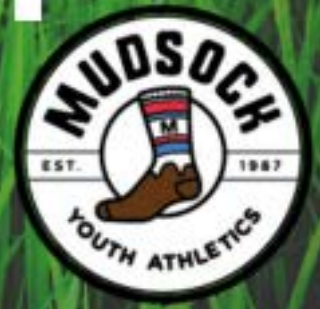


# LET'S PLAY

MYATHLETICS.COM

10,000 Kids. 12 Leagues. 1 Community. No Offseason.

DECEMBER ISSUE



A few months ago, I was asked to be on a podcast called Youth Sports to talk about Mudsock Youth Athletics and my stance on the growing trend of specialization in youth sports and the infusion of private equity. I encourage you to listen to the conversation that I had with the host Ally Tucker, but one of the snippets that resonated with her was my re-purposing of a quote from one of my favorite movies, "Jurassic Park".

Just in case you're one of the few that haven't seen it, or it's been awhile, the first movie centers on scientists discovering dinosaur DNA from a mosquito that was perfectly preserved in amber. The scientists use this DNA to start bringing dinosaurs back to life. Lots of problems occur throughout the story, but one of the main characters tells the owner of the company that is bringing the dinosaurs back "Your scientists were so preoccupied with whether or not they could, they didn't stop to think if they should."

I guess that's a long way of me summarizing, just because your participant can start playing a sport year-round, it doesn't mean they should. And for the skeptical who believe I push multi-sport athletes because it keeps more kids in our programs, I say that I have no qualms with your participant being in a band or scouts or a club at school and then playing one sport during the season. We are not focused on trying to produce the best athletes; we are focused on trying to produce the best humans. We firmly believe that well-rounded children play multiple sports throughout their development and learn life skills that they can apply later in life. That doesn't mean kids who specialize can't turn out to be great humans, too, we just know statistically that more long-term positive outcomes result from life long, active participants versus children who got burnt out at age 12 and never return to sport again.

As we approach the holidays and winter break, I encourage you to take some time to speak with your participant, and truly understand what they want to do and why they enjoy playing sports. Their answers might surprise you. Use Dr. Malcolm's quote as a guide and then decide what's best for your individual participant and your family.

If I don't see you before, best wishes as you wrap up 2025 and I look forward to seeing you all out on the fields, on the courts or in the gyms in 2026!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Spillman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott Spillman  
Executive Director  
Mudsock Youth Athletics