic talent and their parents know it. Every competition is an opportunity to affirm that fact and to bolster the ego of the child and the parent. Competitive parents want every tourney to be a show case for their child and trophies / prizes / accolades are their way of making this happen.
- 70. Tourney winners like to see their photos prominently displayed in the clubhouse:** Most great trophies are dramatic statements about the tourney experience rather than the winners of those tourneys. Names are usually engraved too small to read. However, to have one's team photographed in their moment of glory, to have their names captured beneath and to have that photo prominently displayed in the clubhouse for a year is, by contrast to a perpetual trophy, a very big deal. One is rarely a "big athletic deal" for more than a year after an event, at which point you accept a "back ground role" and let others take center stage.
- 71. Trophies gather dust:** Most people who win trophies raise them in the air for a photograph and then toss the thing into the nearest closet. The same has been true with perpetual trophies at the club--- names are too small to read, the trophy is too common to dramatize merit and the number of perpetual events too few to fill a trophy case with proper trophies. The solution: photos of this year's winners with a huge silver or solid brass plaque noting, in large engraved letters, the winners of the "big events" over the years. Put both in a prominent location and leave it at that.
- 72. When there are few participants in a given tourney, almost each participant will get a prize and they expect to receive one:** Some tourneys are "dogs" and attract few participants. However, people still want the traditional pay-outs for first, second and so forth. Doing so will often mean that everyone wins. If this was just an "acknowledgement issue," no big deal. But when it involves prizes, it means either a higher entry fee (a big no-no under most circumstances) or a prize subsidy from the general membership. Resist their entreaties to "pay out" and distribute only what one collects in admissions fees.
- 73. The schedule of prizes rarely attracts a bigger field of players:** Competitive athletes who have a "gambling impulse" argue that people play for the prize money. In clubs that is rarely the case since dignity and status are their "prime movers" in the member community. Don't get me wrong. People like to be rewarded nicely for their victories. However, they rarely sign up for "the bucks" since the prizes involved don't sway affluent types who can join clubs. By way of example, the volleyball Calcutta has no prizes, yet it is a club tradition and the most aggressively sought after crown in club sports.
- 74. The Board should approve the list of tourney prizes well in advance of "the season":** Some prizes are appropriate under some circumstances whereas others are not. Although the committee recommends that certain prizes be given, they should be run by the Board in the Spring and approved, thereby circumventing post tourney controversies over the type or extend of awarded prizes.
- 75. Pick-up games are dying because members seem to have busier lives than ever before:** People have scrunched even more into their lives than ever before. As a consequence, they're more hesitant than ever to commit to anything in their private time. Showing up and having no game is a fear most over-committed people have. People want to organize "pick-up" games but shy away from the work involved. It's becoming more difficult to generate a "critical mass" of players who meet on
- 76. The pick up players seem to be getting older since the younger crowd is already over-committed and burned out:** The next generation has even more options than the current one. And the volleyball players in particular are burned out from participation in a sport that became a twelve month grind at some point during their high school and college careers. Recreating often means escaping from the routine, the practices, the training and the expectations that surround play at a truly competitive level.

Perhaps when these people have a decade or two distance from their respective sports, they'll return to the club and play pick-up on a regular basis.

77. **The committee needs to determine whether age is more important than talent, or if talent trumps age in determining the right of an individual to play in a given tournament. This is a political not a sports issue:** Many of the younger generation are far better than “the old guard” at certain sports. Some adults don’t want those kids to play in a tourney since it would mean that they wouldn’t. However, the quality of the play is often enhanced by “underage participants.” The committee needs to anticipate the clash and make a ruling well in advance of the first publicity effort.
78. **The Athletic Director must use his judgment and act when chairmen aren’t present:** The Director must be allowed to use his judgment in the absence of the chairman or the committee members. Because of his long term relationship with the club and because of the knowledge he’s gained through that relationship, he should be authorized to act in the Chairman’s absence.
79. **The Athletic Director should influence the decision makers to ensure that their decisions are in the best interests of the largest group of participants:** The Director will not be a silent participant at meetings. His job will be to gather info, provide historical perspective and filter committee ideas through his “club sense filter.” His job is to speak, to inform, to guide to ensure that the committee makes decisions which are in the best interests of the entire Beach Club community.
80. **Those outside the committee will assume the very worst intentions for those on the committee who made the decisions:** Most people feel that chairmen configure the teams and the rules to their best advantage. The suspicion will always exist. However, the emotion behind the suspicion can be mitigated by an “act of will.” The Chairman must go out of his or her way to be overly fair and overly concerned about fairness. It might even be best if they stack the deck against themselves to ensure that “the right message” is sent out to the membership.
81. **Those who are on weaker teams will often feel that the committee stacked the teams in the committee’s favor:** Losers will sometimes look for excuses for their having lost. The primary target will be the committee and the easiest target to shoot at on the committee is the chairman. The search for scapegoats will never end for the insecure and the unhappy but the committee can help its own vested interests by being as obviously fair as they can possibly be.
82. **Avoid the broohaha about “Committee Teams” and “Non-Committee Teams” by using the draft system whenever possible:** Let the captains take the heat. And let the captains determine what “team chemistry” works for them by drafting players themselves. The trick here is to determine “the right selection sequence” for each captain since the best should choose last and the weakest choose first. Although bitching and moaning can still occur over the order of selection, the primary onus for choosing or not choosing certain people will inevitably rest on the shoulders of the captains creating the teams.