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TWENTY CENTS

Dallas Ambulance policy to limit 'non-emergency' services

The Dallas Fire and Ambulance Inc., the volunteer organization which provides free ambulance services in the Dallas area, this week announced a new ambulance service policy to cope with non-emergency calls received by the unit.

Ambulance Chief Wes Cave said the unit was asking that future calls for non-emergency transportation by ambulance be issued directly by the

patient's doctor. Dallas Ambulance also indicated it will no longer take ambulatory patients without question.

Cave said the unit also plans to restrict nursing home ambulance calls to admission and dismissal transportation of Dallas residents, eliminating hospital transfers and special transportation to doctors' offices or x-rays.

The ambulance unit also asked the

public to refrain from unnecessary service calls between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. when most of the unpaid volunteers are at their regular jobs.

Cave said the unit has sufficient manpower to handle all emergency calls and regularly provides this service without charge or tax funding. Non-emergency calls, however, have increased to the point where they

outnumber the emergency requests by a ratio of about five to one, and many occur during workday hours.

"To ask these people (the unpaid volunteers) to leave their jobs for anything other than emergencies is asking too much," Cave said.

The ambulance chief noted that sometimes the unit gets calls from persons seeking transportation to medical services simply because "the roads are slippery and we didn't want to take our car." He said he believed the number of nonessential calls handled by the unit each year was at least 25 or more. He said the unit presently handles about 360-375 calls per year.

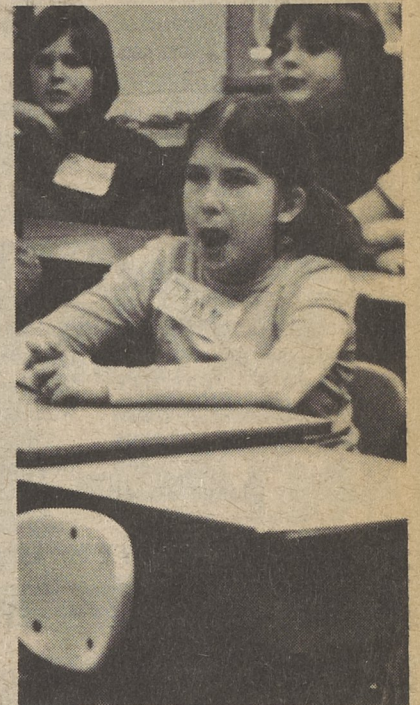
He said crews handling non-emergency calls often get to the hospital only to find that the doctor has not issued admission orders. The crew is tied up then because the patient cannot be removed from the litter until the physician on duty performs an examination and the patient is x-rayed or delivered to his room.

The ambulatory patient problem is

such that the Dallas unit may respond to a non-emergency call only to find that the "patient" is walking around, fully alert and aware, carrying their own suitcase, wanting to walk to the ambulance and declining the litter. Cave said this type of person does not need an ambulance but could find other means of transportation, leaving the emergency unit available for emergency service.

The Dallas ambulance unit generally expends about three manhours or more on each of its 360-375 calls per year. And this time is only about one-third of the time the volunteers invest in the unit. The unpaid crew also spends about eight months of the year in the implementation of its fund-raising program and works throughout the year on training and equipment maintenance.

Voluntary gifts from the Dallas residents sustain the units operational expenses, such as gas, insurance and new equipment when needed. Last year, voluntary gifts to the organization totaled about \$18,000.



LEARNING'S FUN—Fourth grade students at Lake-Lehman thought so last week as they took part in a workshop. For more school news see pp. 3, 6, 13, 16.



LOW BUDGET BANDITS—The latest edition of our local 'Ski Maskmania' are these two aspiring hood-winkers. Pictured are John Farrel, left and Michael Parsons, both of Midland Drive, Dallas.

No date set yet for Haddle trial

District Attorney Patrick Toole announced that no date has been set as yet for the trial of James W. Haddle, Kunkle, charged with criminal homicide in the death of David M. Hodge, Kingston, on Dec. 23.

Haddle was released on \$25,000 bail Dec. 24, following a hearing before President Judge Bernard C. Brominski at Luzerne County Court House. According to the DA's office, he was freed pending a hearing set for Dec.

31, 2 p.m., before District Magistrate Earl Gregory, Shavertown, to answer the charge of criminal homicide.

Following the hearing on Dec. 31, Haddle was bound over for court action. A prima facie case was established against the 37-year old Haddle, who was charged in connection with the Dec. 23 stomping and beating to death of Hodge. Haddle continued free under \$25,000 bail.

Toole acknowledged that Haddle

has to be tried by June 21 under the 180 day rule for criminal cases. After that date, the charges must be dismissed with the exception of two reasons: one, if the defendant's counsel asks for a delay, or if during the 180 days, the Commonwealth shows just reason for a continuation of the trial, according to Toole.

District Atty. Toole said that an attempt is usually made to schedule trial for the convenience of the prosecution.

Dallas fan fined, other charges dismissed in basketball fracas

Disorderly conduct charges against two West Side Tech fans and a PIAA off duty official were dismissed while a Dallas High School fan was fined for disorderly conduct and harrassment at a hearing last Thursday night before District Magistrate Earl Gregory.

Charges against the four men came from an incident at the Dallas-West Side Tech game, Feb. 10 at Dallas Senior High School.

Magistrate Gregory dismissed charges against Jack Barbose, PIAA official, Shavertown; Joseph Koval, brother of a Tech player, Edwardsville; and Clifford Watkins, father of one of the Tech players involved in the fracas, Pringle.

Harry Sickler, father of the Dallas player involved in the fracas, was declared guilty of disorderly conduct and harrassment by Gregory and fined \$25 and \$75 respectively plus \$11 in costs.

Watkins was not present at the hearing due to being hospitalized for surgery. He was represented by his wife, who was not among the fans at the Feb. 10 game.

Assistant District Attorney William Perrone represented the Commonwealth and first called Dallas Township Police Chief Carl Miers to the stand.

In answer to questions, Miers testified that he was not present at the

game but received a report from his men assigned to the event. He said that the following day he received a call from Jack Barbose, who was upset with the publicity given the incident by the press. Brobose told Miers that he felt his actions in coming out on the floor were to assist the police. He said that he tried to stop the fracas.

Miers then related the events leading to the fracas as best he knew them from his investigation.

With two minutes remaining in the game, Dallas had possession of the ball. Brian Sickler headed toward the basket getting ready for the lay up when he charged into Brian Koval of West Side Tech and knocked him to the floor. A technical foul was called on Sickler and he was ejected from the game. In the meantime, however, Koval got up from the floor and went for Sickler.

Koval was restrained by Steve Skammer, Dallas player, and a player from West Side Tech. At this point, Sickler left the court to go to his team's bench, having to pass the West Side Tech team bench. It was here that the confrontation occurred between Sickler and William Watkins, a Tech player who had been ejected from the game on fouls just 60 seconds prior.

Miers stated that he had three police officers assigned to the game,

who gave assistance and helped restore order in a short time.

When asked by Perrone if he could identify Barbose, Miers replied that he could not.

In a cross examination by Atty. Ted Krohn, attorney for Barbose, Miers stated that he did not have any testimony which indicated that Barbose initiated the fracas.

Brian Koval, 17-year-old Tech player took the stand. Under questioning by Perrone, he stated that he was in the front position on the floor, that he plays guard. He stated that he was fouled by Sickler and a charging foul was called on Sickler.

When asked if he took any foul shots he replied in the negative because his team left the court. He said that he was going to grab Sickler but he was restrained. It was at this point that his brother, Joseph Koval, came out of the stands and West Side principal Tom Feeney and a policeman came toward him. He said that his brother pulled him from the foul line toward the stage area, then returned to the bleachers. Koval stated that by then many people were on the court.

When Miers was questioned about Watkins, he said that he had several calls from Clifford Watkins who said that if he could have got out of the stands sooner, he would have "got" another of the defendants Harry Sickler.

West Side Tech player Bill Watkins then took the stand in the hearing. He told Perrone that he fouled out with three minutes remaining in the game. He said that he was on the bench two or three seats from the Tech coach. He also said that he saw the foul between Sickler and Koval and jumped up from the bench; that Koval was his friend and if he needed help he wanted to help him. According to Watkins, the next thing he knew he was on the floor "jarred in the back". He didn't see Brian Sickler do anything but found himself wrestling on the ground, then was dragged off, bleeding profusely.

Atty. Patrick Dougherty, representing Harry Sickler, asked Watkins if he was on the court and he said he thought he might have been on it by a few inches. He also stated that he might have moved, he wasn't sure. He said that he bled from his nose but he could not say whether or not he was hit. He replied that he could not identify the person with whom he was on the floor.

William Rosick, Tech player, was also on the bench having fouled out of the game. Rosick stated that he was sitting next to the coach and Watkins was next to him. He testified that when Sickler walked by the players were standing up. He claimed he saw Brian Sickler hit Watkins in the face. He also said that he saw Harry Sickler throw Watkins to the floor.

Under cross examination, Rosick stated that he clearly saw the punch but that there was much commotion and many people came down from the stands. When asked if it were possible that the man he saw tried to catch Watkins, Rosick did not give a definite answer.

Gary Morgantini, West Side Tech social studies teacher and assistant football coach, was called to the stand. He stated that he was a scorer at the Dallas-Tech game, and sat at the table next to the Tech bench.

Morgantini testified that when the commotion occurred at the end of the floor, he stood up to see the foul there were so many people he could not see so he sat down and talked to William Baran, driver education teacher at Dallas, who was also at the scorers' table.

Morgantini said his 10-year old son was sitting alongside of him. He caught a glimpse of someone coming down from the stands. He identified

that person as Harry Sickler. He said that he saw him grab Watkins around the head, although Watkins is much taller than the older Sickler.

Under cross examination, Morgantini said that he could not see Brian Sickler as he came toward the bench but he said he was able to see Watkins who was in the same area.

He stated that when he first saw Harry Sickler's arm around Watkins' head, they were on the court, embraced so to speak. He stated that pandemonium broke loose on the court.

The prosecution stated they had no more witnesses. Except for Chief Miers, all prosecution witnesses were West Side fans, players or staff. District Magistrate Gregory called for the defense but Atty. Krohn asked to be heard.

Krohn stated that since there was no eyewitness testimony against his client, Jack Barbose, he made a motion that the charge of disorderly conduct against him be dismissed. Gregory complied with his motion and charges against Barbose were dismissed.

Tech fan Joseph Koval then asked that charges of disorderly conduct against him be dismissed for the same reason and Gregory found in his favor.

Mrs. Clifford Watkins made the same request for her husband in absentia and the case against him was dismissed.

Atty. Dougherty moved that the charges against his client Harry Sickler be dismissed but Gregory denied the motion.

Dougherty then called Joseph O'Donnell, Dallas Senior High School basketball coach and guidance counselor, to the stand for the defense.

O'Donnell testified that Brian Sickler was coming up the court and committed the offensive foul. He said that after the foul, Koval got up from the floor and came at Sickler. Skammer restrained Sickler and Sickler walked toward the bench, ejected from the game.

O'Donnell said he went toward Brian. The Tech players were up and also moving toward Sickler. O'Donnell identified William Watkins as the Tech player with his fist up to throw a punch. O'Donnell stated that Sickler threw a punch and Watkins went down on the floor. O'Donnell grabbed Sickler and sent him to the

locker room.

The next thing he saw, according to O'Donnell, were the police and officials coming around, and everything was settled. He stated that there were upwards of 50 persons on the floor. O'Donnell said he then saw Harry Sickler face down on the court near the scorer's table head facing the bench. O'Donnell said that he did not see the older Sickler, swing, kick or push anyone. He estimated the entire fracas lasted no more than two minutes.

Under cross examination, O'Donnell held to his story and repeated that he saw the Tech players come toward Sickler and that he saw Watkins' arm raised.

Melbourne Carey was called to the stand. He testified that he sat about eight rows up in the stands about four rows above Harry Sickler, a little to the right of the Tech bench. He said that he didn't see anything down on the floor but that he did see Harry Sickler wending his way slowly down through the crowd using people's shoulders for support. He testified he saw Sickler miss a shoulder and fall to the floor. He said he could see little else because of the crowd.

Under cross examination by Perrone, he said that he did know Harry Sickler but that they were not friends as Perrone alleged. Carey acknowledged that he had played basketball against Harry Sickler many years ago. Carey verified that his son, Mike, was a member of the Dallas varsity team. When Perrone asked Carey if Sickler lunged instead of falling, Carey replied that he did not know how Perrone would describe it but that he saw Sickler fall forward.

Al "Red" Pisaneschi, another Dallas fan, testified that he was seated across from the Tech bench; that he saw Brian Sickler foul and saw him walk off the court. Pisaneschi stated that from where he sat he could see the Tech players get up and it appeared that Watkins swung at Brian then Brian hit Watkins and knocked him down. He stated that he did not see Harry Sickler on the floor at all.

Tex Wilson of Dallas also took the stand for the defense. He said that he was seated by Jack Jones on the first row across the court from the Tech bench. He verified that he saw

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