

## Portrait of Success

Success can be achieved in any area in life. Sport provides a great example of success.

A couple of nights ago, I was watching the 3rd round of the Australian Open... the match between a relatively little-known Aussie, Casey Dellacqua and former No 1 Amelie Mauresmo.

It was one of those matches I didn't want either to lose... I wanted them both to win!

I had seen Casey play once before... and she looked good, in a developing kind of way. She had been on the circuit for a few years, had never won a match at the Australian Open in 5 attempts, prior to this year, and she had only played once on the Rod Laver Court (and lost). Amelie, on the other hand, had won many matches at the Australia Open, including the 2006 Open championship; throughout last year she had struggled with injuries and then difficulties with motivation but she was on her way back! Prior to her match, Casey was ranked somewhere around 68, Amelie ranked 18.

Last night, Casey epitomised the portrait of success...in every sense! In her brief pre-match interview... she calmly stated she had nothing to lose, she was going to have fun. She was poised, calm (on the outside anyway), humble, down to earth and it was obvious she was looking forward to her match.

The commentators, throughout the evening, described Casey as the "little Aussie battler"... she had done it tough. I know a lot of sportspeople do it tough. She had been playing tennis for a number years, made sacrifice after sacrifice (as do many), had scraped financially... but she never lost sight of her dream.

So what elements make a portrait of success:

- **Mentor and coach...** Casey had learnt and developed so much because of her mentor and her coach. She learnt all aspects of the game from her mentors and coach.
- **Perseverance...** Casey kept trying, trying... practising, trying, improving... she never gave up. She kept her goal in mind and she stayed on track. It must have been a long road for Casey, as with any serious sports person, and there must have been many times that she felt overwhelmed and disheartened. But she kept going!
- **Belief...** Casey believed in her own ability. She believed she was doing the things she was meant to be doing in life. She had belief and it was illustrated so clearly in both her on court and off court behaviour.
- **Determination...** in her quiet way, Casey was so determined to give the match her best shot. Win, lose or draw she was determined to play her best.
- **Focus...** my God, was Casey focused. Throughout the game, you could see she only had her mind on the shot. She wasn't distracted for one second by the crowd, by her large support group in the crowd (including many of her family and friends), by the electric atmosphere of the spectators... she was totally focused. One of the commentators remarked at the end of one point that Casey didn't look up to the

crowd towards her family but she just looked straight at the chair she was going to sit on between points.

- She **didn't let failure interfere**... sure, Casey made mistakes in the match but with each mistake, she grew.

Casey was unbelievably fantastic. She emerged from the match triumphantly! And she was lovely in her success! She emerged from the match as Australia's top ranked female player, and her APT will have had a substantial boost. She is now financially healthier. She is now so much more confident.

Casey, as a tennis player and a successful person, has arrived!

In her post match interview she said she was proud to do this for Australia and for herself. Casey I can assure you... every person watching you last night was incredibly proud of you -- not only because you're Australian but because you gave us all a beautiful demonstration of what success is about.

Jeanne May, January 2008

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