I was lucky enough to talk with Jay Olson from the Van Meter Parks and Rec division of the city. He oversees all of the youth sports in the city and works along side the other coordinators from the other cities that we play against. The program revolves around the generosity and volunteering of local parents. The program does not have any training, at any level of what we consider the three different dimensions. While this may be the case, I think Jay does a great job of making sure his coaches are worthy to work with the youth in our community.

I think one of the greatest strengths of the program, is the shared goal of the different communities who come together to great competition. For VM, Jay makes sure that the coaches we have on hand are quality people who care about the kids growth, and not necessarily about if we win the league championship. There was an instance a couple years back, where a coach was not a right fit and was coaching for the wrong reasons. As a group of coordinators, they all asked him to no longer volunteer his time. Jay said this was a hard thing to do.

I think the biggest weakness is the fact that all coaches are volunteers. While he is involved in the background check, he really doesn’t get to pick the coaches coming aboard his community. I have been volunteering for the past 8 years and there are no resources for coaches to grow as a leader. I would love to see something offered along the lines of the 3D program to help coaches see the true meaning of coaching. I do know we have some good people in our community and so do the surrounding communities, but knowledge is power. This course was pretty powerful for me.

Overall, I think Jay does an amazing job considering all. His program is run on the kindness of others giving up their time to help the youth of community grow through sports. Being highly involved in the community myself, I am going to talk with Jay about implementing some type of 3D training or option for the coaches looking to get involved in our programs. We have a very sports based community and I see nothing but results from making sure we coach the whole, and not just the fundamentals.