

It's time to cheer Team USA

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When I hear the phrase “raising the bar,” I fondly associate it with high school track and field and the high jump event. In this event, participants compete by jumping over a bar placed upon two vertical poles called standards. To determine the winner, the standards are raised until no one can jump over the bar. In this respect the words “bar” and “standards” can be interchanged. Please indulge me in creating an analogy between this sporting event and politics.

Think of the citizenry as team owners, coaches and fans. The Executive Branch and Congress would be the athletes. The Supreme Court could be in charge of officiating. As fans, we watch the event with all eyes on the bar, to see whether or not it stays in place when the athlete makes a jump. The standards are secondary, if noticed at all. In politics, I believe too much emphasis is placed on “raising the bar” and not enough attention given to the standards. We tend to forget where the bar is being raised from. Societies over centuries, have suffered much tribulation in developing standards of behavior (including values and morals if you will) that can be agreed upon by the majority as acceptable. The Founders took this into account when they made the Constitution our political standards “rule book.”

When we send representatives to Washington, we like to think that they are a good representation of our standards, as a model to be followed. Not only in this country, but worldwide as well. Sadly, this is not always the case. Too often we see that politicians will simply attempt to duck under the bar. At this time cheating is running rampant among our athletes and our officials. This is a result of the fan base being too busy to attend the track meets. As team owners it is way past time for our intervention. When the rule book isn't followed, everyone loses.

Certainly, we need team leaders who can inspire the other athletes to better their skills, but we don't want superstars on steroids either. We need to train them so that they can consistently jump over the bar where we have it set. That is to say, as team owners we want them to perform in the manner we are paying them to do and as coaches, tell them what that manner is. We do not want to lower the bar. If they can't compete, we need to recruit new athletes who can.

When was the last time you talked to your team? When was the last time you reprimanded a non-performing member of your team? How much time do you spend training your team? We all need to be cheering for Team USA.