

## PROFILES IN EXCELLENCE

## ZSU ZSU STRAUB

Junior School PE Teacher & Athletics Coordinator, Coach, Athlete, Traveller & Impassioned Competitor



## Q&amp;A WITH ZSU ZSU

**Q WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PASTIME?**

**A** I love to travel! Most recently I visited Austria, Bora Bora, New York City and the Netherlands. I am also an avid follower of the performing arts, particularly live theatre, dance and classical music. Most of the time, though, I can be found enjoying a walk or hike with Abe, my husband, and our dog Kisu.

**Q MOST ADMIRER QUALITY IN AN ATHLETE?**

**A** Focus. This means more than paying attention; a focussed athlete can push aside distracting thoughts that have a negative effect on their performance. When a student is 'in the zone' and able to harness what they have learnt, you can see it in her eyes. It's truly special.

**Q WHAT SPORTS DO YOU FOLLOW?**

**A** I enjoy watching tennis. My favourite player is Roger Federer.

**Q WHERE WAS HOME PRIOR TO VANCOUVER?**

**A** I was born in Hungary but have had the opportunity to live in many different countries prior to settling in Vancouver. Among the cities I have called home are Baghdad, Iraq; Zurich, Switzerland; and Cape Town, South Africa.

**YEARS ZSU ZSU HAS  
BEEN TEACHING AT  
MULGRAVE**

Second faculty member to join Mulgrave shortly after the school was founded and has proudly participated in its progress from a portable

classroom on a church parking lot, to rented facilities at the North Shore Winter Club, and finally to its magnificent and continually expanding home on its spectacular Cypress Mountain campus.

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**“WORDS TO LIVE BY**  
Success is not final,  
failure is not fatal, it is  
the courage to continue  
that counts.”

Winston Churchill

**TOTAL # OF G5  
VOLLEYBALL PLAYERS  
ZSU ZSU WILL HOST**

For the past 16 years, Zsu Zsu has been organising the ISEA Girls volleyball and basketball tournaments. This year, thanks to the added space provided by the Kirkwood gym, Zsu Zsu is back to holding the tournament at Mulgrave after having hosted off-site at the Richmond Oval.

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**ONE THING PEOPLE  
MAY NOT KNOW  
ABOUT MS. STRAUB**

Zsu Zsu was a member of the Hungarian National Rhythmic Sport Gymnastics Team. As part of the team, she represented Hungary in several international competitions.

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# MS. STRAUB'S COACHING AXIOMS FOR GREAT PARENTING

*A parent, teacher, athlete and coach with three decades (or more) of experience, Mrs. Straub has shared with us some of the axioms that lie at the intersection of coaching and parenting.*



## OFFER POSITIVE & HONEST FEEDBACK

Often confused for 'tough love', honest feedback has little to do with being tough. The best coaches highlight the positives but always refrain from false praise. Trust is a fragile thing and disingenuous feedback is the quickest way to threaten it. It is never about demeaning players with negative feedback but rather, it's about taking the time to point out why something may not be working and by offering an explanation enabling them to learn a better way.



## MOTIVATE A GROWTH MINDSET

Building confidence in a student begins with helping them see what they are capable of. By asking of them what I know they CAN give - not what they think they can do - I motivate them to think bigger and stretch themselves.



## EMBRACE COMPETITION

Competition has been maligned and blamed for fostering a sense of inadequacy in children whose skills fail to 'measure up'. In fact, competition in itself is neither good nor bad - it is a drive within all of us. Harnessing our competitive spirit to ask more of ourselves is at the heart of growth. By this I don't mean yelling at children on the sidelines of a game, but rather inspiring in them a desire to stretch. It is about becoming our own best competition.



## MY FAVOURITE COACH



**Sára Berczik**

As a young gymnast, I had the incredible privilege to train under the amazing Mrs. Berczik. Already a legend (she had led a team to gold in Melbourne in the 1958 Olympics and created her own artistic movement method), Mrs. Berczik began training me when she became the artistic director at the Spartacus Club where I trained as part of Hungary's National Rhythmic Sport Gymnastics Team. Her creativity, imagination, and stamina were the source of great inspiration. Looking back all these years later, I am still inspired.

Mrs. Berczik would begin our ten-hour-long training sessions with a hand signal to the pianist and proceed to 'paint a picture' of a routine that would challenge me in just the right way. She pushed me beyond what I

thought was possible, and helped me see that it was ever so attainable - all the while making the music and the beauty of the movements a joy to experience. Today, as a teacher and coach, the harmony between challenging and engaging my students is at the forefront of my approach. I get to know them in a way that allows me to understand what I can ask of each. Then, I focus on motivating engagement by inviting them to embrace the challenge. My belief in each student and what they can do leads to trust and confidence to try something different and/or new - Mrs. Berczik's approach is my inspiration.