

# Earth Day

Wednesday, April 22,  
1998

Penn State Harrisburg  
Campus, Middletown  
at the Science &  
Technology Building  
From 11:00 a.m. to 2:00  
p.m.

Lots of Fun, Food, Games  
and Educational  
Activities

Earth Day Theme:  
**Do Your Share!**  
**Care About Water!**

Earth Day EXPO Participants  
and Events Include:

- Audubon Society
- PSH Lion Ambassadors
- Public Recycling Officials
- Sculptured Art
- WPSH Radio Simulcast
- Zoo America Program
- Tap Water Testing
- Chesapeake Bay  
Foundation
- Sierra Club
- Plus MUCH more

LIVE MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT FEATURING:

**NAMASTE**

"If you're looking for an alternative to alternative, look no further." -Nerissa Miller, York Dispatch/Sunday News

All programs are FREE and open to the public. Contact James Malm at 948-6272 for more information.

This event is partially funded with Student Activity Fees.

## And In This Corner...

### I am left to ask, "What if?"

Today's average fan has lost sight of what the game should really be

by Matthew Bowman

My father and I are very close. In some ways we are best friends. We always seem to be doing something together like going to the Penn State football games or talking coaching strategies for an upcoming game or just having a game of catch in the front yard. He has always been there for me, and I hope that he can say the same of his son.

Of all the time he and I spend together, most of it involves sports in some form or another. You could say that I was born with a ball in one hand and a glove in the other. This would probably explain why I try to get so involved in sports both as a participant and as a journalist.

Anyway, I just hung up the telephone here in the Captimes office. It was my dad on the other end. Once again, the conversation made its way to athletics. As we discussed what I was going to write in this column (at the time it was about Tiger Woods) he began to tell me about how the games have changed.

Now, at this point a lot of people would tune out what was to follow - another "well back when I was your age" story. But over the years I outgrew that stage, and I now realize that the things he says need to be heard. So the conversation continued.

I mentioned that the whole idea of "Tigermania" and this infatuation with the young golfer has gotten out of hand. I then proceeded to say that the fans and followers of sports have lost sight of what the game is, or at least what its supposed to be. As it turns out, I did not really understand what I was saying or what was about to take place.

At that point, it was inevitable. I had poured gasoline on the fire. It was as if Dad transformed into a prosecuting attorney who was trying to prove his case. In a nutshell he said that the game is not the only reason why fans go to the events anymore. I think he might even venture to say that it is not the main reason.

But do you want to know something? As he talked I began to really understand what he was trying to tell me all these years . . . I do not realize how pure the game used to be.

Then my mind started to race with visions of commercials for the "Classic Sports Network" or however the saying goes in the advertisement. I could hear the announcer say, "remember how it used to be, when everybody cared, how perfect it was, and how young we all used to be?"

Maybe there is something to this whole idea.

My father said that when he was younger, there was no need for shooting T-shirts into the stands or to have big promotions to attract fans or even to play music between every stoppage of play. However, in today's arenas and sports complexes this is what enables the organizations to draw the big crowds. Everyone buys a program in hopes of getting the lucky stamp. Some even purchase 50-50 raffle tickets at the possibility of taking home some cash or better yet an autographed hockey stick. "Where is the game at in all of this?," my dad asked. We concluded, "It has taken a back seat."

Guess what? He is totally right. In today's business of filling stadium seats, just having the game as the only item on the agenda would not appeal to us. "What's in it for me" has become our thinking.

I will be the first to admit it. At times you cannot drag me out of seat at certain games, but not during the action. Instead, I prefer to sit right there during intermission or halftime to see if some no name guy can make the half-court shot or not.

So where does this leave us? Well, it leaves me asking, "What if?"

What if our generation tried to enjoy the game for what it is? What if things could go back to the way they used to be? Would we even have to have a Classic Sports Network? Is there hope for my generation to realize what is really important? Does my father have a better idea of sports than I do?

Until our last phone call he definitely did.

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